REALISMS AND WORKING WOMEN IN THE NOVELS OF GASKELL AND BRONTË

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ABSTRACT

REALISMS AND WORKING WOMEN IN THE NOVELS OF GASKELL AND BRONTË

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This thesis demonstrates the use of social realism in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth* by Elizabeth Gaskell and the use of psychological realism in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* by Charlotte Brontë in the representation of working women in Victorian fiction. The study starts with a discussion of differing critical and philosophical definitions of the term "realism" in literature to point out the complexity of the term, that is based on its inherent apparent contradiction in referring to attempts to render "real" life through the fictitious existence of characters, events, and situations in the pages of novels. It also provides an outline of social events that shaped working women's lives in the 19th century, in addition an outline of the common perceptions of Victorian society regarding women and women's work. The analyses carried out in the central chapters of the thesis brought out the result that Gaskell and Brontë embraced the idea of working for women despite the prevailing confining conditions in women's work areas and that they were moved by these hardships surrounding working women, and produced their works as means of criticism of the social, psychological, and moral problems these women were confronted with. Despite this shared concern, Gaskell and Brontë utilize different ways to present these women, their problems and conditions in their novels. This study claims that while Gaskell makes use of social realism in her representations of working women in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth*, Brontë mainly employs psychological theories of her era in her representations of working women in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*.

Key words: Gaskell, Brontë, working women, social realism, psychological realism.

ÖZ

GASKELL VE BRONTË'NİN ROMANLARINDA GERÇEKÇİLİK VE ÇALIŞAN KADINLAR

Kahveci, Rana

Yüksek Lisans, İngiliz Edebiyatı Bölümü

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Bu tez, Elizabeth Gaskell'in *Mary Barton* ve *Ruth* romanlarında toplumsal gerçekçilik kullanımı ve Charlotte Brontë'nin *Jane Eyre* ve *Villette* romanlarında psikolojik gerçekçilik kullanımıyla, Viktorya Dönemi romanlarında çalışan kadınların tasvirini gösterir. Bu çalışma, gerçekçilik teriminin, roman sayfalarında kurgulanan karakterler, olaylar ve durumlar ile gerçek hayatı yansıtma çabasından kaynaklanan bariz tezatlığını göstermek için, edebiyatta gerçekçilik teriminin farklılık gösteren kritik ve felsefi tanımlarının bir müzakeresi ile başlar. 19. yüzyılda çalışan kadının yaşamını şekillendiren olayların taslağını ve bunun yanı sıra Viktorya toplumunda kadın ve kadının çalışması ile ilgili yaygın görüşleri de sağlar. Bu tezin ana bölümlerinde yapılan analizler, kadınların çalışma alanlarında yaygın olan kısıtlayıcı durumlara rağmen, Gaskell ve Brontë'nin kadınlar için çalışma fikrini benimsediklerini, bu kadınları çevreleyen zorluklardan etkilendiklerini ve eserlerini bu kadınların karşılaştıkları toplumsal, psikolojik ve ahlaki problemlere yönelik eleştiri amacıyla yazdıklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Paylaştıkları bu ilgiye rağmen, Gaskell ve Brontë bu kadınları, onların problemlerini ve durumlarını göstermek için, romanlarında farklı yollar kullanırlar. Bu çalışma, çalışan kadınların tasvirlerinde, Gaskell'in, *Mary Barton* ve *Ruth* adlı eserlerinde toplumsal gerçekçiliği kullandığını; Brontë'nin ise, *Jane Eyre* ve *Villette* isimli eserlerinde çağının psikoloji teorilerinden faydalandığını öne sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gaskell, Brontë, çalışan kadın, toplumsal gerçekçilik, psikolojik gerçekçilik.

To Me, My Family, and My Beloved

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MB	*MARY BARTON*
R	*RUTH*
JE	*JANE EYRE*
V	*VILLETTE*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Aims and Organization of the Thesis

The aim of this study is to analyze the use of social realism and psychological realism in the representations of working women in nineteenth-century fiction through an analysis of *Mary Barton* and *Ruth* by Elizabeth Gaskell and *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* by Charlotte Brontë. Elizabeth Gaskell and Charlotte Brontë have been chosen to investigate in this study because they are the well-known women writers of the Victorian Period, which was distinguished for its increasing interest in the use of realism in fiction. These writers lived in a society which was characterized by its common perception of inequality between men an,,d women and increasing numbers of working women who were suffering in terrible conditions of their work area; Gaskell and Brontë were not indifferent to these aspects of their society and as women embedded in a strictly patriarchal society, they were courageous in reflecting certain realities regarding these issues in their works. In this regard, and with reference also to her concerns with the labouring class, Elizabeth Gaskell has long been celebrated as one of the first social realist writers of the English canon, one who uses realistic fiction to inform the reader of certain social realities of her time. That is why her works have been chosen for analysis in this study. It will investigate her use of social realism in the representations of working women in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth*, which present a variety of working women in their social contexts and relations.

Charlotte Brontë also directly addresses to the reader the experience of women in her time, emphasizing another area of realism within her novels, although she is not as famous as Elizabeth Gaskell as a social realist novelist. At the time Brontë was writing, certain psychological theories had become well-known and written about in the medical world. Among the Victorian writers of fiction, Brontë is notable for

showing particular interest in creating psychologically complex women characters and she mainly utilizes the psychological theories of her era in the representations of these women. Therefore, her two novels *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* which include working women of different classes, will be analyzed to show how she reflects Victorian understandings of psychology in her representations of working women.

This study is divided into five parts: Chapter One commences with the thesis and briefly talks about the organization of the whole study.

Chapter Two provides some theoretical information regarding realism in literature, its use in English literature in the 1840s and 1850s (considering the years Gaskell and Brontë wrote the selected novels), and regarding especially social realism and psychological realism, in order to present the social and historical framework of the period that helped shape these novelists' ideas and works and to achieve a better understanding of the results which will come out of this study. It begins with a discussion of differing definitions of literary and philosophy scholars for the term "realism" in literature and provides a loose definition of it in the end. It briefly explains the first use of the term "realism" in the arts, and benefits from British critic Ian Watt's association of the rise of realism in English literature with the rise of novel in the eighteenth century. It continues with some significant characteristics of eighteenth century novels which distinguish them from those of previous written works, to utilize these general characteristics later in the analyses of the novels. The second part of this chapter is allocated to the use of realism in English fiction in the 1840s and 1850s to accomplish a better insight of the novels that will be analyzed in line with their period. Moreover, a discussion of how Gaskell and Brontë used realism in their novels is provided to ensure a general frame of these writers' styles before moving onto the analyses of the aforementioned novels. The rest of the chapter will give information about some general characteristics of social and psychological realism and will provide reasons for their increasing appearance in the novels of the period.

Chapter Three is allocated to a discussion of social events such as the Industrial Revolution that characterized the Victorian Period, and a discussion of social realism and its use in the representations of working women in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth*. As seen, social realism will be discussed first in this thesis in order to understand the relationship between Victorian psychological theories and Brontë's novels that will be analyzed in the following chapter better and to provide a well-grounded theoretical background for it. It starts with background information about how women were viewed in the Victorian society and what kinds of jobs they were engaged in during the era. It mainly focuses on the historical facts about domestic servants (such as cleaners, cooks, washwomen and governesses), needleworkers, factory workers and nurses since these are professions represented in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth* by Elizabeth Gaskell and *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* by Charlotte Brontë. The second part of this chapter analyzes the ways in which working women in domestic service, needle work and nursing are represented and which facts about such women are emphasized in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth*, which might lead to finding out mixed and various attitudes towards work for women. The remaining part of the chapter looks at the ways in which factory women are presented in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth*. Factory women are selected for separate attention here because the issue was a matter of popular discussion at the time, and conflicting opinions regarding factory women were expressed in the Victorian Period. This part of the chapter investigates the extent to which Gaskell's novels imply an association between factory women and the growing rate of prostitution in the mid-Victorian Period.

Chapter Four deals with the use of psychological realism in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*. In the first section, background information about psychological theories of the Victorian Period which are considered relevant to these novels is provided. In this respect, it specifically focuses on physiognomy, phrenology and the Victorian understanding of mental disorders, since they are utilized in the representations of working women in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*. In the following part, the use of physiognomy and phrenology in the representations of working and non-working women in these novels is analyzed, to find out whether they use these theories in a

way that differentiates working women from non-working women. The last part of this chapter examines how Brontë utilizes Victorian understandings of depression, insanity and self-control in the representations of working women in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* by focusing on the protagonists Jane and Lucy who experience mental conflicts related to their employment even though they differ in their reasons.

Chapter Five gives a short summary of ideas given in the previous chapters. It also provides a discussion of further questions which arise from this study.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1.Realism in English Literature

> From its opening sentence, every novel is an argument for its own reality.
>
> ~Mark Kamine

> Realism is illusory, just as representational art is illusory, finding ways to suggest depth and three dimensions on a two-dimensional canvas, finding strategies by which to create the sense of light, as the impressionists did, just by not making the brush strokes look like the thing being represented.
>
> ~ Elizabeth Deeds Ermath

Realism in literature can be loosely defined as the attempt to represent familiar and everyday people and events without any idealization. It attempts to present life as it is rather than as it should be. Although the word "realism" seems easy to understand at first glance, it has remained a complicated term due to the differing definitions of literary and philosophy scholars. Jacobson touches upon this characteristic by commenting on "the extreme relativity of the concept of 'realism'" (Jacobson 25). Levine comments on the issue by claiming that although there would be some kind of an agreement among critics in that realism stands for "the observable world of lived experience" and rejects "allegory and symbol, romantic and sensational plots, supernatural explanations and idealized characters", scholars have never reached a consensus about the distinctive features of a realist novel (Levine 84). According to him, there have been various associations of literary realism with

> the ordinary, middle class, the present, historical consciousness, industrialization, the city, and the nation; it has been linked to omniscient narration, free indirect

> discourse, vernacular dialogue, extended description, open-ended narrative, the panoramic, and the detail; it has been seen as a way to explore the interior lives of characters, and the exterior movement of the objects; it has been cast as totalizing or particularizing, as naively invested in transparency or as highly self-conscious about the problem of representation (Levine 84).

Therefore, as Mitchell puts forward, "one thing most recent scholars seem to agree on is that realism is complicated, conflicted, contradictory, and problematic" and even the Victorians whose novels have been associated with realism were conscious of this very well (Mitchell 179). She exemplifies her claim with George Eliot's well-known statements in *Adam Bede*,

> I might refashion life and character entirely after my own liking; I might select the most unexceptionable type of clergyman and put my own admirable opinions into his mouth on all occasions. But it happens, on the contrary, that my strongest effort is to avoid any such arbitrary picture, and to give a faithful account of men and things as they have mirrored themselves in my mind. The mirror is doubtless defective, the outlines will sometimes be disturbed, the reflection faint or confused; but I feel as much bound to tell you as precisely as I can what that reflection is, as if I were in the witness–box, narrating my experience on oath (Eliot 175).

As Mitchell asserts, Eliot seems to be aware of the difficulties of rendering life as it is through the fictitious existence of characters, events, and situations given on the pages of novels. In this respect, she also draws attention to the fact that such a fictitious existence is rendered to the reader by language, which Mitchell has regarded as defective as Eliot's mirror. She regards language only as "an imprecise medium" since it is not reality itself (Mitchell 179-180). As Lye claims, words are "arbitrary signifiers of reality;"

> they have no necessary, or as it is called "motivated," relationship to what they represent… Words also belong to cultural systems of meaning, and cultural ways of saying, as ethnographers have documented. So as signs, and as culturally-located elements of meaning, words cannot objectively and clearly represent reality (Lye 1).

Given all these difficulties surrounding realism, it would be better to regard realism in literature as "not a direct or simple reproduction of reality (a 'slice of life') but a system of conventions producing a lifelike illusion of some 'real' world outside the text, by processes of selection, exclusion, description, and manners of addressing the reader" (Khuman 79). In this respect, realist novels employ plausible characters with plausible events and situations and they convey to the reader a feeling of the real with their plots. However, this does not mean that a novel should be considered as completely unrealistic if it contains any allegory, sensational plot or supernatural event. According to Levine, there is no purely realist novel in literature. He supports his view with *Jane Eyre* whose protagonist he regards as "one of the most powerfully realistic protagonists in fiction" although some supernatural events happen to her at several important points in the plot (Levine 85). He provides other striking examples to strengthen his claim by saying,

> if George Eliot is a consummate realist, then what are we to make of the allegorical ending of *The Mill on the Floss* or the improbable coincidences tying Daniel to Mordecai in *Daniel Deronda*? Dickens may be a realist in his attempt to capture the social life of the modern city, but his characters range from the cartoonishly distorted to the impossibly mawkish (85).

Therefore, Levine believes that the best way is to "think of realism as a set of overlapping features" (85). It means that a novel can be considered to qualify as a realist novel if it shows several symptoms of the realist novel, not necessarily every single one of them.

The term "realism" was claimed to be first used as an aesthetic description in 1835, indicating "the 'vérité humaine' of Rembrandt as opposed to the 'idéalité poétique' of neo-classical painting" (Watt 5). It came to be used as a literary term after the foundation of the journal *Réalisme* by Duranty (5). British critic Ian Watt relates the rise of realism in English literature to the rise of novel, thereby setting the boundaries of the genre in the eighteenth century. In this respect, he acknowledges "the problem of the correspondence between the literary work and the reality which it imitates" and suggests explaining "the nature of novel's realism, whether in the

early eighteenth century or later, by the help of those professionally concerned with the analysis of concepts, the philosophers" (Watt 6). Many scholars like Lovell hold the same idea in this line of thinking. Lovell claims, "To investigate realism in art is immediately to enter into philosophical territory, into questions of ontology and epistemology: of what exists in the world and how that world can be known" (Lovell 23).

Watt believes that modern realism is the result of the idea that individuals can discover the truth through their senses, which is a position having its origin in Descartes and Locke and later developed by Thomas Reid in the middle of the eighteenth century. He claims that the realist novel arose with such an understanding of discovering the truth, which is a rejection of the position held "by the scholastic Realists of the Middle Ages that it is universals, classes or abstractions, and not the particular, concrete objects of sense-perception, which are the true 'realities'" (Watt 7). Such a realist view conceives of truth as an individual issue, thereby orienting literature to a more individualist position. In this regard, Watt regards the novel as the form of literature "which most fully reflects this individualist and innovating reorientation" (8). According to him, previous literary forms confined the truth in literature to traditional practices such as taking their plots from past stories and legends. He says,

> This literary traditionalism was first and most fully challenged by the novel, whose primary criterion was truth to individual experience- individual experience which is always unique and therefore new. The novel is thus the logical literary vehicle of a culture which, in the last few centuries, has set an unprecedented value on originality, on the novel; and it is therefore well named (8).

According to Mulder, Watt's claim apparently draws attention to the shift from imitation to originality in Western arts. She believes that imitation played an essential role in the Western arts until the end of the sixteenth century and artists only recorded directly what they were seeing before them without any critical attitude expressed in their works. She thinks that romanticism arose as a reaction against the practice of imitation in the arts during the first half of the nineteenth

century and it “replaced imitation with originality, spontaneity and free spirits expressing their own imaginative truths” [‘Romanticism’, def. 1] (Mulder 7). She also relates the rise of romanticism as a reaction to the excessive rationality of the enlightenment process in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and believes that it ended around 1840, succeeded by realism. In this respect, Furst gives a background to realism by saying,

> As an artistic movement realism is the product and expression of the dominant mood of its time: a pervasive rationalist epistemology that turned its back on the fantasies of Romanticism and was shaped instead by the impact of the political and social changes as well as the scientific and industrial advances of its day (Furst 1).

Considering these, Furst seems to believe that realism rose as a reaction against romanticism and these two concepts are quite different from each other in that romanticism reflects “a magical world” of events, feelings and situations while realism tries to “capture plain reality”(Mulder 9).

Setting the roots of the realism in the rise of the novels in English literature, Watt provides several important characteristics of eighteenth century novels that differentiate them from those of previous written works. He summarizes the characteristics of the novel in the eighteenth century in his discussion of formal realism which he defines as,

> the premise, or primary convention, that the novel is a full and authentic report of human experience, and is therefore under an obligation to satisfy its reader with such details of the story as the individuality of the actors concerned, the particulars of the times and places of their actions, details which are presented through a more largely referential use of language than is common in other literary forms (28).

In this respect, he starts with the tendency of novels to reject traditional plots. He gives the examples of Defoe and Richardson whom he believes as the first great writers in English literature in not taking their plots from any mythological, legendary or historical event. He differentiates them from such writers as Milton, Spenser, Chaucer and Shakespeare who frequently employed traditional plots

because “they accepted the general premise of their times that, since Nature is essentially complete and unchanging, its records, whether scriptural, legendary or historical, constitute a definitive repertoire of human experience” (9). He relates this change to the trend of individualism and originality as mentioned before and he regards “the novel’s use of non-traditional plots as an early and probably independent manifestation of this emphasis” (10). As an example to this claim, he mentions Defoe who he claims “merely allowed his narrative order to flow spontaneously from his own sense of what his protagonists might plausibly do next”, without opting for a traditional plot (10). He asserts that novelists following Defoe either deliberately or unintentionally continued this tradition of non-traditional plots although they differed in their own ways.

In addition to applying a non-traditional plot, novels featured particular characters in particular situations and events in their plots. This was quite opposite to the use of general types as characters in the traditional plots of earlier literary forms. Watt associates this change “with the rejection of universals and the emphasis on particular which characterizes philosophic realism” as well (11). As he asserts, the novel put an emphasis on the individualization of its characters and provided a detailed account of their environment. In this regard, he offers the naming of characters as one of the important features in the individualization process of characters. He cites Hobbes with his view that “proper names bring to mind one thing only; universals recall any one of many” and considers proper names to be “the verbal expression of the particular identity of each individual person” (14). Claiming that in literature proper names were first given in the novel, he distinguishes them from the names of characters in previous forms of literature by stating that such earlier names were not intended to give the characters individuality. Therefore, as he says, either type or historical names were used for the characters, often only being surnames. He maintains that early novelists such as Defoe and Richardson gave full and believable names to their characters, enabling the reader to see them as individuals in particular contexts and situations. He

particularly draws attention to Richardson who provided even his minor characters with both a first name and a surname (15).

Watt proposes time also an “essential category in another related but more external approach to the problem of defining the individuality of any object” (17). In this regard, he accepts Locke’s “principle of individuation” with its premise of existence “at a particular locus in space and time” (17). According to Watt, characters in the novel can be regarded as individuals only when “they are set in a background of particularized time and place” (17). He goes on saying that the novel broke away from earlier forms of writing with its rejection of “using timeless stories to mirror the unchanging moral verities” (18). It also differed from them with its emphasis on the causal connection between the past and the present and the development of the characters throughout the time in its plot. Finally, he offers the use of detailed descriptions of everyday life (which depends heavily on the time dimension) as one of the differences between the novel and the earlier literary forms. In this respect, he also gives importance to space which he regards as a dimension inseparable from time, suggesting that it is not easy to make a visual picture of any specific moment without having a specific spatial context. He thinks that place and time were quite general and obscure in tragedy, comedy and romance and he suggests that Defoe might be the first writer in English literature to “visualize the whole of his narrative as though it occurred in an actual physical environment” (22). Moreover, he credits Richardson with furthering this process by giving place to the descriptions of interior spaces in his novels. He further comments on the issue by saying,

> In general, then,… there is no doubt that the pursuit of verisimilitude led Defoe, Richardson and Fielding to initiate that power of 'putting man wholly into his physical setting' which constitutes for Allen Tate the distinctive capacity of the novel form; and the considerable extent to which they succeeded is not the least of the factors which differentiate them from previous writers of fiction and which explain their importance in the tradition of the new form (24).

All in all, as Watt believes, all these features of the novel distinguished it from the previous writing forms precisely by leading to a more realistic portrayal of life in it, and formal realism is thus seen as the major characteristic of the novel genre. Although it cannot be known whether the writers of the eighteenth century used these new characteristics in their novels deliberately or not, they can be considered the pioneers of what was to become the domineering form in English literature, realism in Victorian fiction.

2.2.Realism in English Literature in the 1840s and 1850s

> I wished critics would judge me as an author, not as a woman.
>
> ~ Charlotte Brontë

> We are less than drops in the ocean, as far as our influence can go to re-model a nation.
>
> ~ Elizabeth Gaskell

> I have always felt deeply annoyed at anyone, or any set of people who chose to consider that I had manifested the whole truth; I do not think it is possible to do this in any one work of fiction.
>
> ~ Elizabeth Gaskell

Realism in English Literature is most frequently seen as the dominant form of nineteenth-century fiction and, as Levine proposes, “the lasting influence of the Victorian novel has meant that it has provided a kind of model for later realisms to resist, revise, or renew” (Levine 84). There have been different explanations of the rise of realism in the nineteenth-century fiction and Levine believes that the best explanation has been given by Georg Lukács, who regards “novelistic realism as a response to the upheavals of the industrial and political revolutions of the late eighteenth century and the rise of Napoleon, which prompted a new sense of

history on a mass scale" (86). In this respect, beginning in the midst of the eighteenth century in England and spreading over the world, the Industrial Revolution can be considered one of the most important turning points in history. It was the direct result of many innovations in the areas of technology, manufacturing and transportation and it affected people's lives in several ways. Using cotton mills and steam power in industry contributed to the economic growth of the country. Many roads and railways were built and the country became less rural as time progressed. People moved from the countryside to the rapidly growing cities to be employed in the newly established factories. Products could be produced in large numbers, taking less time (qtd in Mulder 10). All these changes "transformed the society, swooping away old privileges and monopolies and offering new opportunities and changes to the lower, and middle classes" (10). Mulder thinks that these changes especially affected the middle classes in that they became larger and more powerful. In that respect, she relates the development of realism in fiction to the spread of literacy among the middle classes in society. She asserts that reading became more common due to the widespread of the printing press and increasing numbers of people got educated during the Victorian Period. As she says, "A new mass reading public came to be consisting for the most part of middle class people" and this gave way to the destruction of "the old equilibrium, in which the higher classes used literacy as a way to overpower the poorer classes" (Mulder 11). She provides the numbers behind such a change in the society:

> The "reading public" in the 1840s can be thought of as a core of perhaps half a million sophisticated and relatively affluent readers, with a body of several million less-skilled readers; these figures growing steadily throughout the 1860s and 1870s, … although the real explosion in literacy was not to come until after the establishment of compulsory education in 1871 ['readership', def. 1] (11).

Considering this, it can be said that the spread of reading among the middle classes affected the novel in a considerable way. As Mulder states, these new readers wanted to read "other things from books than the select group of elitist men Coleridge addressed in his sermons" (12). They were not educated in such a way as

to wish to read classical literature; they wanted to read things they could relate themselves to, “things like the question how to deal with the newly acquired amount of freedom and leisure time and the need for new guidelines in a time where the former social institutions providing security, like the church, the guild and the family, were no longer granted” (12). Therefore, writers and publishers responded to this situation by producing and publishing books that would appeal to such kind of a readership; there was an inclination towards reflecting the realities of the society in these novels.

The Victorian Era is famous for the dramatic changes that brought prosperity to England and made it a world power in history, as mentioned above. However, all these changes and developments did not occur so quickly without any difficulties for the Victorians. In this regard, especially the early Victorian Period witnessed many social problems due to industrialization (“The Victorian Age- Review” n.p.). Writers responded to these problems by reflecting situations and events in their society in their novels, resulting in the appearance of a new body of fiction called the “condition of England novels” or “social problem novels”. The term specifically refers to the English novels written after the 1830s to draw attention to contemporary social and political issues “with a focus on the representation of class, gender, and labour relations, as well as on social unrest and the growing antagonism between the rich and the poor in England” (Diniejko 1). As Simmons puts forward,

> From the late 1830s on, with issues such as the “factory question,” the “hungry forties,” the repeal of the Corn Laws, and the Chartist uprisings as rich ground from which to mine subject matter, novels about problems of class conflict and capitalism became one of the most significant subgenres of Victorian literature (Simmons 336).

The term “condition of England” is generally attributed to Thomas Carlyle who expressed the problems of the working class in his book *Chartism*. As Diniejko states, these novels tried to raise social awareness about the injustices and inequalities in the society. They acted as tools to enable the reader to empathize

with the working class. He also maintains that such novels led to the reforms of the nineteenth and twentieth century by increasing the public awareness about the terrible living and working conditions of the poor (1). Colby touches upon this characteristic of these novels by saying,

> The industrial novels all share some common characteristics: the detailed documentation of the suffering of the poor, the reproduction of working-class speech through dialect, criticism of the effects of industrialism, the discussion of contemporary reform movements like Chartism and Utilitarianism, and some attempt — usually individual and internal — at a solution to social problems. Frequently the plot is developed around a sensitive protagonist, usually male, whose moral, intellectual, or emotional development spans the course of the novel and whose romantic attachments are troubled and conflicted. The protagonist is typically searching for a way to express or mitigate the dissatisfaction of the working class as he takes his role as their spokesman (Colby 18).

Simmons relates the reason for the appearance of such novels to "the laws that by the 1830s compelled the public to feel there were many victims in the society in which Benjamin Disraeli's concept of 'The Two Nations,' rich and poor, was a reality" (Simmons 336). He believes that the New Poor Law of 1834 showed the extent of poverty in the society to the public in an apparent way, leading to a desire to learn more about the conditions of the poor among the middle and upper classes. As the public wanted to learn more about the plight of the poor and the working class, the novel turned into a form reflecting this aspect of the real condition of the country to the middle and upper classes (336). In this regard, a large portion of the condition of England novels was made up of industrial novels due to the fact that nearly thirty eight percent of the working population was working in factories and most of them had terrible working conditions (Bairoch 191). These industrial novels not only portrayed the conditions of working men but also the conditions of working women and children in their plots. In fact, it can be claimed that most of the industrial novels produced in the Victorian Era employ working women and children as their central characters because of the empathy gained from the readers'

towards the working class (Schor 1). Some examples of such social realist novels of the period can be given as *Mary Barton* and *North and South* by Elizabeth Gaskell, *Coningsby* and *Sybi*l by Benjamin Disraeli, *Shirley* by Charlotte Brontë and *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens. Although Wheeler condemns the early condition of England novels for exaggerating the condition of the poor, he believes that they contributed greatly to the successes of writers of the 1840s and 1850s. He says,

> These early novels and stories tend to exaggerate the evils they expose by focusing exclusively on extreme cases, sometimes giving the impression that factories were piled high with human limbs wrenched off by machines or rapacious overseers. They tend to sentimentalize the poor, thus treating the working class monolithically, and are often documented with ponderous footnotes in the style of the blue book. Their significance lies in the fact that they began the process of educating middle- and upper-class novel-readers, many of whom had formerly been quite ignorant of what was going on in the manufacturing areas of Britain… They also prepared the ground for those novelists of the later 1840s and the 1850s — Disraeli, Elizabeth Gaskell, Charles Kingsley, and Dickens — who dramatically raised the standard of writing in the sub-genre (Wheeler 19).

Considering all of these, it can be maintained that novelists of the Victorian Period mostly drew their stories from the material or social reality of their era, which they believed to be "ontologically independent of anyone's beliefs, linguistic practices, conceptual schemes, and so on" ("Realism" n.p.). Their plots portrayed common people engaged in ordinary events instead of heroic characters in unbelievable events. They mainly depicted the middle class and the working class people struggling to continue their lives in an oppressive society by contrasting them sharply with the affluent life styles of the upper class. In this regard, they gave their characters proper names and placed them at a particular time and place to convey the feeling of reality to the readers. These novels are also organized with a concern with "causality: what sets off events, produces social change, instigates relationships?" (Levine 100). In addition to all these features of Victorian realism, as it is suggested, the Victorian novel has been known for being filled with things

and objects “from natural curiosities to expensive commodities, and everything in between: heirlooms, outfits, instruments, fetishes, furniture, gems, exotic species, foodstuffs, antiquities, and even limbs (like those stuffed into Mr. Venus’s shop in *Our Mutual Friend*)” (Levine 93). Levine believes that this shows the extent to which novelists of the period regarded things as valuable ways to describe the social world and “to understand material objects as an integral part of lived experience” (93). She further comments on the objects as tools to “capture social relations as well or better than subjects: they can be lost, hidden, and stolen; … their values can be emotional, economic, symbolic- or all of these” (93). Including these excessive descriptions of objects, all these characteristics of the Victorian realist novel are essential parts of formal realism in that they work together to create verisimilitude. These features of the Victorian realist novel can act as guidelines in our understanding of what realism in literature meant in the Victorian Period although writers differed in the ways they used these general characteristics in their novels. Therefore, this thesis will now concentrate on the individual choices that Elizabeth Gaskell and Charlotte Brontë made in constructing the realism of their novels in terms of their use of realism in the representations of working women.

Born in 1810 as the daughter of Elizabeth Holland and William Stevenson, Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell is an influential English novelist, story writer and biographer of Charlotte Brontë. Her father was a Unitarian minister and her mother died when she was a child. She was brought up by her aunt in the Cheshire village of Knutsford which is believed by many scholars to serve as an inspirational setting for Cranford and Hollingford in her novel *Wives and Daughters*. She married William Gaskell, a Unitarian minister in 1832 and they had six children, only four of whom could survive to adulthood. Until the end of their lives, they lived in the industrial city of Manchester, which was filled with many social problems resulting from overpopulation due to industrialization. (“Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell” n.p.)

Gaskell began her literary career after her only son died, with a strong yearning for portraying the sufferings of the poor and unfortunate of her society. Therefore, she can be considered one of the condition of England novelists of the Victorian Period with detailed accounts of the society of her era in her novels. In that respect, her first novel *Mary Barton* is her best-known fiction of social realism with its noticeable focus on the agonies of the industrial working class. Foster claims that Gaskell contributes to the realism of the novel with a regional specificity. She says,

> The directly experiential source of much of the narrative is clear from details such as the carefully observed conditions of working-class life in the city, in both relative affluence and terrible poverty; the use of Lancashire dialect; the knowledge of actual streets and districts; and the reference to well-known figures connected with the region… Her specificity was enough to shock many of her readers into hitherto unawakened awareness of the suffering caused by industrialization; and the displeasure of several local factory owners, who felt that she had unfairly represented them, indicates the novel's factual impact (Foster 34).

In this regard, Johnston particularly relates her novels' verisimilitude to her use of personal observances and investigations carried out between 1832 and 1865 and to the facts that she learned in Manchester at that time (Johnston 224-227). Gaskell herself draws attention to this aspect of her novel *Mary Barton* in its preface:

> My first thought was to find a frame-work for my story in some rural scene; and I had already made a little progress in a tale… when I bethought me how deep might be the romance in the lives of some of those who elbowed me daily in the busy streets of the town in which I resided. I had always felt a deep sympathy with the care-worn men, who looked as if doomed to struggle through their lives in strange alternations between work and want; tossed to and fro by circumstances, apparently in even a greater degree than other men (*MB* 3).

As Johnston claims, probably by benefitting from her observances, Gaskell is able to provide even the smallest details like the price of the things, placement of the furniture in the houses and superstitious beliefs of her characters to shed light on the social realities of her era in an apparent way.

There have been some literary critics and scholars that have claimed that Gaskell supported the ideas of social change and transformation for the betterment of the society and that these ideas can be detected in her novels. In this respect, Nancy Henry believes that Gaskell believed in the power of the fiction to

> stir a nation's sympathies, and play several roles in documenting and encouraging the transformation of society. It could preserve a past that had disappeared or was disappearing. It could interpret the causes and consequences of change. It could also be an instrument of change by highlighting social problems and extending the sympathies of readers to the lives of those outside their experience (Henry 149).

Therefore, as D'Albertis believes, especially her early fiction reflects this belief in fiction through its focus on quite vivid representations of the problems of the working class, relations between the workers and the employers, class conflicts, gender relations and the problem of prostitution (D'Albertis 10). In that respect, especially, her sympathy for strong women with knowledge and power to act and her portrayal of the issue of prostitution seems quite courageous to literary critics, given the ideas of her society regarding these issues. In 1853 she received many harsh criticisms for her *Ruth*, a novel in which she conveys with tolerance and sympathy a story of seduction and illegitimacy experienced by a working woman regarded as fallen by the society in spite of her angelic personality. Such a sensitive portrayal of a so-called fallen woman with a focus on her innocent and morally good characteristics may be considered another way of her showing approval of social change and transformation in the society although she never explicitly stated such ideas in her novels.

Regarded as one of the greatest novelists of English literature, Charlotte Brontë was born in Thornton, Yorkshire in 1816 as the third child to a family of six children. Her father Patrick Brontë was an Irish Anglican clergyman and he was later appointed as Reverend to the village of Haworth in 1820. The Yorkshire Moors around Haworth would soon serve as the setting of Brontë sisters' novels. Her mother Maria died there of cancer in 1821 after a long struggle, leaving her

five daughters and a son named Branwell behind. After her death, they were looked after by their aunt Elizabeth Branwell. In 1824, Elizabeth, Maria, Charlotte and Emily were enrolled at the Clergy Daughter's School in Lancashire, where they suffered from the poor conditions, resulting in the deaths of Maria and Elizabeth from tuberculosis. Critics believe that Lowood School in *Jane Eyre* was based upon Charlotte's unforgettable experiences in this school of Lancashire. After the tragic deaths of their sisters, Charlotte and Emily were immediately sent back home, where they together with Ann and Branwell engaged in writing stories about an imaginary country 'Angria'. In 1831, Charlotte was sent to Miss Wooler's School in Roe Head, where she met her lifelong friends and started teaching later in 1835 to finance Emily's education. After her experience as a teacher, she started working as a governess in 1839 for which she expressed her hatred several times. She later went to Brussels to study at the *Pensionnat* Heger with Emily, where they learnt French and German. They also studied literature motivated by their dreams of establishing their own school in the future. It is frequently claimed that Charlotte fell in love with her married teacher Heger in this period, which served as an inspiration for her novels *Villette* and *The Professor*. Although these novels were not welcomed by the publishers until after her death, *Jane Eyre* became an instant success and received favorable comments. In 1846, Brontë sisters published a collection of their poems under the pseudonyms of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell. In 1848, Charlotte experienced the deaths of Branwell and Emily, resulting in a pessimistic tone of voice in her *Shirley*. Nevertheless, the book enabled her a place in London literary circle. She published her last novel *Villette* which was quite similar in its depiction of a powerful independent woman in an oppressive society to her other novels. She married Arthur Nicholls in 1853, only one year after which she died of an illness during her pregnancy. ("Charlotte Brontë" n.p.)

As it is proposed, some of Brontë sisters' novels have been considered merely romantic in the literary world of their time although they frequently announced that their novels were realistic. They especially filled the prefaces of their novels with

such claims (Hussein 7). One such example can be found in Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley* when she states,

> If you think, from this prelude, that anything like a romance is preparing for you, reader, you never were more mistaken. Do you anticipate sentiment, and poetry, and reverie? Do you expect passion, and stimulus, and melodrama? Calm your expectations; reduce them to a lowly standard. Something real, cool and solid lies before you; something unromantic as Monday morning, when all who have work wake with the consciousness that they must rise and betake themselves thereto (Brontë 4).

Moreover, in the preface of *The Professor*, she says, "I had got over any such taste as I might once have had for ornamented and redundant composition, and come to prefer what was plain and homely" (Brontë 3). Hussein believes that the "had-got-over such taste" phrase in her claim might refer to her break away from the romantic and imaginary country Angria and its stories (7). Therefore, it is quite comprehensible that there is the possibility of finding these two modes, realistic and romantic, in her works. She herself expresses her conflict between realistic and romantic modes of writing in her novels in her letter to George Henry Lewes. She writes,

> You advise me too, not to stray far from the ground of experience as I become weak when I enter the region of fiction; and you say 'real experience is perennially interesting and to all men…' I feel that this is also true, but, dear Sir, is not the real experience of each individual very limited? And if a writer dwells upon that solely or principally is he not in danger of repeating himself, and also of becoming an egoist? Then too, Imagination is a strong, restless faculty which claims to be heard and exercised, are we to be quite deaf to her cry and insensate to her struggles? (Brontë 90)

Considering this, Gurman thinks Charlotte Brontë believed that the greatness of a novelist lay in his or her ability to balance realism with romanticism (Gurman 19). According to Wilson, Brontë achieves this greatness in her *Villette* by blending these modes quite successfully. She interrupts the realistic conventions of the book with the strange narrator Lucy, with the frequent uses of gothic elements and

events, without caring for the homogenization of time and space or any certain and meaningful ending at the end of the book (Wilson 24). Ewbank claims that she mainly uses such romantic elements in the novel to achieve psychological realism in the most effective way and she achieves, in this way, "psychological realism of a kind previously unknown to the English novel" (Ewbank 44).

Azim holds the view that female novelists of the previous century had differed from those of the nineteenth century in their use of realism in a noticeable way. He puts forward that they utilized realism in their novels with a claim of recording "real events in the lives of real characters" (Azim 94). According to him, such a tradition "was transferred to a concept of realism which based its claims to reality on an appeal to the events of the author's life" in the nineteenth century (94). However, this did not mean that the novel turned into a form of autobiography. It meant that the text served as a mirror to reflect some aspects of the author's life or her understanding of life as Charlotte Brontë did in *Jane Eyre* (94). In this respect, Charlotte brings a new perspective to the fiction writing in that she makes the focus of her three novels a strong and unconventional woman who fights with the patriarchal society in her struggle to gain her independence. As Hussein suggests, in Charlotte Brontë's novels

> the turmoil of working classes, the anxiety and threat of loss felt by merchants and factory owners as to production, marketing and distribution, and even the instability of the advantageous status entertained by higher classes could not distract the readers' attention from the misery of women which is the most visible of all (Hussein 13).

In this regard, Charlotte Brontë presents her heroine to the reader through a representation of both her social and her psychological reality since, for her, "realism means uncovering the hidden reality of women's lives" from different angles in her novels (Byerly 52).

2.3. Social Realism and Psychological Realism in Victorian Novels

Social realism in the arts can be defined as a style that painters, photographers, film makers and writers tend to use to reflect the conditions of the poor in the society and to criticize the society that leads to such terrible conditions for its members. Khuman believes that the term came into use in literature through a belief in the power of writers to present the realities of the society in a satisfying fashion, while implicitly calling for changes in social structures (Khuman 80). He states that, it is the result of "the need to respond critically and in a denunciatory fashion to the various mechanisms of repression and the frustration of personal and collective aspirations" (82). In this regard, he finds it necessary to draw a distinction between social realism and socialist realism, claiming that social realism is characterized by the representation of the society as it is, while socialist realism renders an idealized society to the reader.

As it has been mentioned before, political and social changes led to social realism in Europe in the nineteenth century. Before Gaskell and Brontë, Schor claims that the novel of the 1830s in English literature "moved back into London, and into particular neighborhoods," characterized by social indicators: "the novel of high society, or 'silver fork' novel; the novels of lower-class and criminal life, or 'Newgate' novel; the budding social-realist novel, focusing on factory and industrial-urban life; the novels of middle-class or 'domestic' realism", which followed one another in a progression. (Schor 1). She emphasizes that there was a strong concern over the social representation in the novels of the period, an example of which can be seen in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* where "a Manchester tea party" is explained in a detailed account, including the details of "how many tea-cups a family would have, and where they would be kept, and from whom others would be borrowed, and with what toast (and what ill-promising social results!) the tea would be consumed" (Schor 1). Considering this, it can be claimed that there was also a particular interest in rendering the plight of the poor, working class and unfortunate in the society through such social realist novels after

1840s as it has been stated before in this thesis. They are known as condition of England novels in which the previously ignored classes and matters came to surface "with lucid but restrained social criticism" (Khuman 80). Since these novels were discussed under the title of "Realism in English Literature in the 1840s and 1850s" in this thesis in advance, it would be better to continue with psychological realism and its use in different writers of the period in the following part of this section.

Psychological realism is a genre of prose fiction that is said to have appeared in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is defined as "the sense that characters in fictional narratives have realistic interiority or complex emotional and intellectual depth, including perhaps subconscious urges and fears they are not aware of" ("Psychological Realism" n.p.). It is therefore distinguished from the other genres of fiction with its intensive focus on interior characterization, representations of thoughts, feelings and motives resulting from external events and situations. As it is the case with all the other genres of fiction, psychological realism also often features different kinds of techniques like the stream of consciousness technique, interior monologues and flashbacks to portray what is happening in the minds of the characters in an effective way. In this respect, this approach is frequently associated with the novelist Henry James who noticeably put an emphasis on the psychology of his characters rather than their actions in his novels. Highly interested in theories of mental development and psychology, James investigated "the complexity and nuances of social interactions, as well as the tangled desires and fears, habits and impulses that construct human character and motivate human behavior" in his novels (Vrettos 85). He openly reflects the importance that he gives to the characters in his novels in his essay "The Art of Fiction". He says,

> There are bad novels and good novels, as there are bad pictures and good pictures; but that is the only distinction in which I see any meaning, and I can as little imagine speaking of a novel of character as I can imagine speaking of a picture of character. When one says picture, one says

> of character, when one says novel, one says of incident, and the terms may be transposed. What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character? What is a picture or a novel that is not of character? What else do we seek in it and find in it? (James 8).

Dames believes that it is to be expected that the terms "psychology and novel are first explicitly allied in the nineteenth century" which witnessed a growing "codification and institutionalization of both psychology and the novel alike" (Dames 91). Influenced by developments in the area of psychology, many Victorian writers became interested in the workings of the mind and reflected on the issues related to it by portraying the mental processes of characters in their novels. In this respect, Vrettos regards especially Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy and Henry James as novelists of the Victorian Period who were particularly "interested in creating psychologically complex characters and intricate social relationships as components of their realism", although writers of different genres also showed an interest in the contemporary theories of mind (Vrettos 68). He exemplifies his claim by mentioning Wilkie Collins, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, and Charles Reade as sensation novelists who were particularly interested in theories of insanity (68). He goes on saying,

> Indeed, almost anywhere we look in Victorian fiction, we can see the influence of and interest in psychology , ranging from explicit engagements with contemporary philosophies of mind, to theories of character development that echoed popular self-help and advice manuals of the day, to fictional experiments with the more speculative branches of Victorian science and pseudo science-physiognomy, phrenology, and, later in the century, psychical research into telepathy, trances, ancestral memory, and other mysteries of the mind (68-69).

Dames shares Vrettos' idea that Victorian novels were filled with portrayals of inner life of man and therefore suggests investigating what psychology meant for the Victorians to gain a better understanding of their novels (Dames 92). He points out the difficulty of such an attempt, in that psychology in the Victorian Period was not a single discipline; it was rather a study of "individuals working from a range

of different premises – from natural history, Lockean philosophy, chemistry, evolutionary science, medicine, and, of course, fiction and literary criticism" (93). Vrettos also believes that it was a study of the works of writers who "drew upon creative literature for insight into human behavior, motivation and psychological development and for examples or case studies of insanity and other abnormal mental conditions" (Vrettos 69). He asserts that psychologists of the period benefitted from these novelists' contributions by borrowing examples and cases from them, blurring the boundary between these two separate disciplines (69). He gives the examples of William James who utilized such examples from the novels of Dickens, George Eliot and Jane Austen for "the associations of ideas and the psychology of habit", and of Darwin who took examples from the novels of Elizabeth Gaskell and Margaret Oliphant to show the place of heredity in expressing feelings and emotions (69).

As it is put forward, Victorian psychology was mainly based upon "the physiological basis of mind although there were many strains of psychological discourse and debate throughout the nineteenth century" (Vrettos 70). Psychologists like George Henry Lewes, Alexander Bain and Herbert Spencer tried to show the analogies between the mind and the body, influenced by John Locke and the associationist psychology of David Hartley (70). In that respect, it can be said that associationism was the domineering theory on the functioning of mind in the nineteenth century. Associationism can be loosely defined as the belief that our ideas are formed by a variety of associations which our mind forms. The mind was seen firstly as a tabula rasa which "receives sensations, conceives ideas of sensations and eventually associates those ideas on the basis of resemblance, contiguity, and causation" (70). These associationists later gave up their understandings of the mind as a tabula rasa and started to believe in the "interaction of inherited characteristics of mind and social and environmental context" in the development of the mind of an individual (71). This idea was readily accepted by the Victorian realist writers in that it enabled them to reflect both the psychological and social realities of their characters. This led to a sub-genre called psychological

realism, mainly used by George Eliot and Henry James late in the Victorian period (71).

Psychological realism was utilized by other writers of the period as well, however. Vrettos considers Charles Dickens as an example of such writers in his use of "habit as a means of registering individuality" (73). He claims, for Dickens,

> verbal, gestural, and sartorial tics form the very basis of characterization. In Matthew Pocket's unnerving habit of lifting himself up by the hair, Mr. Jaggers' obsessive washing of his hands, Mrs. Snags by's chronic curiosity, and Uriah Heep's unctuous hand wringing, Dickens delineates character through identifying habits of body and mind (73).

Vrettos also touches upon different writers' conveyance of the complex inner lives and psychological development of children by portraying their growth from childhood to adulthood in an apparent way, which he asserts to be influenced by the Victorians' growing belief in the influence of environment, education, and experience in children's development. Examples are given with protagonists from *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Great Expectations*, *The Mill on the Floss* and *David Copperfield* in which "the relationship between past and present, the emotional intensity of childhood affections, resentments, desires, and fears" are rendered to the reader in an effective way (87):

> In Jane Eyre's angry rebellion against her uncaring relatives, and the psychological terror of her punishment; in David Copperfield's romantic love for his mother and jealous hatred of his sadistic stepfather; in Pip's excruciating self-consciousness about class inferiority; in Maggie Tulliver's rebellions against Victorian gender codes and ineradicable affection for her judgmental brother Tom, Brontë, Dickens and Eliot render accounts of childhood that are notable for their emphasis on emotional intensity and psychological pain (87).

In addition to such psychological issues used and investigated in novels by writers of the period, he also mentions physiognomy and phrenology as having considerable effects on the fiction of the era. He particularly focuses on the novels

of Charlotte Brontë, who makes use of such theories in the analyses of her characters in her novels (93-94). She quite often makes analyses of the characters by reading their faces in her novels.

Considering these examples of writers, as Dames suggests, it can be maintained that Victorian novelists gave importance to the developments in the psychology and used them in a variety of ways in their novels. In this regard, the Victorian novel can be regarded as "part of the story of psychology, just as surely as psychology is part of the history of the novel form" (Dames 93-94).

CHAPTER 3

USES OF SOCIAL REALISM IN *MARY BARTON* AND *RUTH*

3.1. Background: Working Women in England in the Victorian Period

> No single question mattered more to the Victorian novel than what the nineteenth century considered "The Woman Question."
>
> ~Hilary Margo Schor

> Society is to the daughters of a family, what business is to the son.
>
> ~Sarah Stickney Ellis

The Victorian Period was characterized by strictly established gender roles that differentiated between men and women in a striking way. In his book *Relative Creatures*, Basch asserts that the medieval belief that women were inferior to men and they were inherently flawed still existed in the society during the Victorian Period (Basch 3). During this period, women were regarded, especially by the middle and upper classes, as belonging to the domestic sphere while men were expected to work outside to earn a living for their families. As Basch claims, "the woman can only justify her presence on earth by dedicating herself to others; through deliberate self-effacement, duty and sacrifice" (Basch 5). In this regard, Basch touches upon the Victorians' obsession with marriage for women due to the prevalent idea of women's dependence on men. He believes that the woman was regarded as nothing if she was not a mother for the Victorians and her most important mission in this world was to take care of her children and household (Basch 6). In this respect, women "who contracted a marriage – which the entire weight of nineteenth- century ideology put forward as being the culminating point

of a woman's life" became more constrained in terms of their rights as a so-called independent individual (6). Once she got married, she physically and sexually became the property of the man she married. While the husband became the head of family, the wife's duty was to honor, love and obey her husband. In addition to such characteristics, the ideal woman was expected to be pure, chaste and modest in her behavior. During the Victorian Period, representations of such expected behavior of the ideal woman became popular in different works of art, an example of which can be seen in the well-known poem "The Angel in the House" by Coventry Patmore:

> Man must be pleased; but him to please
> Is woman's pleasure; down the gulf
> Of his condoled necessities
> She casts her best, she flings her breast

This situation, in which it can be claimed that women had a non-existence, resulting mainly from 'the unity of husband and wife', started to be challenged in the 1850s with several laws passed, according to Basch (8). However, although the Victorian period witnessed some change from the traditional idea of men's superiority and was moving towards a modern approach celebrating gender equality, the process was very gradual and gender equality remained in most areas unattained and not even sought.

As it is mentioned before, separate spheres were assigned for men and women in the Victorian Period because of the common ideology of inequality between them. Langland states that even different kinds of spaces were categorized into two groups as masculine and feminine during this period:

> Drawing rooms, for example, were regarded as feminine and usually decorated with "spindly gilt or rosewood, and silk or chintz," while the dining rooms, considered masculine, required "massive oak or mahogany and Turkey carpets." The male domain expanded into smoking rooms, billiard rooms, and bachelor suites… Feminine spaces extended from the drawing room to sitting rooms and boudoirs (qtd in Langland 295).

King believes that the idea of separate spheres was particularly common among the middle classes whose "impact was not only felt in Parliament and in the British economy" but also in the lifestyles of Victorian families (King 18). While men were expected to contribute to their families by earning money outside, women were responsible for the domestic issues. It was "socially unacceptable for a middle-class woman to earn money through her work" and this idea is claimed to result from different sources like "popular literature, evangelical religious fervor, fear of competition, and property laws" (King 18). However, women from the working classes could not live up to such expectations since they had to work to support their families financially. As Mitchell puts forward, sixty percent of working-class men earned "under twenty-five shillings a week" and with only "1 pound a week, a reasonable comfort could be achieved only if the family was very small or if more than one person was earning" (Mitchell 38). Therefore, women were left with no choice but to work to contribute to family income. In this regard, there were three main occupations for those working-class women in the Victorian Period: needle work, domestic service and factory work and it was a common situation that although some women were engaged in the same work as men, they earned much less than them, which is most probably because of the middle class ideology of female domesticity that rejected working outside for women according to King (18). Mitchell gives the salaries of some professions in the Victorian Period as follows:

TABLE 1: (Mitchell 33-34)

Annual Incomes
Highly skilled mechanics and artisans…….150-300
Skilled workers, including cabinetmakers, typesetters, carpenters, locomotive drivers, senior dressmakers…….. 75-100
Semiskilled working men, skilled women in factories and shops……..50-75

Table 1 (continued)
Seamen, navies, longshoremen, some domestic servants…… 45
Lowest ranked shop assistants, domestic servants, needleworkers…….12- 20

This table makes it apparent that women were employed in the least paying sectors in the Victorian Period and the "skilled" women were regarded only as equal to their "semiskilled" men counterparts in factories and shops, revealing the Victorians' gender ideology in an apparent way. This table also proves accurate in terms of the salaries offered to employees with the examples that while Ruth in *Ruth* earns 40 pounds a year in her employment as a governess at Bradshaw household, Jane in *Jane Eyre* gets 30 pounds a year in her employment as a governess at Thornfield.

Apart from the employments given before, women were also employed in different fields like coal mining, the steel industry and agriculture as well and in addition to the working-class women, a growing number of single women from the middle class started to work from the midst of the Victorian Period onward. These women "at marriageable age were perceived as a growing social problem in mid- and late-Victorian England" and they were known as "redundant women" in the society (Diniejko 1). Their options were limited by their class to more respectable employments such as being a school teacher or a governess. As time progressed, these women could also find jobs as salesgirls, cashiers, secretaries, typists, nurses and doctors as well (Wise 61). This thesis will mainly focus on the facts about domestic servants (including all the employments carried out in houses such as serving as ladies' maids, cleaners, and governesses), teachers, needleworkers, factory workers and nurses because these are professions represented in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth* by Elizabeth Gaskell and *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* by Charlotte Brontë.

Krauskopf claims that the number of working women greatly increased in the Victorian Period as the society became more capitalistic (Krauskopf 1). She gives

the figures behind her claim by stating that nearly half of 6 million women in the Victorian Period were working to support themselves or their families and 2 million of them were not married (1). In this regard, as Basch claims, the most suitable jobs for women were considered to be ones such as being a housemaid, lady's maid, cook, kitchen maid and scullery maid. These domestic servants mostly lived with the families they worked for and their wages changed from £12 to £20 a year depending on their duties, experiences and families they served (Mitchell 33). Mitchell claims that domestic servants constituted "13.35% of employed women in 1851" and domestic service grew to be "the largest sector of employment for women by 1855" despite its low salary, unpleasant conditions encountered in employers' families and limited freedom for workers (33).

Serving as a governess or tutoress was another kind of domestic service that was seen as suitable for women due to its domestic association (Basch 109). As Peterson claims, the word governess was used to describe a woman who "taught in a school, who lived at home and travelled to her employer's house to teach or… who lived in her employer's home and who taught the children and served as a companion to them" (Peterson 4). She goes on to claim that employing a governess reflected the power of middle-class families during the Victorian Period. Mitchell holds the same opinion and claims that, while a middle-class family of £150- 200 a year could only have "one maid-of-all work", a family of £300 a year could afford a governess as well (Mitchell 32). Basch says that there were approximately 21,000 women working as a governess or tutoress in 1850 and demands for these employments were increasing day by day irrespective of the working conditions which were getting worse (109). As he claims, most of these women started their jobs without any training and this made their job horrible, coupled with the exploitations they encountered in the families they worked (111). Basch also asserts that salaries were usually quite low when the duties that these women would perform were considered (111). He exemplifies his claim by citing a case from *The Times 1843* which was criticized by Barbara Bodichon under the heading 'White Slaves':

> a letter to the *Times* by an applicant for a post of governess: I at last obtained an interview with the lady, and learnt that the duties of the governess would consist in educating and taking the entire charge of the children, seven in number, two being quite babies, to perform for them all the menial offices of a nurse, make and mend their clothes; to teach at least three accomplishments, and "fill up the leisure hours of an evening by playing to company… For these combined duties the munificent sum of 10 (pounds) per annum was offered!" (qtd in Basch 111).

Besides such difficulties, Basch also points out the frequency of mental disorders among governesses by citing *Eliza Cook's Journal* which asserted that "governesses constitute the largest clan of tenants in lunatic asylums" (qtd in Basch 112). Basch, whose focus is Charlotte Brontë's experiences, relates this to a variety of reasons such as

> nervous tension and anxiety created by their inexperience and the deficiencies in their education, being a stranger in a family, the indifference if not the contempt of the employers, the impossibility of being alone, all of which Charlotte Brontë felt strongly. The twofold hostility of employers and servants was notorious. The unqualified, badly paid governess occupied an ambiguous and ill-defined no-woman's- land between the two (qtd in Basch 112).

Despite the hardships and problems attributed to domestic servants in the Victorian Period, Mitchell believes that domestic service had certain advantages for women over other jobs like needlework and factory work in terms of better living conditions as to food and cleaning, gaining new domestic skills and saving more money if it was performed in a respectable middle-class family (Mitchell 50).

As King puts forward, needlework was a work area for women who did not have sufficient education to be a governess in the Victorian Period. They could easily be employed as needleworkers because "sewing was considered a natural, domestic skill for a woman" (King 45). This job was also not considered to be morally degrading since it could be done at home (45). Mitchell says that common "needle working trades" employing women were "dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses and

tailors" (Mitchell 62). Wages varied from £ 80 a year to 7 shillings a week, considering the type of job done and workers' experience (Mitchell 62-63). In this regard, Basch points out that seamstresses earned the least money of all, sometimes earning as little as six pence a day (Basch 124). Moreover, the working hours usually changed according to the time of the year even though they were generally rather long (Basch 124). Basch reflects the conditions of such employments in a striking way when he says,

> The workers toiled in tiny shops that were dark, overheated or freezing, and airless… they crammed themselves into appalling cells… like the eighteen girls in one room with one window… Meal-breaks were irregular and reduced to a minimum: ten minutes for breakfast… The food was insufficient and unwholesome… this mode of life exposed a seamstress to all kinds of diseases, from swollen ankles and asthma to tuberculosis, blindness or spinal curvatures (124).

Apart from these facts, it is important to point out that many dressmakers started their jobs as apprentices and as such they did not earn money for two or three years. Moreover, they even had to pay money to their bosses before they could be hired.

Factory work was another possibility for the working-class women in the Victorian Period and especially the textile and clothing sectors became widespread areas of employment among women. Although Basch believes that conditions in factories were usually dreadful in terms of health, cleanliness, food, working hours, treatments of factory owners and wages, he suggests that conditions changed among factories as well (Basch 130). He says,

> Even within one factory, for example, the weaving rooms, of a moderate temperature and suitably ventilated, were more bearable than the carding rooms, which were saturated with fluff, or the hot and humid spinning rooms. And the policy of employers towards workers was not everywhere identical (130).

In this respect, he also points out different acts passed in the 1840s and 1850s to improve the working conditions of women in factories and reveals debates about

women working in factories and “their proper space” (134). As he mentions, factory work for women was a controversial issue for Victorians in that it kept women away from their domestic sphere and was thought to lead to a lack of domestic skills, neglect of children and men. Apart from such a popular belief, it was believed that factory work damaged women’s morality (Basch 135). Basch exemplifies this view of the society with “The Sadler Report and other inquiries, as well as Peter Gaskell’s work” which shed light on women’s immorality due to factory work, as measured “by the higher number of illegitimate children, widespread promiscuity, prostitution, alcoholism, delinquency etc” (135-136). In this regard, Mays suggests that although working class women constituted an important part of the industry in the Victorian Period, they were not portrayed as much as other working women “in the industrial novels as well as in later Victorian social problem fiction” (Mays 1). She relates this to the fact that describing the life of a woman factory worker would reveal how little she earned, and how she usually worked in terrible conditions, “her strength, independence and all elements which conflicted with the Victorian view of ‘the feminine’” (Mays 7). That is why, she believes, Victorian novelists mostly preferred to represent women with domestic service in their novels. As she suggests, even if they presented a factory girl or woman, they mostly did it by showing “the errors of her way” (8).

According to Basch, nursing was considered to be an appropriate although not respected job for women in the Victorian Period due to the common belief that “sacrifice” and affection were essential parts of women’s nature and women should, therefore, “train in the sphere where there was a crying need: hospitals, workhouses, psychiatric asylums” (Basch 115). However, nursing was quite disorganized and no training was given to those who wanted to work as a nurse during the 1840s (115). As a result, there were reported cases of nurses who were bereft of any sense of sacrifice, who were cruel, alcoholic and incompetent in the field (118). Such cases continued to happen until renovations were carried out in the profession, mainly by Florence Nightingale. The first school for nurses was established in 1860 under the name of “The Nightingale School of Nursing” (120).

In addition to technical training, discipline and morality were regarded as necessary requirements for these new nurses. Nightingale also tried to improve the conditions of hospitals with her "Method of Improving the Nursing Service of Hospitals," which demanded "rest during the day for night-nurses, modern equipment like hot and cold water in the whole hospital, lifts and other improvements intended to benefit the staff and improve their output" (120). As a result, a new professional area of work opened for women thanks to Nightingale's contributions from 1860 onward.

3.2.Representations of Domestic Servants, Needleworkers and Nurses in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth*

Victorian novels frequently employed working women characters in their plots perhaps as a reflection of their awareness of the growing numbers of women working in the society as it has been indicated before. In that sense, *Mary Barton* and *Ruth* by Elizabeth Gaskell portray the working women of their era with their working women characters in their social contexts and by reflecting the society's opinions on these women in their plots. They present both the positive and negative aspects of women's work in domestic service, needle work and nursing by making use of different experiences of women and differing ideas of characters although negative aspects of such employments outnumber the positive ones in these novels, implying the need for changes in the working conditions of women. They also seem to encourage women's work and progress in different fields with their occasional criticisms of "do-nothing ladies" (*MB* 10). For instance, *Mary Barton* puts the harshest criticism of these ladies into John Barton's statements when he says,

> I'd rather see her earning her bread by the sweat of brow, as the Bible tells her she should do, ay, though she never got butter to her bread, than be like a do−nothing lady, worrying shopmen all morning, and screeching at her pianny all afternoon, and going to bed without having done a good turn to any one of God's creatures but herself (*MB* 10).

The narrator also criticizes such women by offering Mrs. Carson, who "indulges in the luxury of a head-ache", "the work of one of her own housemaids for a week" as a remedy (*MB* 196). *Ruth* implies another such criticism when the narrator challenges these idle ladies with the question of what they knew about "the meaning of the world, so terrific to poor" (*R* 14). Considering all of these implications of *Mary Barton* and *Ruth*, this part of the thesis will analyze the ways in which women working in domestic service, needle work and nursing are represented and which facts about such professions for women are emphasized in these novels. It argues that these texts use social realism by presenting working women characters in their social interactions and contexts, reflecting the society's beliefs about the professions women were engaged in in the Victorian Period and making use of a variety of social details related to life in their time. It also argues that these texts utilize social realism mainly to reflect the problematic aspects of such employments for women, pointing out the changes that could improve the working conditions for women in the society.

Domestic service was a common choice among working women in the Victorian Period due to the fact that it did not necessitate any special training and it was believed to be appropriate to women's nature. Many middle-class and upper-class families employed working-class women in their houses to work as housemaids, cooks and nursemaids. Therefore, domestic service became one of the largest areas of employment for working-class women during the era. It was also one of the lowest paying employments and there were a large number of women who wanted to work in this area. Owing to the popular Victorian belief that domestic service suited women's nature more than other kinds of services, representations of women working in this field can be seen in many Victorian realist novels. *Mary Barton* and *Ruth* also feature women characters working in domestic service in their plots. Both positive and negative aspects of this kind of employment for women are touched upon in these novels.

A positive picture of working as a servant is rendered in *Ruth* through the character of Sally, who is regarded not only as a servant but also as a family member in the Benson family. Throughout the novel, Sally and her employers Faith and Thurstan Benson are shown as having an intimate relationship based on mutual understanding, respect and honesty. In this respect, the narrator provides the reasons behind such a relationship in the novel. It is explained that Sally bears deeper love and respect for Thurstan Benson "owing to a fall he had had when he was scarcely more than a baby, and entrusted to her care—a little nurse-girl, as she then was, not many years older than himself" (*R* 100). After the accident which caused a deformity in her master, Sally is claimed to have promised herself that she would serve him until the end of his life. She continues her service with the Bensons in a faithful way and gains privileges in her job, resulting from both her diligence and the rewarding personalities of her employers. She is described as a woman who "loved Miss Benson, but … almost worshipped the brother… But if she scolded him herself, she allowed no one else that privilege. If Miss Benson… ventured to think his sayings or doings might have been improved, Sally came down upon her like a thunder-clap" (*R* 101). It is apparent that Sally enjoys great freedom in her manners and behavior as a servant in the Benson family. She has a share in household matters and she is treated with respect in the household. Readers may be surprised to learn, for instance, that even the regularity of breakfast hour is organized considering Sally so that she can organize her work in the most effective way. Mr. Benson gently says to Ruth when she comes late for the breakfast, "It was our fault for not telling you our breakfast hour. We always have prayers at half-past seven; and, for Sally's sake, we never vary from that time; for she can so arrange her work, if she knows the hour of prayers, as to have her mind calm and untroubled" (*R* 105).

Sally acknowledges these privileges and seems absolutely content with her life as a servant with the Bensons, when she says to Ruth,

> Well, your station is a servant, and it is as honourable as a king's, if you look at it right; you are to help and serve

> others in one way, just as a king is to help others in another. Now what way are you to help and serve, or to do your duty, in that station of life unto which it has pleased God to call you? (*R* 129).

She elevates her position as a servant to that of a king in this speech since she gets satisfaction from working for people and helping them. Her positive feelings for her employment might stem from the appreciation she gets from Bensons, even though she does not acknowledge it herself. She also makes it clear that there is no concern about money in her service when she declines a salary rise offered to her by Mr. Benson. She states,

> Master Thurstan and Miss Faith took a fit of spending, and says they to me, one day as I carried tea in, 'Sally, we think your wages ought to be raised.' 'What matter what you think!' said I, pretty sharp … 'As long as I'm content, I think it's no business of yours to be meddling wi' me and my money matters.' 'But,' says Miss Faith, 'Sally, all the servants in the town have six pound and better, and you have as hard a place as any of 'em.' 'Did you ever hear me grumble about my work that you talk about it in that way? wait till I grumble,' says I (*R* 141).

After a hot discussion of the issue, Sally cannot resist Mr. Benson's insistence on the pay rise but comes up with a plan in her mind. She accepts his offer but decides to save the money and prepares a will in which she declares that she leaves all her money to the Bensons.

Apart from Sally, Ruth is also portrayed in favorable conditions in *Ruth* as a nursemaid in the Bradshaw household until Mr. Bradshaw fires her because of her past extramarital affair, which had resulted in Leonard's birth. Her typical day at Bradshaws is given in quite a positive way:

> At nine she was to be at Mr Bradshaw's house. She sat in the room with Mary and Elizabeth during the Latin, the writing, and arithmetic lessons, which they received from masters; then she read, and walked with them, they clinging to her as to an elder sister; she dined with her pupils at the family lunch, and reached home by four. That happy home—those quiet days! (*R* 156)

Ruth earns forty pounds a year for this job and she is treated with respect in Bradshaw family. On one occasion, Mr. Bradshaw invites her to a dinner in which Mr. Farquhar will be invited too. He invites her with the request that she should observe Jemima's disgraceful attitudes towards Mr. Farquhar and speak to her about it, since Jemima will certainly listen to her. This shows the extent to which Ruth is respected in the family as a wise person. Besides these positive sides of her job, she is shown to have time for the Benson family and her son while she works for Bradshaws. She can help Sally in her household chores and look after her child due to her reasonable working hours.

Considering the examples of Sally and Ruth, it can be claimed that *Ruth* offers domestic service as a good choice for working-class women provided that they serve well-mannered middle-class or upper-class families who treat their servants with gentleness. The text shows that domestic service, in this way, will no longer be seen as a kind of slavery in which women feel trapped with pressures of work and limited freedom.

In contrast, mainly a negative picture of domestic service is presented in *Mary Barton* through Mary and John Barton's negative ideas on this work area and through Alice Wilson's past experience as a domestic servant. John Barton strongly believes that Mary should not be employed in any kind of domestic service because he regards "domestic servitude as a species of slavery; a pampering of artificial wants on the one side, a giving up of every right of leisure by day and quiet rest by night on the other" (*MB* 25). As it is stated by the narrator, his opposition to such a job for Mary also stems from his strong and growing hatred for the upper classes in his society. He does not want his daughter to serve the upper classes in their houses because of his hatred. However, although Mary also does not consider domestic service appropriate for herself, her reasons differ from her father's in some ways. In this regard, the narrator explains that her mother's death has given Mary a kind of independence, which will make it difficult for her to "submit to rules as to hours and associates, to regulate her dress by a mistress's ideas of propriety, to lose the

dear feminine privileges of gossiping with a merry neighbour, and working night and day to help one who was sorrowful" if she is to work as a domestic servant (*MB* 25). Another reason why she eliminates the option of working as a servant is given as her consciousness of her beauty, which she believes to be likely to gain her a superior position as a lady in society. Her aspirations grow stronger with her belief that her lost aunt Esther achieved such a high status in the society through her beauty. She thinks that a dressmaker's apprentice has more chances of being discovered for her beauty than a servant because "while a servant must often drudge and be dirty, must be known as his servant by all who visited at her master's house, a dressmaker's apprentice must… be always dressed with a certain regard to appearances; must never soil her hands, and need never redden or dirty her face with hard labour" (*MB* 26).

Even though Mary holds these opinions about being a servant, Alice Wilson, who once served as a servant, does not talk about such aspects of her old job. In the part of the novel in which she serves her guests Mary and Margaret in her house, she explains her reason for getting employed by saying that "there was more mouths at home than could be fed" and she had to leave her family to go to Manchester since she heard it from her brother George that "wages were far higher in Manchester than Milnthorpe or Lancaster" (*MB* 31). She claims that even though she loved her job because of the satisfaction it gave her to help others, she feels guilty because she could not spare any time for herself or her family because of it. She especially feels guilty about not being able to see her mother again after her departure from her family to find a job. She gives the reasons behind it by saying,

> Many a time and oft have I planned to go. I plan it yet, and hope to go home again before it please God to take me. I used to try and save money enough to go for a week when I was in service; but first one thing came, and then another. First, missis's children fell ill of the measles, just when the week I'd asked for came, and I couldn't leave them, for one and all cried for me to nurse them. Then missis herself fell sick, and I could go less than ever. For, you see, they kept a little shop, and he drank, and missis and me was all there

> was to mind children and shop and all, and cook and wash besides (*MB* 31).

These sentences present the kinds of duties she had to perform in her employment as a servant and reflect the exploitations experienced by women servants in the Victorian Period in a clear way. They also make it apparent that domestic service could be damaging for women in that they have to sacrifice their freedom and family for it. Moreover, as King suggests, with Alice's story, Gaskell's text also reveals the fact that domestic service could be rather unsecure for women when the risk of losing the job, as experienced by Alice, because of the financial ruin and "the whims and caprices of employers" is considered (King 36).

Needlework was another option for women who wanted to work and it was believed to be a womanly profession due to its domestic association in the Victorian Period, as was explained before. King puts forward that both the working class and middle class women could be employed in this profession because of the idea of domesticity attached to it (King 39). As she claims, Elizabeth Gaskell explores the lives of needleworkers in her novels "more thoroughly than any other working class occupation" (39). She makes Mary and Ruth, both of whom work in the area of dressmaking, heroines in her books *Mary Barton* and *Ruth,* and provides us with detailed accounts of their lives as needleworkers. Portrayal of this occupation is rather negative and pessimistic in these novels, especially in terms of the low salaries offered, long and monotonous working hours, and the health problems caused by the work. *Mary Barton* reflects the conditions of needleworkers through its characters Mary and Margaret and mostly focuses on their earnings, working hours, and health problems. *Ruth,* however, draws a more detailed picture of needleworkers in its scenes, showing dressmakers engaged in their work in unpleasant conditions. Details of even what are offered to these women as food and in what manner they eat it are given in the novel, contributing to its verisimilitude. Considering this, it can be asserted that such small details are used in *Ruth* to arouse sympathy for its so-called fallen character Ruth. Details of

awful working conditions may have been intended to change the way the reader will judge Ruth regarding her illicit relationship.

As has been mentioned before, in *Mary Barton*, Mary chooses to be a dressmaker mainly because it gives her the opportunity to meet gentlemen from the upper classes while maintaining a pleasant appearance. The text implies that Mary could get a place as an apprentice in Miss Simmonds' business because of her beauty, by talking about her father's unsuccessful efforts to find her a place to work as a dressmaker. John Barton has difficulty finding her a position in dressmaking business for a day because employers ask for large amounts of money to train the young workers, to take them as apprentices. The narrator says that John Barton "would have been indignant, indeed, had he known that if Mary had accompanied him, the case might have been rather different, as her beauty would have made her desirable as a show−woman", revealing an important criterion in finding a position in an established dressmaking business (*MB* 26). After a few lines, the narrator describes Mary getting the position of apprentice in Miss Simmonds' business, where she will not receive any money for her service for two years. She will be trained in the meantime and then

> she was to dine and have tea, with a small quarterly salary (paid quarterly because so much more genteel than by the week), a VERY small one, divisible into a minute weekly pittance. In summer she was to be there by six, bringing her day's meals during the first two years; in winter she was not to come till after breakfast. Her time for returning home at night must always depend upon the quantity of work Miss Simmonds had to do (*MB* 26- 27).

While the physical conditions of Miss Simmonds' business or Mary's working environment with other women in the workshop and showroom is not provided in the novel, her long working hours, usually being late for home and her low earnings are emphasized several times in it. For instance, her earning is compared to the rent of her house, as follows: "But the rent! It was half-a-crown a week - nearly all Mary's earnings - and much less room might do for them, only two" (*MB* 111). In another part, her preference to stay late in her job "be it as late as it would"

is provided with the reason that she will earn “a few pence, enough for one good meal for her father on the next day” (137). By providing the readers with such social details as the comparison of salaries with rents and a day’s earning with the price of a good meal, the text enables them to comprehend the conditions better. With such details, it is emphasized that Mary as a working-class girl has no choice but work to maintain her family even if she works for long hours to earn small amounts of money. In addition to Mary, the need for women’s work is indicated through other characters in the novel as well. Mrs. Davenport, whose husband died because of hunger and appalling conditions at home earlier in the novel, starts to work to maintain her family. She is described as nursing some children at home and doing plain sewing, said to pay extremely low rates by Margaret, to survive.

As King claims, although Mary’s work is shown as tiring and badly-paid throughout the novel, she does not seem to have any health problems because of it (King 42). She also has time for her friends and her lover Harry Carson. Compared to her, Margaret suffers more as a slop worker, which is claimed to be “the poorest paid needle working occupation” in the Victorian Period (King 43). As many slop workers do, Margaret has to work at home with her own candlelight, usually for long hours. She says that she prefers to be engaged in black work despite its hurting her eyes since “plain work pays so bad, and mourning has been so plentiful this winter” (*MB* 47). She continues working for long hours although she knows that she is going blind because of her work. She provides the reason behind her hard work by saying, “Mary, we've sometimes little enough to go upon, and what I earn is a great help. For grandfather takes a day here, and a day there, for botanising or going after insects, and he'll think little enough of four or five shillings for a specimen” (*MB* 47). After a period of time, her condition deteriorates so much that she cannot go on working as a slop worker. She starts singing and performs successfully in different places. Her financial situation improves greatly since she earns more money through singing, and she even gives money to Mary to ease her burden. Through Margaret’s story, the text suggests less conventional

working areas for women and seems to support women's work and progress in different fields.

In *Ruth*, a chapter is spared to the occupation of dressmaking, with painstaking descriptions of the meals provided, the working hours and days, the conditions of the workers and indifferent and cruel behaviors of customers. The novel starts with an account of a so-called exceptional night in which "more than a dozen girls still sat in the room into which Ruth entered, stitching away as if for very life, not daring to gape, or show any outward manifestation of sleepiness" at two o'clock in the morning (*R* 4). Girls are portrayed as feeling extremely exhausted even though they do not express it in the presence of the business owner, Mrs. Manson. In this passage, they are aware of the fact that they will not be able to sleep this evening although they should start their work again at eight o'clock in the morning. Mrs. Manson unwillingly announces a break of half an hour in which some bread, cheese and beer will be distributed to these girls. After Mrs. Manson's departure, the condition of the room and girls are described in striking details:

> It was curious to watch the young girls as they instantaneously availed themselves of Mrs Mason's absence. One fat, particularly heavy-looking damsel laid her head on her folded arms and was asleep in a moment; refusing to be wakened for her share in the frugal supper, but springing up with a frightened look at the sound of Mrs Mason's returning footstep… Two or three others huddled over the scanty fireplace, which, with every possible economy of space, and no attempt whatever at anything of grace or ornament, was inserted in the slight, flat-looking wall… Some employed the time in eating their bread and cheese, with as measured and incessant a motion of the jaws… as you may see in cows ruminating in the first meadow you happen to pass… Others stretched themselves into all sorts of postures to relieve the weary muscles; one or two gave vent to all the yawns, coughs, and sneezes that had been pent up so long in the presence of Mrs Mason. (*R* 5).

As it is understood from these statements, girls are dehumanized in their jobs with long hours of work, harsh discipline and unpleasant physical conditions in their work area. They do not show any reaction even when Mrs. Manson announces that she will choose the most diligent ones among them to take to the ball for which they are preparing dresses now. With their listlessness, they appear as only a mass of bodies without any souls inside. After such descriptions, it is emphasized that Mrs. Manson will actually make her choice by evaluating these girls as to her opinion of their beauty. This again turns our attention to the fact, also encountered in *Mary Barton*, that the area of dressmaking preferred to employ beautiful girls.

In addition to these difficulties surrounding women in the dressmaking sector, one other difficulty is shown as customers' cruel treatment of working girls. In the ball to which Ruth is brought to repair dresses in case of problems, an upper-class lady treats her in an unkind way. The narrator stresses that while the lady speaks politely to a gentleman nearby, she commands Ruth rudely, saying, "Make haste. Don't keep me an hour" (*R* 12).

Ruth reveals that she is miserable in her work by stating, "Oh! how shall I get through five years of these terrible nights! in that close room! and in that oppressive stillness! which lets every sound of the thread be heard as it goes eternally backwards and forwards" (*R* 7). She thinks of returning home but the high premium her father paid for this job deters her and she acknowledges that she has to work considering those she left at home. As it can be seen, the premium issue is utilized in this novel as well, most probably to draw attention to its popularity and the problems it caused to working women and their families.

Even though Mrs. Manson could be seen as the most important reason behind her workers' sufferings, she is not blamed for her behavior in any part of the novel. The novel quite often offers explanations for her management rules and treatment of workers. For example, before revealing that Mrs. Manson economizes by not providing her workers with dinner food and fire on Sundays, her difficult life as a widow who "had to struggle for the sake of the six or seven children left dependant

on her exertions" is explained (*R* 26). Through such comments, it can be asserted clear that the text does not make any discrimination in portrayals of working women from different classes. As King suggests, Gaskell in her novel does not put the blame on Mrs. Manson completely "because that would have been offering a simple solution to a complex problem" (King 45). Gaskell tries to investigate "both sides of the problem without a clear solution" as she always does in presenting the social reality of her time regarding working women (King 45).

Apart from domestic servants and needleworkers, Gaskell's novels also employ the figure of a sick nurse working outside to help patients. Her *Ruth* superficially draws attention to the working conditions of a sick nurse through the character of Ruth, who starts to serve in this job after being dismissed from the Bradshaw family. Through Ruth, the text reveals the fact that nurses did not receive proper training for their job, leading to large numbers of women, driven by their needs for an employment, working in the area. As has been mentioned before, there were reported cases of cruel, incompetent and exploitative nurses during the Victorian Period and Gaskell touches upon these facts with Jemima's reaction to Ruth when she learns that Ruth will be a sick nurse. Looking at "the lovely refinement of Ruth's face", Jemima claims that Ruth is not suitable for it (*R* 282). Thinking that Jemima reacted against her idea because of the common belief that nurses are cruel beings, Ruth tries to convince her with her gentle and affectionate personality that yearns to help others. Jemima states, "It was not in that way I meant you were not fitted for it. I meant that you were fitted for something better. Why, Ruth, you are better educated than I am!" (*R* 282). Knowing that Ruth is a well-educated woman, Jemima thinks that she is too superior to serve as a nurse, indicating the low quality and statues of nurses working until Florence Nightingale implemented some changes to the profession.

3.3.Representations of Factory Women and the Concept of 'Fallen Women'

Despite the prevalent ideology of separate spheres for men and women in society, women working in factories were a widespread reality for the Victorians because of the need to work for all to survive in the capitalist society. However, this did not prevent paternalists from challenging women working in factories with their idea of a proper space for women. As Basch claims, these paternalists felt threatened by the idea of any sphere shared by both men and women, fearing "women's competition" and potential victory in the work area (Basch 135). They focused their claims on women's nature which, they claimed, was turning away from its inherent domesticity and submissiveness because of their work outside home. Factory women were particularly blamed for not cultivating the domestic skills which were deemed necessary for their families. They were also criticized for ignoring their children and husbands, which, in turn, gives way to "the dissolution of family ties" (Basch 135). In addition to such claims, factory women were also associated with the growing fact of prostitution in the midst of the Victorian Period. They were claimed to be engaged in privileges like meeting friends in public places, drinking and smoking which were regarded as appropriate only for men (Basch 137). In this respect, *Mary Barton* and *Ruth* reveal these concerns regarding factory women through the ideas of their characters and narrators. While they support women's factory work as a necessity for survival, and even showed how rejecting it could be the main factor in a woman's "fall", they seem to prioritize jobs considered appropriate for women's domestic nature. Moreover, these novels empathize with fallen women characters by investigating and reflecting the external factors that lead to this fall. They prepare a life of suffering, repentance, and redemption through good deeds and death at the end for these characters; this has been frequently associated with Gaskell's Unitarian beliefs.

The ideas of separate spheres for men and women and different codes of behaviors expected from them are reflected through the characters, their ideas and their behavior throughout *Mary Barton*. An example can be found in the part of the

novel in which Margaret advises Mary not to express her love to Jem. As it is stated, Mary tries hard to resist her desire to reveal her love with "the whisperings of her womanly nature" which deter her from an "unmaidenly action" (*MB* 170). Another example can be seen at the beginning of the novel where John Barton describes Esther's manners before her leaving home as "more womanly like; more gentle, and more blushing, and not so riotous and noisy" (*MB* 10). The novel also presents such expectations and examples of "appropriate" behavior from women regarding their work, in several places. In this regard, it reflects Victorians' concerns over women working in factories with its characters' different ideas and experiences. It starts with a detailed description of a group of factory girls who are described as "merry and somewhat loud-talking girls, whose ages might range from twelve to twenty… with a buoyant step" (*MB* 6). Their physical appearances are rendered in considerable detail with descriptions of their clothing styles and unattractive faces:

> They were most of them factory girls, and wore the usual out−of−doors dress of that particular class of maidens; namely, a shawl, which at midday or in fine weather was allowed to be merely a shawl, but towards evening, if the day was chilly, became a sort of Spanish mantilla or Scotch plaid, and was brought over the head and hung loosely down, or was pinned under the chin in no unpicturesque fashion. Their faces were not remarkable for beauty; indeed, they were below the average, with one or two exceptions; they had dark hair, neatly and classically arranged, dark eyes, but sallow complexions and irregular features (*MB* 6).

After such an unimpressive portrayal of the factory girls' faces, the narrator draws attention to the fact that these girls demonstrate striking "acuteness and intelligence" in their behavior, which is claimed to be commonly observed in people employed in factories (6). They are also shown as treating the factory boys who try to communicate with them with indifference, which is suggested as stemming from the independence these girls gained from their jobs. Considering these descriptions, it can be claimed that the text does not present factory work as a threat to women's morality. As King asserts, it does not criticize factory women for

“being masculine, immoral, or unnatural which were common accusations associated with factory girls” (King 54). In that sense, it can be put forward that the novel deliberately focuses on these women’s unremarkable appearances and listless behaviors towards men to refute any association of factory work with immorality. It even seems to support factory work for women in that it is claimed to provide factory women with noticeable intelligence and independence, which in turn contribute to their self-sufficiency.

The novel conveys to the reader the morality issue regarding factory women in the Victorian Period through John Barton’s ideas. He has extremely negative beliefs about factory women because he regards factory work as one of the factors leading to Esther’s disgrace. He frequently emphasizes that Esther tried to attract men, spent her money on clothes and went home late at night while working at factory although he warned her of what would happen at the end. Therefore, he does not consider factory work even an option for Mary and criticizes it severely in several places in the novel. However, although he considers and chooses dressmaking as the most appropriate employment for Mary, Mary becomes involved in an unsuitable love affair because of the freedom of going outside that she gains from her job. She follows Esther’s steps to some extent in her desire to achieve the status of a lady, even though she does not work at a factory. Considering this, it can be put forward that the novel does not relate women’s morality to the type of job they work at. It appears to suggest that factors other than kind of employment may bring about degradation of morality for women, as has been claimed before.

While factory work is not seen as morally damaging for women in the novel, it employs only two women characters who have the experience of working at factories. Moreover, it only makes references to these women’s past experiences as factory workers, it does not reflect the conditions in factories or show any woman engaged in her work at a factory. In this regard, Mrs. Wilson is the dominant figure representing women’s factory work in the novel and she mostly draws attention to the negative effects of factory work on women’s domestic skills. She presents her

own experience as an example to support her ideas. She says that she started factory work at the age of five, resulting in her incompetence in cooking, cleaning, washing and such house chores. She presents the extent of her lack of knowledge in domestic work by talking about her first day at home after her marriage. She says,

> The day after we were married, he went to his work at after breakfast, and says he, "Jenny, we'll ha' th' cold beef, and potatoes, and that's a dinner for a prince." I were anxious to make him comfortable, God knows how anxious. And yet I'd no notion how to cook a potato. I know'd they were boiled, and know'd their skins were taken off, and that were all. So I tidied my house in a rough kind o' way, then I looked at that very clock up yonder, pointing at one that hung against the wall, and I seed it were nine o'clock, so, thinks I, th' potatoes shall be well boiled at any rate, and I gets 'em on th' fire in a jiffy (that's to say, as soon as I could peel 'em, which were a tough job at first), and then I fell to unpacking my boxes! and at twenty minutes past twelve, he comes home, and I had the beef ready on th' table, and I went to take the potatoes out o' th' pot; but oh! Mary, th' water had boiled away, and they were all a nasty brown mess, as smelt through all the house (*MB* 117).

Despite her acknowledgement that she was not skillful at home due to her past work, Mrs. Wilson does not make clear whether or not she approves of factory work for unmarried women. She focuses on only its effects on married women and their families. She maintains her idea that women should not work at factories after they get married since it also leads to problems different from and in addition to lack of domestic skills at home. She gives the account of nine men she claims to know, who ended up in a public house because of their wives' factory work. She says, these women

> thought there was no harm in putting their little ones out to nurse, and letting their house go all dirty, and their fires all out; and that was a place as was tempting for a husband to stay in, was it? He soon finds out gin−shops, where all is clean and bright, and where th' fire blazes cheerily, and gives a man a welcome as it were (*MB* 118).

In these sentences, she reflects the common idea of the Victorian Period that women's factory work gave way to a breaking down of family ties since women

could not care for their families and worked outside the home at the same time. She believes that these women often neglected their children and their husbands, who, then turned to alcoholism. In this regard, it can be asserted that although the novel encourages women's work in factories in general, in terms of its contribution to women's self-sufficiency, it shows some concerns over married women employed in factories.

As it has been noted by literary critics, Gaskell's Unitarian background manifests itself in her writings especially in terms of its belief in man's potential to do good things for the world. Chapple states that Unitarians regarded the individual's search for truth, rationality, conscience, tolerance and self-improvement as significant values and Gaskell reflected these humanistic ideals in her representations of characters and events in her novels (John 165). In this regard, *Mary Barton* deals with the issue of prostitution through the character Esther, by taking different aspects of her life into consideration. It does not indicate any association between her present situation as a fallen woman in the society and her past job as a factory worker. Rejecting this simple association that pervaded the Victorian society, the novel challenges the society by investigating and reflecting the pathetic circumstances that led to Esther's fall. Esther provides the reason behind her "going into the street" in her speech to Jem, to show him the reason why he should take on the duty of protecting Mary. She makes it clear that she left the Bartons' house because of her lover's promise that he would marry her. However, he abandoned her and her child after three years. She reveals her suffering with her child in a detailed way when she says,

> The landlord seized the few bobbins and tapes I had left, for shop−rent; and the person to whom the mean little room, to which we had been forced to remove, belonged, threatened to turn us out unless his rent was paid; it had run on many weeks, and it was winter, cold bleak winter; and my child was so ill, so ill, and I was starving (*MB* 157).

In this passage, it can be clearly seen that she tried to work from home with her "bobbins and tapes", which were later taken away from her by her landlord. After

these statements, she claims that she turned to prostitution to save her child and asks the question "Do you think God will punish me for that?" (*MB* 157). This question seems not only meant for Jem but also for her society which is responsible for her fall by turning its back on her and her child in the novel. In this respect, Webster relates this implication of the novel to Gaskell's Unitarian beliefs that man was not "innately sinful" and the environment is mainly "responsible for shaping the individual" (Webster 6). She believes that Gaskell's novels mainly touch upon the role of their environments in fallen women's sufferings and ask for empathy from the reader for these women, by presenting their plight and repentance (Webster 6). Esther shows her repentance in several parts of the novel with her self-denigrating words. She frequently emphasizes that she is a sinner and calls herself "a wretched, loathsome creature" (*MB* 122). The novel does not criticize her for her deeds in any of its parts, and it tries to draw attention to her potential to engage in good behavior, an example of which is given by demonstrating her struggle to prevent Mary from turning into a fallen woman. Esther is also rendered into a positive, even angelic image while she is dying. She is described as wearing "a heap of white or light-colored clothes" and named as "the poor crushed Butterfly- the once innocent Esther" (*MB* 375). She is put in the same grave as John Barton and it is implied that they are forgiven for their deeds with the verse written on their grave stone: "For he will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger forever" (*MB* 378).

Controversial for its sympathetic treatment of a so-called fallen woman in the Victorian Society, *Ruth* has been regarded as a novel which challenges the double standards society employed in its treatment of men and women regarding sexual behavior. The novel frequently points to the ideas of separate spheres and inequality between men and women. In this regard, Mr. Bradshaw possesses traditional and patriarchal ideas about the place and status of men and women in the society. He occasionally calls attention to his idea of women's inferiority to men. For example, when he reprimands Jemima for her unpleasant treatment of Mr. Farquhar, he makes his idea of women's inherent dishonest nature clear by

claiming that he has educated Mrs. Bradshaw "to habits of accuracy very unusual in a woman" (*R* 162). He believes that it is men's duty to guide women in the way to goodness. The narrator makes his ideas and attitude towards his wife more explicit by giving a description of Mrs. Bradshaw in her husband's presence. She is shown as flustered but extremely passive and submissive while her husband is with her:

> When he was there, a sort of constant terror of displeasing him made her voice sharp and nervous; the children knew that many a thing passed over by their mother when their father was away, was sure to be noticed by her when he was present; and noticed, too, in a cross and querulous manner, for she was so much afraid of the blame which on any occasion of their misbehaviour fell upon her. And yet she looked up to her husband with a reverence and regard, and a faithfulness of love, which his decision of character was likely to produce on a weak and anxious mind. He was a rest and a support to her, on whom she cast all her responsibilities; she was an obedient, unremonstrating wife to him; no stronger affection had ever brought her duty to him into conflict with any desire of her heart (*R* 168).

Apart from Mr. Bradshaw, his son Richard and Mr. Farquhar are also shown to have patriarchal ideas regarding men and women. Richard scorns women for their lack of knowledge and understanding in economy. He says to Jemima, "Never you trouble your head about my business, my dear. Women can't understand the share-market, and such things. Don't think I've forgotten the awful blunders you made when you tried to read the state of the money-market aloud to my father" (238). While Richard mainly focuses on women's incapability in money affairs, Mr. Farquhar stresses his idea that women should be docile and submissive to men. He is portrayed as a man who looked for "a staid, noble-minded wife, grave and sedate, the fit companion in experience of her husband" (156). He admires "reticent characters, full of self-control and dignity" and he, therefore, seems indecisive about Jemima whom he considers to be "a wild-hearted, impetuous girl, who knew nothing of life beyond her father's house, and who chafed under the strict discipline enforced there" (156). Having such ideas about Jemima's personality, he

turns his attention to Ruth whom he celebrates as an ideal woman, possessing "a calm, serene soul, fashioning the body to angelic grace" (223). These discriminatory ideas of the Victorian society are presented in society's treatment of men and women in terms of sexual behavior in the novel, as well. As McGavran claims, the novel points out society's double standard and hypocrisy in its attitudes towards men and women engaged in illicit sexual affairs by contrasting Ruth's life of suffering with Mr. Bellingham's unaffected and undisturbed life after their sexual affair (McGavran 39). Considering this, it can be asserted that the novel criticizes and challenges the society with its sympathetic and uncritical treatment of Ruth. It reflects Unitarian ideas that sin is not inherent and that personal circumstances lead to man's fall by drawing attention to Ruth's innocent personality and the environmental factors that cause her fall. It does not relate Ruth's fall to her job as a dressmaker, although it implies that her monotonous and unpleasant working hours together with freedom at Sundays may be counted as minor factors giving way to her disgrace. In this regard, the novel appears to propose lack of parental guidance and lack of knowledge about sexuality and world as major causes of Ruth's fall.

The novel hints at its sympathetic treatment of a fallen woman from its beginning by emphasizing the importance of personal circumstances in the development of an individual. It starts with a description of its social setting, presenting people, their customs, manners and lifestyles with a claim that these factors all contribute to "the formation of character" (*R* 3). It draws attention to Ruth's naïve personality, inadequate knowledge about the world and lack of familial guidance. She is described as a lonely girl suffering under the unpleasant conditions of her work place and missing the happy times she had with her family in the countryside before their death. The narrator asks the question "What became of such as Ruth, who had no home, and no friends in that large, populous, desolate town?", pointing out the almost inevitable end for such girls as Ruth in such a society (*R* 27). In another part of the novel, the narrator again calls attention to Ruth's being devoid of parental supervision and knowledge about the world, by saying,

> She was too young when her mother died to have received any cautions or words of advice respecting *the* subject of a woman's life—if, indeed, wise parents ever directly speak of what, in its depth and power, cannot be put into words—which is a brooding spirit with no definite form or shape that men should know it, but which is there, and present before we have recognised and realised its existence (33).

After these statements Ruth is portrayed as a girl who "was innocent and snow-pure," having heard of love although she has never experienced the "signs and symptoms thereof" (33). The text particularly employs these innocent descriptions of Ruth before her sexual experience with Mr. Bellingham and occasionally directly addresses the reader to arouse pity and sympathy for her. An example occurs when Mr. Bellingham offers Ruth going to London together. The narrator immediately reminds the reader of Ruth's innocence before her answer by stating "Remember how young, and innocent, and motherless she was!" (42). Considering all of these, it can be claimed that the novel does not relate Ruth's fall to her job or to any part of it, although it makes use of her terrible working conditions before her extramarital affair to enable readers to empathize with Ruth. The text later reflects a positive idea of work for women in showing that it gains them independence, self-sufficiency and knowledge of the world. In Ruth's case, her employments as a nurse maid and sick nurse bring her independence and redemption in the society.

After her affair with Mr. Bellingham, Ruth is saved by Master Thurstan whose humanistic behaviors and manners have been associated with the spirit of Unitarianism by literary critics, in that he believes in an individual's potential for goodness and improvement. He and his sister unconditionally give Ruth a chance of redemption by taking her into their house. Although Mrs. Benson initially reacts badly to her brother's offer of taking Ruth into their household, she instantly changes her opinion when she sees Ruth sleeping. The narrator states, "such death-like quietness startled Miss Benson—startled her into pity for the poor lovely creature who lay thus stricken and felled. When she saw her, she could no longer imagine her to be an impostor, or a hardened sinner; such prostration of woe belonged to neither" (*R* 84). Even Sally, who is prejudiced against Ruth, gradually

welcomes Ruth's presence in the Benson family. Ruth becomes morally stronger through the education she receives in this family and through her love for her son. Ruth then starts working for the Bradshaw household as a nurse maid in order not to be a burden to the Bensons although they never regard Ruth and her son as a burden. Ruth continues living with the Bensons while she works for the Bradshaw family and she economically contributes to the Bensons' income. She gradually turns into a strong and independent woman. With the moral and economic power and knowledge she gained from her education and work, she rejects Mr. Bellingham's proposal of marriage. However, her happiness in her employment lasts until Mr. Bradshaw is informed about her extramarital sexual relationship. Considered to hold rigid Calvinistic views about man and the world, Mr. Bradshaw severely condemns Ruth for her deed and immediately fires her. Even Jemima, who has long been jealous of Ruth because of Mr. Farquhar's growing fondness for her, regards her as inferior to herself and gives up her jealousy. Her contradictory feelings for Ruth are reflected apparently when the narrator says,

> Her jealousy was gone—she knew not how or where. She might shun and recoil from Ruth, but she now thought that she could never more be jealous of her. In her pride of innocence, she felt almost ashamed that such a feeling could have had existence. Could Mr Farquhar hesitate between her own self and one who— No! she could not name what Ruth had been, even in thought (235).

Jemima later empathizes more with Ruth by contemplating the factors that might have led to her deed. As has been repeatedly stressed by the novel, she also considers Ruth's situation as a girl without friends or a family in a big town to be the major cause of her fall. She thanks Master Thurstan for what he did for Ruth and draws a parallel between her and Ruth's situation, suggesting that she could have ended up in Ruth's position if she had lived in the same circumstances as Ruth. She says,

> I have been thinking a great deal about poor Ruth's... and it made me think of myself, and what I am. With a father and mother, and home and careful friends, I am not likely to be tempted like Ruth; but oh! Mr Benson… if you knew all I

> have been thinking and feeling this last year, you would see how I have yielded to every temptation that was able to come to me; and, seeing how I have no goodness or strength in me, and how I might just have been like Ruth, or rather, worse than she ever was, because I am more headstrong and passionate by nature (264).

While nearly all of the characters concern themselves with Ruth's state as a fallen woman, they do not hold any questions about the man who engaged in this sexual relationship with her. Moreover, Mr. Bellingham's life is shown as continuing smoothly without any suffering or accusations after his affair with Ruth. However, some references are made to his seemingly evil personality by a few characters in the novel. When Ruth visited a former family servant with Mr. Bellingham at the beginning of the novel, he warned her against Mr. Bellingham's possible dark intentions by saying, "My dear, remember the devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; remember that, Ruth" (38). On another occasion, Jemima detects something devilish in Mr. Bellingham's personality and resembles him to a race horse. She says to her mother, "Brutes are sometimes very beautiful, mamma. I am sure I should think it a compliment to be likened to a race-horse, such as the one we saw… Though he seems so gentle, I almost think he is very headstrong in following out his own will" (191). In this respect, it can be asserted that the novel partly puts the blame of Ruth's fall on Bellingham's hidden, "animal" nature or wild and active sexuality. As Webster believes, *Ruth* can be counted as an example of novels through which "some writers attempt to inculcate a more 'humane and reasonable response' to prostitution, by shifting responsibility onto the male and his unrestrained sexual desire" (Webster 7).

Dismissed from her job with harsh criticisms of immorality, Ruth is not discouraged from her desire to help others through her job. She starts working as a sick nurse irrespective of the health risks it entails and its low wages. As she meticulously takes care of patients with love and affection, her popularity grows and she gradually gets rid of the criticisms related to her sexual affair in the society. She eventually dies of typhus caught from Mr. Bellingham while nursing

him, which ending aroused strong reactions from literary figures such as Charlotte Brontë. Such an ending for Ruth may be linked to the idea that Gaskell reflected the social reality of her time in her novels in order to transform the world into a better place for all to live in. As it is put forward, her "reforming intentions in Ruth" can be realized through her letter to Eliza Fox about Pasley, who was claimed to be an inspiration for her character Ruth (McGavran 40). Gaskell says, "Well I suppose it won't do to pull this world to pieces, and make up a better, but sometimes it seems the only way of effectually puryfying [sic] it" (qtd in McGavran). Considering this, it can be claimed that Ruth dies due to her job of helping the sick in the society, implying that she gains the society's and God's salvation through her work. With her death, she is portrayed as achieving the status of a saint who readily sacrifices her own life for the others. Through such a graceful representation of a fallen woman who possesses many virtues, the novel challenges the way society deals with the problem of prostitution. It suggests familial guidance, education, motherhood and employment as remedies to moral degradation. In this way, it also celebrates humanity's potential to engage in good deeds for humanity when provided with favorable personal circumstances.

CHAPTER 4

USES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL REALISM IN *JANE EYRE* AND *VILLETTE*

4.1. Psychological Theories of the Victorian Period

Many developments occurred in the area of psychology during the Victorian Period, despite the fact that psychology was not established as a single and unified discipline as mentioned before. These developments in psychology affected the fictional worlds of the Victorian novels which increasingly started to employ a realism that reflected their era's understanding of psychology. This part of the thesis will specifically focus on physiognomy, phrenology and the Victorian understanding of mental disorders since they are used in the representations of working women in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*.

Physiognomy was a theory introduced by John Casper Lavater towards the end of the eighteenth century. Its premise was that "an individual's inner moral qualities were directly embodied in the features of the face and that God had inscribed this relationship between the body and spirit on the face of nature, available for the trained eye to read" (Vrettos 80). Physiognomical science asserted that there was an absolute correspondence between the external and internal qualities of man. Such a claim meant that "the individual is only 'conceivable' if read through the details of external form" and selfhood is uncovered by the action of the gaze (Shuttleworth 60). Physiognomy attempted to read an individual's personality by analyzing facial features such as eyes, brow and mouth with different values attributed to them (Ingham 157). For instance, as Ingham claims, while it regarded the upper facial features as signs of "intellectual faculties", it proposed the lower features as the indicators of "the organs of sense" (157). Ingham also asserts that physiognomy was frequently utilized to validate the Victorian beliefs about men, women and different races. It supported the common view that while men and white people were rational beings governed by their reasons, women and colored

people (Ingham mentions only black people but the novels of the time treated Asians similarly) were emotional beings whose acts initiated in their feelings and senses (157).

Phrenology was introduced by Franz Joseph Gall in the 1790s and it firmly identified the brain as the organ of mind. It can be loosely defined as a theory which suggested that bumps on the human skull were parts of "a system of external signs" that could render information about an individual's character. Gall examined the human skull and identified a variety of "faculties", which he believed to possess a certain and specific place in the brain (Shuttleworth 60). He associated a "mental organ" in the brain with each one of these faculties and regarded these mental organs as "material instruments by means of which a faculty acts and is acted upon" (qtd in Ingham 159). He further claimed that "the size of each bump on the skull" reflected "the strength of the organ lying below" (Shuttleworth 60). As Ingham states, although phrenology developed from physiognomical science, phrenologists differed considerably from physiognomists in that they considered the external features of an individual head "only as a system of signs to be decoded in order to determine what lay below" (qtd in Ingham 159). Contrary to physiognomy which embraced the idea that external qualities directly represented inner qualities, phrenology regarded the outer form as "not directly expressive of inner quality", but "only as an indicator of quantity" (qtd in Shuttleworth 61). Moreover, quite different from the earlier theories of "the mind as an immaterial, indivisible entity", Gall and other phrenologists believed in the "physicality and multiplicity" of the brain (Shuttleworth 62). The Scottish phrenologist George Combe resembled the brain to "a musical instrument- a pianoforte, having various strings", each one of which stand for a different faculty (qtd in Ingham 159). Combe explained the coexistence of the faculties of "Benevolence" and "Destructiveness" in the human mind with this idea of the man filled with "an assemblance of contradictions" (Shuttleworth 62). Such an understanding of the human mind meant that the individual consisted of "warring forces, the conflux of different flows of energy" (62). Considering this, Shuttleworth claims that

phrenology paved the way to investigations into "the complexities of the conscious," with its idea of inner multiplicity, later in the nineteenth century (62).

Phrenology was also utilized as a "social programme" in the Victorian Period owing to Combe's notion of the faculties as dynamic things which possessed the potential for individual development through practice (Ingham 63). Combe believed that man had the potential to improve his faculties by taking "the laws of nature revealed by phrenology" into consideration and changing his behavior accordingly (Ingham 63). In this way, individuals could build up on their strengths and control their weaknesses because phrenology had helped them identify these areas of character. This belief in self-improvement embraced by Combe and his followers helped to establish "a platform from which to fight for reform in penal institutions and lunatic asylums", and for improvements and changes in the educational system and working- areas like factories in the Victorian Period (63).

Charlotte Brontë employs physiognomy and phrenology in her novels in her descriptions of characters and in her exposition of the conflicting forces that reside in her characters' and protagonists' minds. Her novels frequently feature narrators and characters who read other characters' faces to gain insights into their personalities. They make use of a "penetrating gaze", which can also be called "the external gaze" of the society which is claimed to threaten to gain insights into the personality through reading the countenance, (Shuttleworth 39), surveillance and spying on the people they encounter to shed light upon their inner world. As Vrettos puts forward, Jane's relationships with Rochester and St. John Rivers in *Jane Eyre* and Monsieur Paul's and Lucy's analyses of facial characteristics of other characters in *Villette* provide the reader with striking passages of physiognomical science (Vrettos 80). In addition to physiognomy, Brontë's novels are claimed to be especially filled with "passages of pure phrenological jargonese" (Ingham 57). Phrenology served as a tool for her work which frequently reflected protagonists in a battle ground of conflict between "a sense of power and autonomy and its converse, a feeling of helplessness in the face of irresistible internal forces"

(Shuttleworth 62). Jane Eyre reflects such a turbulent mind of strong passions and resistant self-control when she talks about her relationship with St. John Rivers:

> I know no medium: I never in my life have known any medium in my dealings with positive, hard characters, antagonistic to my own, between absolute submission and determined revolt. I have always faithfully observed the one, up to the very moment of bursting, sometimes with volcanic vehemence, into the other; and as neither present circumstances warranted, nor my present mood inclined me to mutiny, I observed careful obedience to St. John's directions; and in ten minutes I was treading the wild track of the glen, side by side with him. (*JE* 407)

Lucy Snowe in *Villette* also describes the conflict between her reason and feelings when she says,

> This hag, this Reason, would not let me look up, or smile, or hope: she could not rest unless I were altogether crushed, cowed, broken-in, and brokendown. According to her, I was born only to work for a piece of bread, to await the pains of death, and steadily through all life to despond. Reason might be right; yet no wonder we are glad at times to defy her, to rush from under her rod and give a truant hour to Imagination— *her* soft, bright foe, *our* sweet Help, our divine Hope... Reason is vindictive as a devil: for me she was always envenomed as a step-mother. If I have obeyed her it has chiefly been with the obedience of fear, not of love. Long ago I should have died of her ill-usage her stint, her chill, her barren board, her icy bed, her savage, ceaseless blows; but for that kinder Power who holds my secret and sworn allegiance. Often has Reason turned me out by night, in midwinter, on cold snow, flinging for sustenance the gnawed bone dogs had forsaken… Then…A spirit, softer and better than Human Reason, has descended with quiet flight to the waste—bringing all round her a sphere of air borrowed of eternal summer; bringing perfume of flowers which cannot fade (*V* 237-238).

In this passage, Lucy very clearly reflects her sense of being torn between her reason, which dictates that she resist emotions in her life, and her feelings. Influenced by her love for Dr. Graham Bretton, she regards her reason as an evil being which treats her with cruelty, although she praises it when talking about her relationships with other characters in the novel.

Until the first half of the nineteenth century, there was a widespread idea that people who were experiencing any kind of mental illness were suffering from a "disease of the soul" and they should therefore be kept away from society (Goldberg 24). These people were treated as animals and usually lived under appalling conditions in mental asylums. However, a radical change occurred in the treatment of the insane with the two Lunatic Acts of 1845 and establishment of new mental asylums (Shuttleworth 34). The insane were no longer regarded as criminals or social outcasts and were claimed to possess the potential to be healed through "moral management" (34).

"Moral management or moral therapy" was introduced by William Tuke in 1792 and it became the dominant treatment in mental asylums (Vrettos 75). It attempted to change "the behavior of the insane" with codes of behavior established and embraced by middle-class families, thereby leading to a more humane treatment of the insane in general (Vrettos 75). Apart from these improvements in the treatment of the insane, there was a change in the understanding of mental illnesses as well. The idea that all individuals were under the threat of insanity became increasingly popular (Shuttleworth 34). Although the dominant belief of the post-Darwinian period was in the inherited nature of mental disorders, the emphasis was "on notions of self-control" (Shuttleworth 35). Obeying the rules of society and showing behavior appropriate to what was expected from men and women became the signs of mental normality. In this respect, as Shuttleworth puts forward, while men who were passive in the public and who failed in areas like commerce were considered to be likely to have a mental illness, women were usually tested for sanity through the extent of their obedience, submissiveness, modesty, decent behaviors and with ability to control their emotions (35). Madness began to be seen as "a partial state, to which anyone under stress is liable, and which endures only so long as passion overturns reason" (Shuttleworth 35). This understanding implied that insanity was a temporary state which could be cured with medical healing and avoided with "the ever-vigilant maintenance of self-control" (35). Despite these improvements in attitudes towards mental illnesses, however, madness still

continued to be regarded "as a 'female malady' in Victorian culture, allied with hysteria, and viewed as a product of women's greater tendency towards emotional excess and irrational behavior and thought" (Vrettos 77). Women were also thought to be at graver risk of insanity because of the influence of their reproductive systems (Shuttleworth 166).

Vrettos suggests that the new nineteenth-century understanding of insanity was particularly shaped by two categories of insanity in the Victorian society: "monomania" and "moral insanity" (Vrettos 76). The term and concept of monomania was introduced in France by Etienne Esquirol who defines it as a kind of insanity "in which the understanding is partially disordered or under the influence of some particular illusion, referring to one subject, and involving one train of ideas," while all the other areas of "intellectual powers" remain unaffected (qtd in Shuttleworth 51). Therefore, monomania can be considered a partial insanity in which the person who is experiencing it is completely sane in all behaviors except for one, which is frequently revealed by an obsession. The term "monomania" increasingly appeared in Victorian novels after its first appearance. For example, Charlotte Brontë makes her narrator Lucy use it to describe Paulina Home's obsessive love and devotion towards her father in *Villette* by saying, "This, I perceived, was a one-idea'd nature; betraying that monomaniac tendency I have ever thought the most unfortunate with which man or woman can be cursed" (10). Lucy Snowe herself, for a long time, shows such an obsession towards Dr. Graham Bretton's letters, although she does not diagnose herself as harshly as she did Paulina. She cannot prevent herself from waiting for letters from him and feels extremely depressed when he stops writing to her.

The other new category of the time, "moral insanity", was defined and introduced by James Cowle Prichard in 1835, and it denoted a form of partial insanity in which "a systematic 'perversion' of the subject's moral character or temperament" was observed (Vrettos 76). Prichard describes it as "a morbid perversion of the natural feelings, affections, inclinations, temper, habits, moral dispositions, and

natural impulses, without any remarkable disorder or defect of the intellect… any insane illusion or hallucination" (Prichard 16). The descriptions of Bertha Mason's symptoms in *Jane Eyre* are close to those of "moral insanity". Shuttleworth asserts that Prichard's definition of moral insanity reflects the revolutionary change that occurred in the understanding of mental disorders in the Victorian Period in an apparent way. The new concept of "partial insanity" suggested that any individual suffering from it could function well in the society and may not necessarily show "the usual outward signs of lunacy" (Shuttleworth 49). The examples of these two, relatively new categories of insanity show how what Victorians called insanity increasingly began to be regarded as "a failure to conform to the increasingly rigid social and moral prescriptions of Victorian culture," which could threaten any individual in the society and which can be cured through moral management and prevented with self-control (49).

Influenced by these changes in the concepts and understanding of mental disorders, Victorian novels showed a particular interest in investigating the mind, the self and new psychological notions, and this was perhaps essentially true of Charlotte Brontë's. Her novels were preoccupied with "the workings of insanity, nervous disease, the unstable constitution of female identity" and the idea of self-control (Shuttleworth 11). Her interest in sanity and insanity is not constrained to her early work, but can be found throughout her fiction as well: "Crimsworth [in *The Professor*] suffers from hypochondria, Caroline Helstone [in *Shirley*] from brain fever, and Lucy Snowe from 'constitutional nervousness'. *Jane Eyre* focuses on two of the classic images of excess in Victorian psychiatry: the passionate child and the hysterical, insane woman" (12). In her novels, she also puts an emphasis on the importance of self-control, which she implies as an effective tool to gain "social control" and social respectability (Shuttleworth 36). Therefore, her narrators (usually her protagonists) do not reveal much about their inner-selves and they try to hide certain information regarding their lives from the other characters and the reader, perhaps because of an awareness that "the external gaze simultaneously constitutes and threatens to dissolve the self" (39). Under the influence of the

notions of monomania and phrenology, Charlotte Brontë creates heroines who are characterized by "fragmented and non-integrated minds" (52). As has been claimed before, her Lucy Snowe reflects such kind of a personality because of her conflicting faculties of mind in *Villette*. Moreover, her Jane Eyre is frequently portrayed as possessing a fragmented-mind in which her reason and feelings are constantly at war with each other.

4.2. Uses of Physiognomy and Phrenology in the Representations of Working and Non-working Women in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*

This part of the thesis will analyze the use of physiognomy and phrenology in the representations of working and non-working women in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*. It will argue that these novels use physiognomy and phrenology in a way that differentiates working women from non-working women in certain aspects of personality such as industriousness, intelligence and resistance to the restrictive Victorian society. While analyzing the women's personalities through the implications of the Victorian understanding of physiognomy and phrenology, it will also give place to some general descriptions and actions of these women, as given mostly by the narrators, to see whether they support the implications of their phrenological and physiognomical reading. Moreover, it will also analyze the narrators' attitudes towards working women in general terms, seeking especially comments which strengthen the implications of the physiognomical and phrenological analyses provided in the novel, and to show how they treat strong working women who they promote as the ideal women of the time with respect.

Fascinated by the claims of psychological theories of physiognomy and phrenology that external appearance could provide an insight into the internal side of people, Charlotte Brontë employs these theories in her representations of working and non-working women characters in her novels *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*. Both of these novels are narrated by strong women characters, Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe, who strive for independence, equality and more freedom. Since they are also the

protagonists of these novels, most of the physiognomical and phrenological readings of the working women in their stories are made by them. Jane and Lucy are described only in a few instances by themselves or other characters in physiognomical and phrenological terms, and in these descriptions they share the characteristics of being “plain”, not “handsome” and having “irregular features”. They are aware of their unremarkable physical appearance, but they seem content with it because they claim not to regard physical appearance as being equally important to their lives as intelligence, although they implicitly express their wish to be more beautiful a few times in both of these novels. Indignant with a society which favors beauty, submission, obedience to men, domesticity, silence and passivity in women, Jane and Lucy desire to transcend these established notions of being a woman, and they criticize them in their narrations. Through their physiognomical and phrenological descriptions of working and non-working women, they reflect their criticisms of the patriarchal society which tries to impose these rigid notions on women. Although they do not draw a sharp line between working and non-working women in physiognomical and phrenological terms, they have the tendency to elevate working women whom they frequently label as strong, intelligent, clever and determined. However, in their physiognomical and phrenological reading of working women, they focus on strong, middle-class working women who can lead to changes in society, and they describe them in detailed ways. They largely ignore the working class women and render them in stereotypical terms. On the other hand, in their physiognomical and phrenological analyses of non-working women, they occasionally refer to these women’s idle ways of life, domesticity, preference for marriage as providing their living and status, and their scornful treatment of those women who try to stand on their own feet. Lucy and Jane do not attribute these characteristics only to non-working women, however. They also acknowledge the existence of these characteristics in some working women and severely criticize them as well, reflecting their deep hatred of such ideas and manners in an apparent way.

Jane Eyre differs from *Villette* in that it makes a more clear-cut division between working and non-working women through their physiognomical and phrenological analyses. While it generally represents working women as intelligent, strong and self-sufficient; it presents non-working women as lacking intelligence, originality and strength of character. In this latter case, it mostly focuses on upper-class ladies who are characterized by their noticeable physical beauty. Although these ladies have beautiful and regular body features, their beauty indicates either "a hard-heart incapable of feeling" or intellectual and mental deficiency (Fairless-Aitken 83). Their unremarkable capacities and haughty manners are frequently pointed out and condemned by Jane in her readings of their character, even though they are types of the women celebrated as ideal by Victorian society. In the physiognomical and phrenological readings of working women, the novel particularly puts an emphasis on the representation of strong middle-class working women as is the case in *Villette*. It provides only stereotypical information about the working-class women but allows space to outline their vanities.

Contrary to Lucy Snowe who does not provide any specific information about her appearance in *Villette*, Jane Eyre makes several references to her appearance through her own and other characters' comments. Compared to Lucy Snowe whose appearance is hardly at all described in visual terms, the reader of *Jane Eyre* at least knows that Jane is a small and pale woman with green eyes, dark hair and irregular facial features. Jane's green eyes may be analyzed through Lavater's understanding of a propensity of green in eyes to be a sign of "ardour, fire, and courage" (Lavater 61). In this respect, her dark hair, which was commonly attributed to being passionate, supports what green eyes mean in Lavater's description. Moreover, Jane possesses irregular facial features as Lucy does in *Villette*. In Victorian physiognomical science these irregular features implied a personality under the constant influence of conflicting emotions and reason (Fahnestock 330). These physiognomical details used in descriptions of Jane convey her character to the reader, and what they imply about her character seems compatible with her deeds in the novel.

Although Jane claims not to give importance to physical appearance, and occasionally shows too much attention to one's own beauty as a sign of intellectual and emotional deficiency in upper class ladies, on a few occasions she expresses the desire to be more beautiful; when she feels desperately lonely and lacks the energy to face up to the difficulties of her life, for instance. An example is found before she meets Adele whom she will look after in Thornfield, at which time she feels anxious that her appearance may cause antipathy in her pupil. She says:

> I sometimes regretted that I was not handsomer; I sometimes wished to have rosy cheeks, a straight nose, and small cherry mouth; I desired to be tall, stately, and finely developed in figure; I felt it a misfortune that I was so little, so pale, and had features so irregular and so marked. And why had I these aspirations and these regrets? It would be difficult to say: I could not then distinctly say it to myself; yet I had a reason, and a logical, natural reason too (*JE* 98).

Despite her unfavorable conditions, Jane keeps struggling for independence, freedom and equal treatment from society, demonstrating an unyielding personality. Her strong character is particularly revealed to two male characters, Mr. Rochester and St. John, both of whom are rejected by Jane mainly because of their differing but equally restrictive ideas about the role of women. She is described as an original and courageous woman by St. John who holds rigid and religious ideas: "There is something brave in your spirit, as well as penetrating in your eye… I watch your career with interest, because I consider you a specimen of a diligent, orderly, energetic woman: not because I deeply compassionate what you have gone through or what you still suffer" (381). Jane's most comprehensive physiognomical and phrenological reading is given by Mr. Rochester when he disguises himself as a fortune teller to learn Jane's ideas and feelings about him (and to give Blanche Ingram an aversion to him). His description of Jane shows similarities to St. John's later analysis of her. He also regards Jane as a woman of strong character who will not yield to her unfortunate circumstances. Loving her as St. John does not, though, he also describes her eyes as "soft", "full of feeling" and "susceptible" (202). Her eyes sharply contrast with the eyes of upper class ladies

which are claimed by Jane to be “cold”, “fierce” and “hard”. The use of adjectives such as soft, cold and hard in these descriptions seems to confirm the idea that eyes revealed human soul, its feelings and passions more than any other facial features (Lavater 64). When it comes to her mouth, Rochester observes that it expresses “all that the brain conceives” even though it conceals what her heart suffers (202): “Mobile and flexible, it was never intended to be compressed in the eternal silence of solitude: it is a mouth which should speak much and smile often, and have human affection for its interlocutor” (202). Rochester’s such analysis of a “mobile and flexible” mouth is in line with what Lavater tells about open mouths. According to him, “openness of mouth” shows “complaint”, proximity in relationship and “endurance” (Lavater 74). Although Jane possesses such a mouth, she mostly tries to hide her suffering from the people around her. In addition to these features, the description of Jane’s brow and forehead declare her reason and analytic ability, to Victorian physiognomical understanding. However, Rochester does not give any clue about these characteristics. He only says that no matter how compelling and fiery her feelings are, her reason guides her actions:

> Reason sits firm and holds the reins, and she will not let the feelings burst away and hurry her to wild chasms. The passions may rage furiously, like true heathens, as they are; and the desires may imagine all sorts of vain things: but judgment shall still have the last word in every argument, and the casting vote in every decision. Strong wind, earthquake-shock, and fire may pass by: but I shall follow the guiding of that still small voice which interprets the dictates of conscience (202).

Considering these descriptions and Jane’s deeds in the novel, it can be claimed that Jane’s analyses by Rochester and St John provide clear insights into her personality. Apart from these descriptions, Jane also enables the reader to understand her character when she engages in analyzing other women characters and criticizes their weaknesses. For instance, her class-consciousness can be easily detected when she compares herself to Grace Poole whom she describes as a woman of “square, flat figure, and uncomely, dry, even coarse face” (157). Grace Poole’s square and flat figure might be indicating her masculine personality

considering Lavater's claim that men were supposed to be more "angular" in shape than women (Lavater 221). In addition to it, her dry face might imply her "bilious temperament" which was thought to reveal itself "by coldness or dryness of the skin" (Wells 62). Although Jane acknowledges that she herself does not have striking beauty, she says that she is certainly a lady when compared to Grace Poole who has "more color and more flesh; more life, more vivacity… brighter hopes and keener enjoyments" (157). She also seems to consider Grace Poole slightly morally insane with her over-indulgence in alcohol. She points out Grace Poole's drinking habit at several places in the novel in which she occasionally refers to the fact that Grace carries "a pot of porter" (110) to her room and alienates herself from the others in the house. Following these descriptions, she continues with strange sounds or laughs that she believes to be produced by Grace:

> She would thus descend to the kitchen once a day, eat her dinner, smoke a moderate pipe on the hearth, and go back, carrying her pot of porter with her, for her private solace, in her own gloomy, upper haunt. Only one hour in the twenty-four did she pass with her fellow-servants below; all the rest of her time was spent in some low-ceiled, oaken chamber of the third story: there she sat and sewed- and probably laughed drearily to herself" (165).

As seen, Grace Poole is apparently described as a strange woman with peculiarities of her personality, which are implied to have resulted from her lack of control over her drinking appetite. In this way, she can be claimed to act as another embodiment of the insane woman with her strange behavior such as engaging in "eccentric murmurs" or thrilling laugh in the novel.

Of all the working women characters in *Jane Eyre*, Miss Temple stands out in terms of physiognomical and phrenological analyses. She is presented as a strong middle-class woman who possessed an independent spirit and a great intellectual capacity in her physiognomical reading. Miss Temple, who works as a teacher at Lowood School, is described as a woman "with dark hair, dark eyes, and a pale and large forehead" when Jane sees her for the first time (39). Lavater's physiognomy regards people with blue eyes as weaker and more yielding compared to people

with brown and black eyes (Lavater 61). Considering his analysis of eye colors, it can be claimed that Miss Temple's dark eyes may denote her "health", "firm mind" and "courageous and honorable" personality (Lavater 66). In addition to this, her large forehead might imply her good comprehension skills, since people with a "large arched forehead" were attributed with the characteristics of intelligence and wisdom (Lavater 216). After this physiognomical analysis, she is immediately compared to Miss Miller, who is an "under-teacher," whose appearance and posture are described by the narrator in the following terms: "Miss Miller was more ordinary; ruddy in complexion, though of a careworn countenance; hurried in gait and action, like one who had always a multiplicity of tasks on hand" (39). Although ruddiness in complexion was believed to indicate a sanguine character (Cooke 218), in this description Miss Miller's countenance shows that this "natural" tendency has been eroded by cares or worries. Another comparison between Miss Temple and Miss Miller is made when a breakfast served in the school leads to complaints and murmurs. While Miss Miller is shown as looking "purple, weather-beaten, and overworked", Miss Temple is admired for her beauty and erectness:

> Seen now, in broad daylight, she looked tall, fair, and shapely; brown eyes, with a benignant light in their irids, and a fine penciling of long lashes round, relieved the whiteness of her large front; on each of her temples her hair, of a very dark brown, was clustered in round curls, according to the fashion of those times (43).

As seen, the same facial characteristics are again emphasized in this description. The most striking difference between her first and second reading is the emphasis on "the whiteness of her large front", which is celebrated as one of the ideal characteristics of a forehead in Lavater's physiognomy (Lavater 60). After this positive portrayal of her appearance, she is shown as standing up to Mr. Brocklehurst with her order that more food will be provided to students and teachers that day. With her strength, determination and courage, Miss Temple becomes the role model for Jane and Jane is no longer content at Lowood once Miss Temple has married and left the institution.

Apart from Miss Temple who is celebrated as an ideal women figure in the novel, the Rivers sisters Diana and Marry, who later turn out to be Jane's cousins, are also conveyed to the reader in positive ways although their physiognomy is not described in a detailed way. They work as governesses "in a large, fashionable, south-of-England city" where they are not given much importance by their haughty employers "who neither knew nor sought one of their innate excellences, and appreciated only their acquired accomplishments as they appreciated the skill of their cook, or the taste of their waiting-woman" (357). The only striking reference to physiognomy in their descriptions is a reference to their "intelligent" and "pretty countenances" (*JE* 348) about which not much detail is given in the novel. Diana is claimed to be superior to Jane and Marry, both in physical and intellectual terms. She is shown as having a soothing tone of voice, fascinating eyes and a face filled with charm. Her description, especially that of the quality of her voice, implies a peaceful and innocent personality, considering the association of the quality of the voice with personality in physiognomy: "The voice of civilized man is one thing, that of the savage quite another… The savage has a coarse, indistinct guttural voice; while that of the cultivated man is more sonorous and musical (Wells 325). In this regard, Diana's voice is sharply contrasted with Bertha's "demoniac laugh-low, suppressed, and deep-uttered" (*JE* 148) and this detail of Bertha's voice or laugh that is frequently given in the novel supports her general description as an animal-like being.

As mentioned before, Jane particularly focuses on representing some middle-class working women in the novel, while she ignores working women who belong to the lower class. Characters like Bessie and Hannah are described only superficially. For example, working as a servant in Mrs. Reed's house, Bessie is mostly ignored in terms of her physical appearance. She is only remembered as a pretty woman "with black hair, dark eyes, very nice features, and good, clear complexion" (*JE* 25). As seen, Jane uses quite general adjectives for her appearance, except for her black hair and dark eyes which might imply a passionate personality although she is not shown with great accomplishments or a questioning spirit: "she had a

capricious and hasty temper, and indifferent ideas of principle or justice" (25). She is only praised for her capacity to tell stories. Compared to Bessie, Hannah, who works as a servant at the Reeds' household, is given an even more limited physiognomical and phrenological description. She is only portrayed in a stereotypical way when Jane says, "she put her floury and horny hand into mine; another and heartier smile illumined her rough face; and from that moment we were friends" (347).

In *Jane Eyre* descriptions of upper-class ladies who do not work usually point out their physical beauties, which mainly connote their materialism, scornful treatment of working-class women and lack of intelligence and originality. Jane's disdain for such women as Mrs. Reed, her cousins Georgiana and Elisa and for Blanche Ingram can easily be detected in her physiognomical and phrenological analyses of them. She particularly portrays Mrs. Reed as a strict, cruel, merciless and insensitive woman through her analysis of her appearance:

> she was a woman of robust frame, square-shouldered and strong-limbed, not tall, and, though stout, not obese: she had a somewhat large face, the under jaw being much developed and very solid; her brow was low, her chin large and prominent, mouth and nose sufficiently regular; under her light eyebrows glimmered an eye devoid of ruth; her skin was dark and opaque, her hair nearly flaxen; her constitution was sound as a bell—illness never came near her; she was an exact, clever manager; her household and tenantry were thoroughly under her control (*JE* 31).

In this physiognomical description, Mrs. Reed is shown to possess a developed under jaw, which in physiognomy was increasingly associated with animalism and a low order of development "after Darwin popularized the idea that humans are descended from apes" (Wohl 1). However, since the date of Darwin's *Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* and this novel do not overlap, the association cannot be deemed totally compatible. Jane later hints at what she means by such a developed under jaw by talking about the hard quality it gives to the countenance of Mrs. Reed's daughters. Apart from this facial feature, Mrs. Reed is given as possessing a "low brow", which was associated with "contempt" and "disdain" in

Wells's discussion of previous systems of physiognomy (Wells 36) and this quality is displayed in her treatment of the people around her. In this respect, her face with its large and prominent chin, which was claimed to indicate a "rude, harsh, proud and violent" person, seems to confirm what her low brow and dark skin tell the reader about her personality (Wells 40). In addition to these physiognomical terms, the use of adjectives such as "square", "strong" and "solid" alludes to Mrs. Reed's brutal and masculine personality in an apparent way considering Lavater's claim that men were rougher in appearance and more angular in shape than women (Lavater 222). Moreover, her "eye devoid of ruth" sharply contrasts with the soft and bright eyes of working middle class women such as Jane and Miss Temple. Jane repeatedly makes references to Mrs. Reed's cruel eye in the novel. Even when she is on her deathbed, it is given as a "peculiar eye which nothing could melt" (*JE* 232). Jane recognizes the same unpleasant characteristics in Georgiana and Elisa. Especially in her description of Georgiana, she explicitly criticizes the society which ignores any fault Georgiana makes because of her enchanting beauty. Although she herself acknowledges their beauty, she focuses on the negative traits they share with their mother:

> In each of the sisters there was one trait of the mother—and only one; the thin and pallid elder daughter had her parent's Cairngorm eye: the blooming and luxuriant younger girl had her contour of jaw and chin—perhaps a little softened, but still imparting an indescribable hardness to the countenance otherwise so voluptuous and buxom (230).

In this analysis, she refers to their wild and hard facial features which she associates with their mother's characteristics. This hardness in their appearance shows itself in their treatment of Jane, as well.

Jane also analyses other upper-class ladies in detailed ways and she particularly draws attention to Blanche Ingram whom she initially regards as a potential bride for Mr. Rochester. Miss Ingram's description is initially provided by Mrs. Fairfax who seems enchanted with her beauty:

> Tall, fine bust, sloping shoulders; long, graceful neck: olive complexion, dark and clear; noble features; eyes rather like Mr. Rochester's: large and black, and as brilliant as her jewels. And then she had such a fine head of hair; raven-black and so becomingly arranged: a crown of thick plaits behind, and in front the longest, the glossiest curls I ever saw (159).

Wöckinger claims that Blanche Ingram's portrayal as an extremely dark lady may imply her passionate personality (Wöckinger 36). Moreover, her long and raven black hair might contribute to this implication, and provides an implied association with Bertha Mason, whose appearance is characterized by "thick and dark hair hanging long down her back" (*JE* 286), in whom the passions run amok. In this regard, it is also important to point out that dark hair began to be increasingly associated with "strong animal passion" after Charles Kingsley stated that he had frequently acknowledged the existence of such passion in women of dark colour (qtd in Ofek 63). Blanche's passionate personality had been seen in her flirtatious manners towards Mr. Rochester, when she wanted to marry him for his wealth, according to Mr. Rochester: "What love have I for Miss Ingham? None… What love has she for me? None… I caused a rumor to reach her that my fortune was not a third of what was supposed, and after that I presented myself to see the result; it was coldness both from her and her mother" (257). Although Jane accepts Miss Ingram's noticeable beauty, she also finds faults in it:

> The noble bust, the sloping shoulders, the graceful neck, the dark eyes and black ringlets were all there;—but her face? Her face was like her mother's; a youthful unfurrowed likeness: the same low brow, the same high features, the same pride. It was not, however, so saturnine a pride! she laughed continually; her laugh was satirical, and so was the habitual expression of her arched and haughty lip (173).

Resembling her mother in her low brow and high features, Blanche's inherited negative traits of a scornful attitude and pride are also displayed in her treatment of people around her. Her lofty manners are said to appear even in the way she laughs. They are also claimed to reveal themselves in her lips, which Lavater believes to be "the chief seat of wisdom and folly, power and debility, virtue and vice, beauty and

deformity, of the human mind- the seat of all love, all hatred, all sincerity, all falsehood, all humility, all pride…" (Lavater 71). In Blanche's case, they turn out to be the indicators of her haughty manners. She behaves in a particularly unpleasant way to Jane, most probably because of her class-consciousness. She explicitly and harshly expresses her ideas about governesses in the presence of Jane at Mr. Rochester's party: "I am a judge of physiognomy, and in hers I see all the faults of her class" (179). This claim is also significant for showing how physiognomical analysis can be distorted by prejudice and how it was used to categorize people in the Victorian Period (Ingham 157). Blanche makes this comment because she assumes that Jane is from a lower class than her, considering her employment. However, her assumptions turn out to be inaccurate since the reader learns that Jane is from a similar class to Blanche's, being the child of Mr. Reed's sister and the Rivers's (eventually) wealthy uncle. Following this false association of Jane with lower class people, Jane criticizes Blanche for her showy, unaffectionate and ordinary personality. She believes that she cannot be a real choice as partner for Mr. Rochester because:

> she was too inferior to excite the feeling. Pardon the seeming paradox; I mean what I say. She was very showy, but she was not genuine: she had a fine person, many brilliant attainments; but her mind was poor, her heart barren by nature: nothing bloomed spontaneously on that soil; no unforced natural fruit delighted by its freshness. She was not good; she was not original: she used to repeat sounding phrases from books: she never offered, nor had, an opinion of her own. She advocated a high tone of sentiment; but she did not know the sensations of sympathy and pity; tenderness and truth were not in her (186).

The narrator, Jane, severely criticizes other upper-class ladies in the novel as well. In all their descriptions, she observes certain kinds of faults in their appearance that imply their unpromising personality traits. For example, she describes old Lady Ingram as having "a double chin, disappearing into a throat like a pillar" (172). In this description, her double chin might be analyzed through Lavater's comments on such a chin as indicating people who noticeably took pleasure in fine food and

drink (Lavater 77). Jane also regards her features as “inflated and darkened, but even furrowed with pride” (172), again showing the existence of passions and contempt in such ladies. Her “fiery” and “hard eye” also reminds her of Mrs. Reed’s eyes and her voice appears authoritative and unpleasant to her. In the same way, she portrays Lady Lynn at Mr. Rochester’s party as an “erect” and “haughty-looking” lady whose “dark hair shone glossily under the shade of an azure plume” (172). Different from these extremely haughty-looking and passionate ladies, she presents Blanche Ingram’s sister Mary as a woman with a “milder and more open countenance than Blanche” (173). Even though she praises her softer and fairer features, she criticizes her for a deficiency of originality and intellect: “her face lacked expression, her eye lustre; she had nothing to say, and having once taken her seat, remained fixed like a statue in its niche” (172). Jane recognizes the same characteristics in Mrs. Eshton’s daughters as well:

> Amy, was rather little: naive, and child-like in face and manner, and piquant in form; her white muslin dress and blue sash became her well. The second, Louisa, was taller and more elegant in figure; with a very pretty face, of that order the French term minois chiffone: both sisters were fair as lilies (172).

As seen, she finds both of them childish, pretty and fair. As Wöckinger asserts, their portrayals as having regular and smooth features might indicate ordinary and dull personalities which, in this novel, are mostly associated with upper-class ladies who are not engaged in any kind of employment (Wöckinger 38).

Villette is the first person, retrospective narrative of a lonely woman named Lucy Snowe who fights against Victorian society’s established and rigid ideas of being a woman. As Brennan claims, it is the story of a Victorian “misfit” who “moves from stage to stage in a desperate search for an individual identity independent of collective society” (Brennan 4). Lucy starts her journey as an orphan who has no support other than herself in a society “where dependency was a social expectation” for women (4). Different from those women who deem physical appearance and marriage as the most significant ways to survive in the world, Lucy

Snowe clings to the idea of paid employment. Brennan believes that Lucy prefers to "develop an individual identity" rather than combine her identity with the identity of any other since her fiery and independent personality makes her unsuitable for marriage (Brennan 26). Her fiery nature and strong emotions are indirectly reflected when she describes her fascination with the character Vashti in a play she attends with Dr. John. For Lucy, Vashti represents the free spirit which should guide women's lives, with her courageous refusal to display her beauty at her husband King Ahasuerus' banquet, leading to her banishment. Lucy describes Vashti's personality with some use of physiognomy:

> For awhile—a long while—I thought it was only a woman, though an unique woman, Who moved in might and grace before this multitude. By-and-by I recognized my mistake. Behold! I found upon her something neither of woman nor of man: in each of her eyes sat a devil. These evil forces bore her through the tragedy, kept up her feeble strength—for she was but a frail creature; and as the action rose and the stir deepened, how wildly they shook her with their passions of the pit! They wrote HELL on her straight, haughty brow. They tuned her voice to the note of torment. They writhed her regal face to a demoniac mask. Hate and Murder and Madness incarnate she stood. It was a marvellous sight: a mighty revelation (*V* 267).

In this description, it is important to point out the physiognomical detail of Vashti's "straight, haughty brow". Vashti's brow here refers to her forehead which can be understood through the clues of being hard to "write" on and the singularity of the brow. Lavater associates "rectilinear" foreheads with "pertinacity and severity" while he claims that curved foreheads are indicators of feminine characteristics of being "more tender and flexible" (Lavater 57). Considering this, it can be claimed that Vashti's powerful personality is associated with masculinity with a physiognomical detail and it can be a criticism to the Victorian society which values power only in its male members. After this possible association, Vashti's strength is provided further with the text's general descriptions of her actions. Vashti seems unrelenting to the powers that attack her, even within sight of death.

She continues her tormented struggle and the actress gives a magnificent performance:

> I have said that she does not resent her grief… To her, what hurts becomes immediately embodied: she looks on it as a thing that can be attacked, worried down, torn in shreds. Scarcely a substance herself, she grapples to conflict with abstractions. Before calamity she is a tigress; she rends her woes, shivers them in convulsed abhorrence. Pain, for her, has no result in good: tears water no harvest of wisdom: on sickness, on death itself, she looks with the eye of a rebel. Wicked, perhaps, she is, but also she is strong; and her strength has conquered Beauty, has over- come Grace, and bound both at her side, captives peerlessly fair, and docile as fair. Even in the uttermost frenzy of energy is each maenad movement royally, imperially, incedingly upborne (*V* 68).

Considering her fascination with and description of Vashti's appearance and deeds, it can be claimed that Lucy Snowe feels close to Vashti in her complete rejection of patriarchal ideas considering men and women in the society. As Machuca claims, Vashti's performance can also be seen as "a representation of the female artist, struggling for a space in the world of patriarchal cultural production", which draws analogies to Charlotte Brontë's experience as a woman writer in the Victorian Period (Machuca 87). However, as seen in her description in the quotation above, Vashti, quite like dark colored people, is attributed with purely emotional responses such as her inclination to attack and tear things away when she is faced up with misery. She acts in haste without thinking about the results of her action or using her reasoning skills. This is a great difference between her and Lucy who is proud of her intellectual control over her passions. Nevertheless, Lucy admires Vashti for her refusal to submit to the society and its rules and her struggle to protect her personality against the external factors which try to shape it in line with their established ideal characteristics.

Although Lucy as a narrator frequently engages in physiognomical and phrenological analyses of other characters, she gives no specific clues about her own appearance. At one part of the novel, she sees her reflection with two other

reflections in a mirror and immediately starts to describe her companions as fine and beautiful. When she is about to describe her own reflection, she stops herself and says, "Thus for the first, and perhaps only time in my life, I enjoyed the 'giftie' of seeing myself as others see me. No need to dwell on the result" (*V* 218). This refusal to reveal her appearance to the reader might indicate a conscious effort to hide her unconventional personality from the reader. She reflects this in other parts of the novel as well. For example, Monsieur Paul's physiognomical description of her, when she comes to Madame Beck's *pensionnat* for the first time, remains quite superficial and hollow compared to Lucy's physiognomical analyses of other characters. Monsieur only states that Lucy's physiognomy reflects both good and bad characteristics, which reflects a belief in the phrenologists' claim that man is filled with a number of contradictory traits. When Madame Beck asks him whether she should employ Lucy or not, he suggests engaging her in work. On another occasion, when Monsieur mentions his belief that Lucy shares some similarities with him in terms of personality, he renders only a general and superficial reading of Lucy's face. He does not provide the reader with specific details. He says to Lucy:

> I was conscious of rapport between you and myself. You are patient, and I am choleric; you are quiet and pale, and I am tanned and fiery; you are a strict Protestant, and I am a sort of lay Jesuit: but we are alike—there is affinity between us. Do you see it, Mademoiselle, when you look in the glass? Do you observe that your forehead is shaped like mine—that your eyes are cut like mine? Do you hear that you have some of my tones of voice? Do you know that you have many of my looks? I perceive all this, and believe that you were born under my star. Yes, you were born under my star! (*V* 383).

As seen, even though Monsieur Paul draws physiognomical analogies between himself and Lucy in some facial features such as the forehead and eyes, he does not reveal the characteristics of these features.

Despite these general analyses, the reader feels sure that Lucy does not possess striking beauty as a woman because of many textual hints, including references to

her easily falling into a shadowy existence. For instance, Dr. John occasionally labels her as "his quiet Lucy Snowe" and his "inoffensive shadow" in the novel (*V* 330). Moreover, when something secret must be carried out at Madame Beck's *pensionnat*, Lucy is usually assigned the task since nobody will pay attention to her. Keith claims that being plain causes Lucy Snowe and Jane Eyre "to be overlooked" and gives them the chance to see and analyze others "without being seen in return" (Keith 1). Dames believes that this power of seeing into others without attracting notice is "the most satisfying revenge" Lucy employs to criticize the society that observes people and fixes them into so-called appropriate categories with its claim to read their personalities accurately (Dames 377). Quite aware of the continuous scrutiny of character that society makes use of, Lucy defends herself from its hostile eyes by making most of the physiognomical and phrenological reading herself, revealing the weak points she finds in other characters immediately, and criticizing them severely.

Villette is a novel in which Charlotte Brontë does not employ as many working women characters as she does in *Jane Eyre*. The reader finds, other than Lucy herself, that analyses of the physiognomy and phrenology of working women concentrate mostly on two characters: these are Madame Beck and Mademoiselle St Pierre, and neither belongs to the working class. Lucy provides only a short description of working-class women characters, like Rosine who works as a portress at Madame Beck's *pensionnat*. She superficially analyzes Rosine in phrenological terms as a woman "in whose skull the organs of reverence and reserve were not largely developed" (*V* 368). In another instance, she again describes a working class woman, a cook, in a stereotypical way with adjectives such as "robust" and "strong-armed" (97). On the other hand, she describes Madame Beck and Mademoiselle St Pierre in more detailed ways through physiognomy. While Madame Beck's physiognomical analyses mainly give way to a description of her as a disciplined woman who makes use of self-control and rationality in her behavior, Mademoiselle St Pierre's analyses reveal criticisms of

her extravagance, laziness, indulgence in luxury, pride and repressed negative characteristics.

The novel provides Madame Beck's first description as a woman "rather short and stout, yet graceful in its own peculiar way… with the grace resulting from proportion of parts" (*V* 72). In that sense, Madame Beck is contrasted with Lucy who does not possess regular body features, which Fahnestock proposes as an indication of regular character traits in the Victorian understanding of physiognomy (Fahnestock 330). This means that, compared to Lucy who is characterized by restlessness under the influence of her conflicting emotions and reason, Madame Beck has a steady character which is later given as governed by her reason. Lucy continues her portrayal of Madame Beck as a person who

> was fresh and sanguine, not too rubicund; her eye, blue and serene; her dark silk dress fitted her as a French sempstress alone can make a dress fit; she looked well, though a little bourgeoise; as bourgeoise, indeed, she was… her forehead was high but narrow; it expressed capacity and some benevolence, but no expanse; nor did her peaceful yet watchful eye ever know the fire which is kindled in the heart or the softness which flows thence. Her mouth was hard: it could be a little grim; her lips were thin. For sensibility and genius, with all their tenderness and temerity, I felt somehow that Madame would be the right sort of Minos in petticoats (*V* 72).

As seen, Lucy makes use of several physiognomical details in her description of Madame Beck. According to Lavater's descriptions, Madame Beck's blue eyes can reveal a mild treatment of people around her. Lavater believes that while black eyes indicate vivacity (Lavater 63), blue eyes are the signs of "mildness" and "effeminacy" (Lavater 61). Lucy confirms a mild aspect to Madame Beck's personality only a few lines after this physiognomical description by referring to her rule of a *pensionnat* which she claims to have the mildest system ever (*V* 72). However, this does not mean that Madame possesses a soft, friendly and flexible personality as can be acknowledged through her portrayal as a woman who is characterized by her "high but narrow" forehead and thin lips. While her narrow

forehead may hint at her personality of “compression, firmness” and little “volatility” (Lavater 57) in the novel, her thin lips may “denote coldness, industry, a love of order, precision and housewifery” (Lavater 73). In addition to these physiognomical analyses, Madame Beck is shown as a woman who is highly conscious of her status in the society and who tries to control everything around her with her “watchful eye”. She is a stern person with her “hard” and “grim” mouth. Moreover, Madame’s seemingly peaceful eyes do not prevent Lucy from discovering that Madame is bereft of affections and feelings. Therefore, Lucy acknowledges the fact that she should not trust in her and she behaves carefully in her presence. Even though Lucy mainly focuses on Madame’s disciplined personality with this analysis, she also celebrates her ability to rule her *pensionnat* in a fair way by comparing her to Minos, who is celebrated as a “powerful and just” ruler in Greek mythology (Wöckinger 48). After this physiognomical and phrenological reading, Lucy also provides the reader with a list of adjectives she finds suitable for Madame, which seem compatible with the implications of her physiognomical reading done before: “Wise, firm, faithless; secret, crafty, passionless; watchful and inscrutable; acute and insensate— withal perfectly decorous” (*V* 75).

Lucy’s description of Mademoiselle St Pierre, who works as a teacher in Madame Beck’s *pensionnat*, remains rather negative when compared to Madame Beck’s analysis as a strong, disciplined and mostly well-mannered woman. She is criticized for being prodigal and caring overmuch for her physical appearance. She spends her money on clothes, jewelry and cosmetics, leading to her owing debts to people around her. She is “thin in face and figure, sallow in complexion, regular in features, with perfect teeth, lips like a thread, a large, prominent chin, a well-opened, but frozen eye, of light at once craving and ingrate” (*V* 130). In this description, “her lips like a thread” which can be considered to be consisting of lips which are proportional in size and amount might indicate her “inclination to pleasure” which was explained before (Lavater 73). Her large and prominent chin may refer to a “rude, harsh, proud and violent personality which was claimed to

exist in people with long and broad chin" (Wells 40). Lucy claims to acknowledge the presence of such negative characteristics in Mlle St Pierre despite her "externally refined" personality (*V* 129). In addition to such characteristics, with her "frozen eyes", it is implied that she has a "cold", "callous" and "heartless" personality (*V* 130). Since she hates work, Lucy severely labels her as a woman who is a "brainless dissipation of time" (*V* 130). This negative reading of the Parisienne as a working woman makes it clear that the text does not make any discrimination in its treatment of working and non-working women if they show the lack of a powerful, industrious and unyielding character.

Lucy's physiognomical and phrenological reading of non-working women in the novel is characterized by criticisms against the prevalent notions and ideas of being a woman in the Victorian Period. In this regard, Polly Home serves as the embodiment of "angel in the house" with her domesticity, submissiveness, graceful beauty and well-mannered behavior towards gentlemen in the novel. Brennan claims that Polly is quite conscious about her social standing and the gender roles imposed by her society, even as a small child at the beginning of the novel (Brennan 10). Lucy describes her at their first encounter as an "exceedingly tidy; but … a neat, completely fashioned little figure" who resembled "a mere doll" with "her neck, delicate as wax, her head of silky curls" when she sits on Mrs. Bretton's lap (*V* 6). In this description the narrator deliberately draws attention to Polly's "completely fashioned" appearance as a child to point out her class-consciousness and awareness of what it means to be a lady in the Victorian Period. Following this, Lucy provides even more detailed examples of how Polly acted like a woman in her manners. She curiously watches Polly's undressing herself:

> It was curious to watch her as she washed and dressed, so small, busy, and noiseless. Evidently she was little accustomed to perform her own toilet; and the buttons, strings, hooks and eyes, offered difficulties which she encountered with perseverance good to witness. She folded her night-dress, she smoothed the drapery of her couch quite neatly; withdrawing into a corner, where the sweep of the white curtain concealed her, she became still. I half

> rose, and advanced my, head to see how she was occupied (*V* 8).

Polly's ladylike and womanly manners are revealed in the most striking way when she addresses the older Lucy as "the girl" with her "mute" conduct and uses a "trenchant manner" in her speech, which is "quite different from that she used with Mrs. Bretton, and again from the one dedicated to Graham" (30). Conscious of the status and classes of those around her, Polly cannot place Lucy in a class due to her ambiguous role in Mrs. Bretton's house, and she treats her like a servant or Mrs. Bretton's maid. Apart from such precociously adult, Polly also behaves like a woman who willingly embraces the ideas of obedience and submissiveness to men in the novel. She seems to feel inadequate, incomplete and unsafe without a man figure in her life. Lucy refers to the positive changes in Polly's face in a detailed way when she sees her father:

> I witnessed in its iris and pupil a startling transfiguration. These sudden, dangerous natures—*sensitive* as they are called—offer many a curious spectacle to those whom a cooler temperament has secured from participation in their angular vagaries. The fixed and heavy gaze swum, trembled, then glittered in fire; the small, overcast brow cleared; the trivial and dejected features lit up; the sad countenance vanished, and in its place appeared a sudden eagerness, an intense expectancy (11).

In this description, Lucy gives insight into Polly's personality with some physiognomical terms such as "fixed and heavy gaze" and "the small, overcast brow" and points out the positive changes that appeared in Polly's face when she sees her father. Polly's "fixed and heavy gaze" can be analyzed through the Victorian understanding of a kind of peculiar gaze which lunatics were claimed to have possessed and which was characterized by fixing eyes on "an object or upon vacancy with a ghastly stare" (Simms 343). This phrase might have been used to indicate Polly's obsessive love and devotion towards her father, which the narrator named as a "monomaniac tendency" (*V* 10). Polly appears quite energetic in her father's presence and constantly tries to serve her father in order to maintain his love for her through a display of domestic virtues. Bearing excessive love towards

her father, Polly is distinguished by her fixed gaze and retreats into a ghostly existence in her father's absence. Her depressed character when she is far away from him also reveals itself by her small and overcast brow, which was associated with calmness and lack of physical strength and energy (Lavater 67). However, her dispirited state lasts only until she finds another male figure to care for in the novel. Lucy observes the same situation in her treatment of Graham when her father goes away. Lucy criticizes her behavior in a scornful way when she says, "It was sufficiently comical to observe her as she sat beside Graham, while he took that meal. In his absence she was a still personage, but with him the most officious, fidgety little body possible. I often wished she would mind herself and be tranquil; but no—herself was forgotten in him" (*V* 23). Lucy also states that it is not interesting to watch Polly when Graham is absent because "she would sit on a stool at that lady's feet all day long, learning her task, or sewing, or drawing figures with a pencil on a slate, and never kindling once to originality, or showing a single gleam of the peculiarities of her nature" (22). Polly's peculiar nature only becomes visible when Graham returns home. In his absence, she is dull and uninteresting to observe. Considering these, it can be claimed that Polly seems struck in "limbo, caught between childhood and womanhood" (Brennan 15). As asserted, she reflects the characteristics of "the ideal Victorian woman" as a child, whereas she possesses childlike innocence and manners as a woman later in the novel (Gilbert & Gubar 428).

Several years after leaving the Brettons' house, Lucy encounters Polly in a theatre with Dr. John. They recognize each other after some time and Lucy observes that Polly still serves to soothe her father. At one part of the novel, she mentions that Polly makes use of "different moods for different people" and she is "still a child, or child-like, affectionate, merry, and playful" with her father (312). She refers to her childish and simple-minded nature which wants to take attention of people around her again when she resembles Polly to a little spaniel, Sylvie which "invited affection by her beauty and her vivacious life" (434): "She was very tiny, and had the prettiest little innocent face, the silkiest long ears, the finest dark eyes in the

world. I never saw her, but I thought of Paulina de Bassompierre: forgive the association, reader, it *would* occur" (434). Even though Lucy scorns these characteristics of Polly, she elevates her when she compares her to Ginevra Fanshawe, especially in her physiognomical and phrenological assessments. Although she finds both of the girls attractive and beautiful, she prefers Polly's graceful and angelic beauty to Ginevra who uses her beauty to manipulate men in the novel:

> Paulina Mary was become beautiful—not with the beauty that strikes the eye like a rose—orbed, ruddy, and replete; not with the plump, and pink, and flaxen attributes of her blond cousin Ginevra; but her seventeen years had brought her a refined and tender charm which did not lie in complexion, though hers was fair and clear; nor in outline, though her features were sweet, and her limbs perfectly turned; but, I think, rather in a subdued glow from the soul outward (287).

As seen, Polly's beauty differs from that of Ginevra; its tender and soft quality is claimed to have resulted from her inner purity and virtues. In this regard, it is important to point out that Lavater also stresses a soft and mild quality in his description of angelic beauty: "all the glories of her angelic form be imbibed like the mild and golden rays of an autumnal evening sun" (Lavater 216). Lucy associates Ginevra's beauty with materialism and earthliness due to her "pink and flaxen attributes" which were associated with excessive femininity and a flirtatious character (Wöckinger 53) while she frequently employs words like soft, delicate, tender and graceful in the representations of Polly's beauty; implying a childlike innocence:

> At dinner that day, Ginevra and Paulina each looked, in her own way, very beautiful; the former, perhaps, boasted the advantage in material charms, but the latter shone pre-eminent for attractions more subtle and spiritual: for light and eloquence of eye, for grace of mien, for winning variety of expression. Ginevra's dress of deep crimson relieved well her light curls, and harmonized with her roselike bloom. Paulina's attire—in fashion close, though faultlessly neat, but in texture clear and white—made the eye grateful for the delicate life of her complexion, for the

> soft animation of her countenance, for the tender depth of her eyes, for the brown shadow and bounteous flow of her hair—darker than that of her Saxon cousin, as were also her eyebrows, her eyelashes, her full irids, and large mobile pupils. Nature having traced all these details slightly, and with a careless hand, in Miss Fanshawe's case; and in Miss de Bassompierre's, wrought them to a high and delicate finish (325-326).

In this comparison of Polly and Ginevra, it is also relevant that Polly is shown to be darker than Ginevra. Lucy might have chosen to present Polly in a darker countenance due to the Victorian idea that darkness symbolized passion in women while blondeness, as seen in Ginevra, was associated with "being extremely feminine- frail or flirtatious or both" (Wöckinger 53).

While Polly represents the ideal domestic woman of the Victorian society in the novel and is criticized for her submissive personality, her cousin Ginevra Fanshawe represents the other "less desirable side of the feminine" (Brennan 24). She is strikingly beautiful and charming although she is selfish, manipulative, vain and devoid of strong character. Lucy refers to her lack of a strong and enduring personality even when she sees her for the first time on the ship which carries her to Villette:

> I noticed, in persons of Ginevra Fanshawe's light, careless temperament, and fair, fragile style of beauty, an entire incapacity to endure: they seem to sour in adversity, like small beer in thunder. The man who takes such a woman for his wife, ought to be prepared to guarantee her an existence all sunshine (*V* 57).

As mentioned before, Ginevra's light skin and hair may be the implication of her flirtatious personality in this description. Lacking mental capacity and the necessary power to endure the difficulties of life, Ginevra regards marriage as the best solution to go on her existence in the society. She particularly yearns for a profitable marriage with which she can lead an easy life and elevate her status in society: "By- and- by we are to marry- rather elderly gentlemen, I suppose, with cash: papa and mama manage that" (55). In this respect, she differs strikingly from

Lucy who does not consider marriage even a possibility. Rather than looking for solutions in someone else, Lucy tries to deal with her problems herself in her way to independence and freedom. Moreover, unlike Ginevra who possesses great physical beauty with her "delicacy of skin and flexibility of shape", freshness and blue sparkling eyes; Lucy seems to be a plain woman who also does not have anyone to care for her. Despite her unfavorable conditions, Lucy "transcends both Ginevra's base, earthy reign and Polly's sickeningly submissive domesticity" (Brennan 29). While Ginevra embodies the Victorian beautiful woman who does not work and lacks strength of character, according to Lucy, Lucy seems to consider herself superior to Ginevra, being (as she pretends, or desires to be) an unrelenting and powerful woman.

In addition to Polly and Ginevra who share the characteristics of being weak, submissive, feminine and unintelligent, Lucy presents another non-working middle-class woman, Mrs. Bretton, in a fairly similar way, through physiognomical and phrenological analyses. Having beautiful dark skin and "cheerful eyes" (3), Mrs. Bretton is also shown as only "marked for beauty, but not for sense or character" (177), implying the vanity of those women who do not reflect any originality of character by being obedient to the established and widespread notions of being a respectable middle-class Victorian woman.

4.3.The Victorian Understanding of Depression, Insanity and Self-control in the Representations of Working Women In *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*

Jane Eyre and *Villette* are stories of two young and employed women who choose to maintain their living by working and, as far as possible, without depending on anybody in their society. Instead of dependency on men through marriage, Jane and Lucy cling to the idea of an employment when they are left alone without a family. Brontë effectively makes use of psychological realism in the representations of these working women by utilizing Victorian understandings of sanity, insanity, depression and self-control. Each of these women experiences stress related to

their employment although there are different reasons for this stress. While Jane suffers from extreme anxiety when she feels that the independence she believes her employment has given her is threatened by marriage, Lucy suffers from stress in all her three jobs in which she is not the boss. She is not shown to be happy in any of her jobs in which she works for someone else and tries to impose self-control in all her employment. She finds happiness only in her last job of running her own school, which points out her personality which cannot stand to submit to any person or set of restrictions. Lucy especially experiences more severe mental conflict and depression because of the restrictive conditions of a job in which she is under constant surveillance and espionage. As seen, Brontë here applies one of the Victorian understandings of insanity, that of it being a partial state which lasts until reason takes control over passions and feelings. This partial insanity could affect anyone under stress as Brontë shows by presenting the cases of Jane and Lucy who find conflicts between their feelings and reason, and by making them regain their old states.

The Victorian idea of exercising self-control to avoid insanity which was believed to reveal itself by disobeying the rules and appropriate codes of behaviors expected from men and women, also appears in the representations of working Jane and Lucy. Experiencing a conflict between her passions for more freedom, independence, and equality with men and her reason throughout the novel, Jane frequently expresses the fight between them and tries to impose self-control over herself to maintain her social position and avoid insanity. However, she begins to lose her self-control when she experiences the extreme anxiety of losing her independence and freedom (which she associates with her financial independence). Lucy Snowe also tries to control herself to hide her passionate personality in the novel, as seen in her efforts to withhold personal information from the other characters and (as narrator) from the reader as well. However, in her case, too much self-control seems to give way to depression. Fearing that the constant gaze of people in her work area may reveal that her personality does not conform with the qualities Victorian society expects from its female members, Lucy Snowe

willingly chooses loneliness as a way of utilizing self-control. Loneliness, however, becomes unbearable for her during the long vacation in which she is left alone without a job in the school. With Lucy's case, Brontë suggests the potential dangerous effects of that excessive self-control which was elsewhere embraced for its positive implications for men and women in the Victorian Period.

Quite similar to Lucy Snowe in that she holds an ambiguous position in her society without a family, Jane Eyre makes her first appearance to the reader in her uncle's house where she is mistreated because she is a dependent. The ten-year-old Jane is distinguished for her fiery nature with which she courageously challenges Mrs. Reed and her children who treat her unpleasantly. Acknowledging the meaning of financial dependency on others for Victorian women, Jane is shown to have fought for independence and freedom since her childhood. Her courageous and unrelenting personality can be clearly seen when she challenges Mr. Brocklehurst, who serves as the embodiment of the patriarchal society that oppresses women with its restrictive rules. When Mr. Brocklehurst asks Jane what she should do to avoid hell, which he claims to be a place for naughty children, Jane gives a striking answer that apparently reflects her fiery and courageous personality: "I must keep in good health, and not die" (*JE* 28). Gilbert claims that Jane's story is "a story of enclosure and escape… in which the problems encountered by the protagonist as she struggles from the imprisonment of her childhood toward an almost unthinkable goal of mature freedom" are indicators of the hardships that women in patriarchal societies should tackle: "oppression (at Gateshead), starvation (at Lowood), madness (at Thornfield), and coldness (at Marsh End) (Gilbert & Gubar 339). Jane seems aware of these problems even when she is still a child, and she starts her journey to freedom and independence with all of these things in her mind. After eight years in the Lowood boarding school where her first experiences include the appalling conditions under which they lived during Mr. Brocklehurst's rule, she feels confined as a teacher there. She feels she is separated from the outside world and unsatisfied with her narrow sphere of existence and experience. She yearns for freedom, which she hoped will come with new employment:

> I had had no communication by letter or message with the outer world: school-rules, school-duties, school-habits and notions, and voices, and faces, and phrases, and costumes, and preferences, and antipathies: such was what I knew of existence. And now I felt that it was not enough; I tired of the routine of eight years in one afternoon. I desired liberty; for liberty I gasped; for liberty I uttered a prayer; it seemed scattered on the wind then faintly blowing. I abandoned it and framed a humbler supplication; for change, stimulus: that petition, too, seemed swept off into vague space: "Then," I cried, half desperate, "grant me at least a new servitude!" (*JE* 84).

Considering the quotation which is given above and the fact that Jane does not find very much freedom of movement in employment, as Lucy will not find it in *Villette*, it can be claimed that Jane feels that total independence and lack of confinement is not possible for her. Both protagonists encounter a very Romantic conflict of an almost ontological sort: Can the human ever be free? They recognize that it is not humanly possible- whether in work or as a child in a family or as a married person since there is always physical and economical dependency which is not related to gender at all. They realize that they cannot be entirely free because of their bodies which need food and shelter, which leads to economic subjugation, and the emotional solace of other people, which shows that all humans are psychologically dependent upon a decree of social integration. Recognizing the impossibility of total freedom from all constraint, Jane, nevertheless, craves a change from her much confined life as a teacher at Lowood and embraces the idea of new employment as a way of gaining some degree of freedom; and she later feels anxious when threatened with the risk of losing her job.

Jane starts her job as a governess to Mr. Rochester's extramarital child Adele[1] in Thornfield and she still feels confined with her new job, which clearly shows her ideal of total liberty. She uses self-control by comparing her situation with that of

[1] The text does not openly say that Adele is Mr. Rochester's child. Adele's mother Celine Varens is shown as Rochester's mistress who has cheated on him with another man. Even though there is a possibility, Rochester is strongly convinced that she is not his child and repeats his conviction at several parts of the novel.

other women of her era to relieve herself. The narrator acknowledges the suffering of Victorian women under the rules of the patriarchal society and asks for freedom and equality for women in a speech that she renders to the reader when discussing her job at Thornfield:

> Millions are condemned to a stiller doom than mine, and millions are in silent revolt against their lot. Nobody knows how many rebellions besides political rebellions ferment in the masses of life which people earth. Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts, as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex (*JE* 109-110).

As Shuttleworth claims, Jane seems to "shift constantly between a sense of power and autonomy and… a feeling of helplessness in the face of irresistible internal forces" throughout the novel (Shuttleworth 33). Although her inner side is filled with passions for liberty and autonomy, she tries to impose control over herself with the fear of losing control and becoming insane (Shuttleworth 33). She applies the same strategy in her new job and tries to get used to its monotonous nature as time passes. She even claims to love it more with the appearance of a master, Mr. Rochester, because of whom she will serve with more purpose: "it had a master: for my part, I liked it better" (*JE* 118). Her restless and passionate nature, which she tries to hide, is revealed to Mr. Rochester who has just met her:

> Do you never laugh, Miss Eyre? Don't trouble yourself to answer—I see you laugh rarely; but you can laugh very merrily: believe me, you are not naturally austere, any more than I am naturally vicious. The Lowood constraint still clings to you somewhat; controlling your features, muffling your voice, and restricting your limbs; and you fear in the presence of a man and a brother—or father, or master, or what you will—to smile too gaily, speak too freely, or

> move too quickly: but, in time, I think you will learn to be natural with me, as I find it impossible to be conventional with you; and then your looks and movements will have more vivacity and variety than they dare offer now. I see at intervals the glance of a curious sort of bird through the close-set bars of a cage: a vivid, restless, resolute captive is there; were it but free, it would soar cloud-high (*JE* 139).

Jane's excessive feelings of anxiety and fear which Mr. Rochester superficially names as "hypochondria" (283) appear long before their wedding ceremony most probably because Jane feels that she will lose the limited independence which she has gained with her employment after getting married. It can be asserted that she considers marriage to be a more confining and restrictive option for women although she acknowledges the fact that she cannot gain total freedom with employment either, as mentioned before. In this respect, Mr. Rochester's excessively patriarchal behaviors towards Jane during the wedding preparation and Jane's class-consciousness (which we may now understand as a consciousness more specifically of economic differences between them), triggered by Mrs. Fairfax's warning about the incompatibility of the match, can be considered to have contributed to Jane's extreme anxiety.

After Jane's acceptance of the marriage proposal, Mr. Rochester demonstrates excessive eagerness to buy expensive jewellery and luxurious clothes for Jane, and this situation makes Jane acknowledge her financial dependence on Mr. Rochester over and over again: "Oh, sir! – never mind jewels! I don't like to hear them spoken of. Jewels for Jane Eyre sounds unnatural and strange: I would rather not have them" (262). Jane makes several attempts to reject Mr. Rochester's desires and actions although nothing can stop his enthusiasm. On one occasion, Jane refuses to be called Mr. Rochester's angel when she says, " 'I am not an angel,' … 'and I will not be one till I die: I will be myself. Mr. Rochester, you must neither expect nor exact anything celestial of me- for you will not get it, any more than I shall get it of you: which I do not at all anticipate" (263). Refusing to undertake the role of "angel-in- the-house", Jane claims that she "had rather be a thing than an angel" (265). However, her anguish goes unnoticed by Rochester who indulges in

buying more for her as time passes: “the more he bought me, the more my cheek burned with a sense of annoyance and degradation” (271). Jane also recognizes the fact that Rochester is acting like a sultan who tries to take control over her physically as if she was his slave: “He smiled; and I thought his smile was such as a sultan might, in a blissful and fond moment, bestow on a slave his gold and gems had enriched: I crushed his hand, which was ever hunting mine, vigorously, and thrust it back to him red with the passionate pressure” (271). Aware of the potential dangers awaiting her before and after marriage, Jane utilizes self-control no matter how much she loves Rochester. She puts limits to their meeting time and continues her job, which Rochester calls “governessing slavery” (273). Jane asserts that she will continue her employment even after she gets married since she fears losing her independence:

> I only want an easy mind, sir; not crushed by crowded obligations. Do you remember what you said of Celine Varens?— of the diamonds, the cashmeres you gave her? I will not be your English Celine Varens. I shall continue to act as Adele’s governess; by that I shall earn my board and lodging, and thirty pounds a year besides. I’ll furnish my own wardrobe out of that money, and you shall give me nothing but— (272).

Jane’s anxiety and increasing pessimism about the marriage gives way to a depressed state which seems to be out of control. As Victorian understandings of temporary insanity implies, her continuously stressed situation during the wedding preparations causes her to lose her self-control, which results in two terrifying dreams and a vision of an animal-like creature in her room before her wedding day. Although Jane firstly insists that she really saw a creature in her room, she finally interprets the vision as a pure hallucination and a warning and half-accepts Rochester’s assurances that the so-called creature was Grace Poole whom Jane “in a state between sleeping and waking… ascribed to a goblin appearance different from her own” (*JE* 288). Her two frightening dreams are characterized by a child who first appears in a dream on the night Bertha attacks Richard Mason. In this first dream, she carries a small, weak and crying child, “following the windings of

an unknown road" in rainy weather and unsuccessfully trying to reach her future husband (284). In her second dream, she sees herself walking among the ruins of Thornfield, still carrying the little child, and following Rochester who looks "like a speck on a white track, lessening every moment" (286). She wakes up by losing her balance and falling down in her dream. As Gilbert claims, the little, wailing child in her dreams may refer to the poor orphan child in Bessie's song at the Reed household and it may in a way refer to the child Jane as well. In the song, the child complains about the length of the road, its sore feet and weary limbs (16). Gilbert asserts that the child's complaint "is still Jane's or at least the complaint of that part of her which resists a marriage of inequality" (Gilbert & Gubar 358). Jane will carry "her orphaned alter ego everywhere" until she achieves her aim of independence, freedom and equality with Rochester (358).

In addition to these dreams, Jane also finds it hard to maintain her self-control after she sees "the savage face" of Bertha Mason in her room. Bertha tears Jane's veil and glares at her with her fiery eyes (287). Because of her terror, Jane loses consciousness and when she regains it she questions Rochester about who that woman was. Gilbert asserts that, although the creature-like woman was Bertha Mason in reality, she is psychologically and figuratively the "avatar of Jane" (359) and so here we can see how Brontë's use of psychological symbolism actually intrudes into the plot itself, collapsing the boundaries between material realism and a literary technique like foreshadowing. She immediately carries out what Jane wants to do as seen in her tearing Jane's expensive veil which Jane dislikes because it reminds her of her economic dependence on Rochester and also, perhaps, because it symbolizes the lack of freedom that her marriage vows will entail. Moreover, fearing what would happen to her after the marriage, Jane has already expressed her wish to cancel it (278) and Bertha does this for her symbolically (Gilbert & Gubar 359). Not able to tolerate losing her independence and limited freedom, Jane stands up to Rochester. When Jane's inner voice teasingly asks who cares for her, Jane says,

> I care for myself. The more solitary, the more friendless, the more unsustained I am, the more I will respect myself. I will keep the law given by God; sanctioned by man. I will hold to the principles received by me when I was sane, and not mad—as I am now. Laws and principles are not for the times when there is no temptation: they are for such moments as this, when body and soul rise in mutiny against their rigour; stringent are they; inviolate they shall be. If at my individual convenience I might break them, what would be their worth? They have a worth— so I have always believed; and if I cannot believe it now, it is because I am insane—quite insane: with my veins running fire, and my heart beating faster than I can count its throbs. Preconceived opinions, foregone determinations, are all I have at this hour to stand by: there I plant my foot (321).

In this passage, Jane reflects the conflict of her passions which force her to stay at Thornfield and her reason which wants her to leave in order to maintain her limited freedom and independence. She again utilizes self-control by claiming that she will act with "the principles" embraced by her in her sanity and secretly leaves Thornfield. She immediately starts to look for a job, as the only way to support herself; she is at this point literally starving and without shelter. She accidentally finds her relatives and starts teaching in a poor village school and tries to deceive herself that she is content to regain her independence, limited freedom and self-control:

> Which is better?—To have surrendered to temptation; listened to passion; made no painful effort—no struggle;—but to have sunk down in the silken snare; fallen asleep on the flowers covering it; wakened in a southern clime, amongst the luxuries of a pleasure villa: to have been now living in France, Mr. Rochester's mistress; delirious with his love half my time—for he would— oh, yes, he would have loved me well for a while… Whether is it better, I ask, to be a slave in a fool's paradise at Marseilles—fevered with delusive bliss one hour—suffocating with the bitterest tears of remorse and shame the next—or to be a village-schoolmistress, free and honest, in a breezy mountain nook in the healthy heart of England? Yes; I feel now that I was right when I adhered to principle and law, and scorned and crushed the insane promptings of a frenzied moment. God

> directed me to a correct choice: I thank His providence for the guidance! (365).

As seen, although Jane is still attracted to the idea of life with Rochester "in the silken snare" which she calls "the insane promptings of a frenzied moment" referring to her passions, she apparently forces herself to stick to self-control ("principle and law") in this passage. Despite her love for Rochester, she still yearns for that Romantic freedom from all constraint (her ideal of liberty), and asserts that she has chosen the best way for her life by leaving Thornfield.

Gilbert and Gubar claim that *Villette* is the most touching and appalling story of "female deprivation ever written" with its heroine Lucy Snowe who is without a family, friends, money and health, which are deemed essential components of existence in the Victorian society (Gilbert & Gubar 400). Lucy also does not have striking beauty and it also makes her situation more difficult combined with the other misfortunes she has. Defeated by these significant handicaps from the beginning of the novel, Lucy acknowledges that her existence is shadowy to the people around her and wants to establish a powerful identity independent of them. She also yearns for a Romantic idea of freedom which ties her to nobody or nothing as Jane does in *Jane Eyre*; however, she is also aware that it is impossible to achieve because of her need to work as a lonely woman with nobody and money, which inevitably makes her act within the society to serve others. Lucy hates taking orders from other people and never feels content in her jobs in which she works for others. Nevertheless, she regards working as the most important way to achieve her dreams of independence and some freedom in this patriarchal society (which she hopes to achieve with establishing her own school), as did Jane in *Jane Eyre*. She initially adopts the idea of a job to survive in the world since she is left alone after a catastrophe which caused her family to perish. Most probably because of the Victorian belief that self-control guards against insanity and also from her own wish to be protected against the society's gaze, she is quite careful about not revealing any clear information about what specifically happened to her family, as she frequently tries to suppress any information related to her background from the

other characters and from the reader, in other parts of the novel as well: “For many days and nights neither sun nor stars appeared; we cast with our own hands the tackling out of the ship; a heavy tempest lay on us; all hope that we should be saved was taken away. In fine, the ship was lost, the crew perished” (*V* 34). After this ambiguous description of what happened to her family, she emphasizes that she has no one but herself to depend on: “I know not that I was of a self-reliant or active nature; but self-reliance and exertion were forced upon me by circumstances, as they are upon thousands besides” (34). Not having any brighter opportunity than being a companion to an old, crippled woman, she unwillingly starts her first job with her awareness of its potential hardships:

> To live here, in this close room, the watcher of suffering—sometimes, perhaps, the butt of temper— through all that was to come of my youth; while all that was gone had passed, to say the least, not blissfully! My heart sunk one moment, then it revived; for though I forced myself to *realise* evils, I think I was too prosaic to *idealise*, and consequently to exaggerate them (35).

Despite her initial reluctance, she gradually gets used to Mrs. Marchmont’s manners and personality and a kind of intimacy grows between them. She does not feel humiliated when reprimanded, because of the respect she has developed for her old employer. She resembles their relationship to the relationship between a mother and a daughter and praises her employer’s reasoning skills and self-control in the face of anger. In this respect, she most probably feels safe with her job as a nurse and companion to Mrs. Marchmont since she is motivated to use her self-control in the presence of this woman who kept her sanity by controlling herself after her fiancé died in her arms following his fall from a horse at a night of terrible storm. Relieved to have found a job in which she serves an affectionate woman and pessimistic because of the tragedy that has fallen upon her, Lucy asserts that she is content with her restrictive job since it satisfies her passions for independence and freedom with the little things it offers to her:

> Two hot, close rooms thus became my world; and a crippled old woman, my mistress, my friend, my all. Her service was my duty—her pain, my suffering—her relief,

> my hope—her anger, my punishment—her regard, my reward. I forgot that there were fields, woods, rivers, seas, an ever-changing sky outside the steam dimmed lattice of this sick chamber; I was almost content to forget it. All within me became narrowed to my lot. Tame and still by habit, disciplined by destiny, I demanded no walks in the fresh air; my appetite needed no more than the tiny messes served for the invalid (36).

Lucy again tries to utilize self-control recognizing the impossibility of her aspiration for total freedom. She tries to deceive herself that she is happy with her narrow sphere in her job, most probably to make her life seem more bearable to herself. However, her so-called happiness does not last long due to the old woman's death. "Though worn, not broken," she immediately commences her search for employment, for the second time (42).

As is claimed, Lucy "will have to seek her identity on foreign soil" since she is a foreigner even in her own country due to her ambiguous position as a woman who is without anybody in the world to care about her and who has to survive on her own terms (Gilbert & Gubar 405). Informed about the job opportunities for English women in foreign families, Lucy sets out on her journey to a foreign country to find a job: "My business is to earn a living where I can find it" (*V* 55). Her journey ends in the fictional Kingdom of Labassecour where (like Jane at Whitcross), she loses even her remaining few possessions ("my few clothes and little pocket-book enclasping the remnant of my fifteen pounds") (61). Feeling hopeless and with no place to go, Lucy accidentally finds the *pensionnat* of Madame Beck who, according to a young girl (Ginevra) who Lucy had met on board ship, was looking for an English governess. Lucy's desperate need for a job is clearly seen when she reports to the reader what she told about herself to Madame Beck: "I told her how I had left my own country, intent on extending my knowledge, and gaining my bread; how I was ready to turn my hand to any useful thing, provided it was not wrong or degrading; how I would be a child's-nurse, or a lady's-maid, and would not refuse even housework adapted to my strength" (65). From this point on, Madame Beck's gaze is turned to spy on Lucy, while continuing its habitual

regulation of what is happening in her institution: “I felt she was not one to be led an inch by her feelings: grave and considerate, she gazed, consulting her judgment and studying my narrative” (66). Apart from Madame Beck’s study of her countenance, Lucy is also exposed to the gazes of other characters as well. For example, her face is also scrutinized by Monsieur Paul who is celebrated for his skill in physiognomy (or so Madame Beck says) at his first encounter with Lucy. Lucy describes her experience of his scrutiny in a detailed way: “The little man fixed on me his spectacles: A resolute compression of the lips, and gathering of the brow, seemed to say that he meant to see through me, and that a veil would be no veil for him” (67).

Lucy starts a job of a nursery governess in Madame Beck’s *pensionnat.* Here Madame rules through espionage and surveillance as seen in her “spying at keyholes, oiling the doors, imprinting keys, opening drawers, carefully scrutinizing Lucy’s private memorabilia, and turning the girl’s pockets inside out” (Gilbert & Gubar 408); Mme Beck’s behavior stands for the society’s gaze that threatens to uncover Lucy’s self, something that she fears, (Shuttleworth 39); it is a threat that is made up of the conflict between imagination (feelings) and reason in Lucy’s case, but she refuses to reveal much about her inner feelings and her life – neither to Madame Beck and the other characters nor to the reader. As is claimed, Madame Beck becomes the “symbol of repression, the projection and embodiment of Lucy’s commitment to self-control” in the novel (Gilbert & Gubar 408).

Lucy avoids forming a close and intimate relationship with any person in the *pensionnat* and regards her loneliness as her own choice even though it gives her more depression: “But I must not complain. I lived in a house full of robust life; I might have had companions, and I chose solitude” (*V* 129). After she gets a new, better job as an English teacher in the school, she tries to find a reasonable colleague to befriend, but she finds faults with them all. In fact, Lucy is very much inclined to finding faults with anyone, including her students whom she frequently

and severely criticizes for not being able to bear "severe or continuous mental application… heavy demand on the memory, the reason, the attention" (84).

To keep her sanity and maintain social respectability in her new society and job, she devotes all her time to teaching others and studying her own nature (*V* 83). She claims that although she does not have any spare time left for anything else, she finds it pleasant, most probably because it diverts her attention away from her solitude and strong passions for freedom and independence. However, her satisfaction with solitude ends during the long vacation of more confinement and isolation in which she is left alone in the school with a deformed "cretin". She describes it as follows:

> My heart almost died within me; miserable longings strained its chords. How long were the September days! How silent, how lifeless! How vast and void seemed the desolate premises! How gloomy the forsaken garden— grey now with the dust of a town summer departed. Looking forward at the commencement of those eight weeks, I hardly knew how I was to live to the end. My spirits had long been gradually sinking; now that the prop of employment was withdrawn, they went down fast. Even to look forward was not to hope: the dumb future spoke no comfort, offered no promise, gave no inducement to bear present evil in reliance on future good. A sorrowful indifference to existence often pressed on me—a despairing resignation to reach betimes the end of all things earthly (162).

At the beginning of the vacation, she looks after a weak, deformed and mentally deficient pupil who has been rejected by her stepmother and is later taken in by an aunt. Lucy claims that the time she spent looking after this child deprived her of the power to eat regularly, breathe fresh air, and act freely. She refers to the damage this experience put on her nervous system when she says,

> my nervous system could hardly support what it had for many days and nights to undergo in that huge empty house… As she very rarely spoke, and would sit for hours together moping and mowing, and distorting her features with indescribable grimaces, it was more like being

> prisoned with some strange tameless animal, than associating with a human being (163).

As Gilbert and Gubar claim, the small, mentally and physically ill girl who is left in the school with Lucy might embody "a last nightmarish version of" Lucy due to the fact that she is "unwanted, lethargic, silent, warped in mind and body, slothful, indolent, and angry" (414). The child, in this way, provides a warning for Lucy who will collapse mentally and start seeing hallucinations soon. Luckier than Lucy who is totally left alone in her despair in the school, the child is later taken by an aunt. After the child is taken away, Lucy starts walking around all the day to relieve herself; however, she desperately needs a companion: "A goad thrust me on, a fever forbade me to rest; a want of companionship maintained in my soul the cravings of a most deadly famine" (164). Bereft of anyone next to her, she pictures other people with their families and friends enjoying time together. She particularly focuses on Ginevra who serves as some sort of fantasy alter ego for Lucy with her fulfillment of the fantasies of Lucy in terms of travel freedom and love:

> There was Madame Beck at a cheerful watering place with her children, her mother, and a whole troop of friends who had sought the same scene of relaxation. Zélie St. Pierre was at Paris, with her relatives; the other teachers were at their homes. There was Ginevra Fanshawe, whom certain of her connections had carried on a pleasant tour southward. Ginevra seemed to me the happiest. She was on the route of beautiful scenery; these September suns shone for her on fertile plains, where harvest and vintage matured under their mellow beam. These gold and crystal moons rose on her vision over blue horizons waved in mounted lines… By True Love was Ginevra followed: never could she be alone (164-165).

Filling her mind with these thoughts of the happiness other people have and her own loneliness and hopelessness, Lucy finally falls ill after "a day and night of peculiarly agonizing depression" (*V* 165). She begins to see the white dormitory beds turning into specters:

> the coronal of each became a death's-head, huge and sun-bleached—dead dreams of an elder world and mightier race lay frozen in their wide gaping eye holes. That evening

> more firmly than ever fastened into my soul the conviction that Fate was of stone, and Hope a false idol—blind, bloodless, and of granite core (166).

As Machuca claims, Lucy's constant effort to utilize self-control in her life and job might be the main reason behind her depression and falling ill in the end. Although Lucy may have chosen her solitude and to devote herself to her job "to induce self-control and, thereby, sanity", they cause "a mental conflict" that becomes excessively stressful for Lucy, and leads to her strained physical and mental health (Machuca 49). As seen, Brontë here utilizes the Victorian understanding of depression as possible to occur in any person under stress. She also seems to contradict the positive implications of self-control (to avoid insanity or any kind of mental disorder) by presenting Lucy in a depressed state after an excessive effort to control herself.

Lucy recovers from her illness with the help of Dr. John and his mother, who turn out to be the Bretton family. Dr. John diagnoses the presence of "hypochondria" in Lucy and advises her to avoid loneliness and engage in exercise. Lucy spends the remaining part of her holiday with the Bretton family and regains her old healthy state. Her negative feelings for the *pensionnat* reveal themselves again when she has to go back to the school to work: "YET THREE DAYS, and then I must go back to the *pensionnat*. I almost numbered the moments of these days upon the clock; fain would I have retarded their flight; but they glided by while I watched them: they were already gone while I yet feared their departure" (235).

Although Lucy returns to the *pensionnat* with a fresh mind, she again seems to be torn between her imagination, which redeems impossible, total freedom in her actions, and reason which dictates careful behavior and actions, and she again experiences what she believes to be fantastic events or hallucinations. These are in fact caused by seeing a nun – which towards the end of the novel turns out to have been one of Ginevra's lovers. As Gilbert and Gubar claim, "the nun appears to Lucy on five separate occasions, at moments of great passion, when she is an actor in her own life", such as when she attempts to read Dr. John's letters or tries to

bury them (qtd in Gilbert & Gubar 425). Considering this, it can be claimed that Lucy never feels safe in her job in Madame Beck's *pensionnat* because of the system of surveillance and spying (and because she has no companion to share her worries with), and she is shown as likely to experience a kind of mental disorder resulting from it. Although the nun does not exist in reality, it becomes the embodiment of Lucy's harmful self-control in the novel. She later expresses her desire to achieve the freedom and independence which is denied to her in Madame Beck's *pensionnat* by talking about a plan to establish her own school and she makes it clear that she is able to survive in Madame Beck's system only because of this aim:

> Courage, Lucy Snowe! With self-denial and economy now, and steady exertion by-and-by, an object in life need not fail you. Venture not to complain that such an object is too selfish, too limited, and lacks interest; be content to labour for independence until you have proved, by winning that prize, your right to look higher. But afterwards, is there nothing more for me in life—no true home—nothing to be dearer to me than myself, and by its paramount preciousness, to draw from me better things than I care to culture for myself only? Nothing, at whose feet I can willingly lay down the whole burden of human egotism, and gloriously take up the nobler charge of labouring and living for others? (376-377).

Lucy is shown to be happy only after she establishes her own school with the help of Monsieur Paul. Her school prospers with her hard work and unexpected money which comes from Mr. Marchmont who was previously introduced by Lucy as the greedy cousin of Miss Marchmont. At the end of the novel, she acknowledges Monsieur Paul's great contribution to her success:

> The secret of my success did not lie so much in myself, in any endowment, any power of mine, as in a new state of circumstances, a wonderfully changed life, a relieved heart. The spring which moved my energies lay far away beyond seas, in an Indian isle. At parting, I had been left a legacy; such a thought for the present, such a hope for the future, such a motive for a persevering, a laborious, an enterprising, a patient and a brave course—I could not flag. Few things shook me now; few things had importance to

> vex, intimidate, or depress me: most things pleased—mere trifles had a charm (514).

As seen, Lucy emerges as a lively and hopeful woman with her new job in which she works for herself without submitting to anybody's authoritative manners and she seems to have hopes for her future for the first time in the novel.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study has aimed to refine our understanding of the representation of working women in Victorian fiction through an analysis of the use of social realism in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth* by Elizabeth Gaskell and the use of psychological realism in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* by Charlotte Brontë. The detailed analysis of the uses of social and psychological realism in these novels revealed that these writers presented the needs for and benefits of decently paid employment for women despite the prevalence of unpleasant conditions awaiting women in their work areas. It showed that the authors were inspired by the conditions and problems of working women in their society, and produced their works as tools of criticism of the social, moral and psychological problems encountered by these women. Despite their shared concern for the working women of their era, Gaskell and Brontë differ in the ways they reflect these women, their problems and conditions, in their novels. While Gaskell utilizes social realism in her representations of working women in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth,* as she does in her dealing with other social problems of the Victorian period Brontë mainly benefits from the psychological theories of her era in her representations of working women in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*.

The analysis of Gaskell's use of social realism in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth* revealed the important fact that her novels make use of social realism mainly by presenting working women characters in their social interactions and contexts, reflecting the society's beliefs about the professions that women were engaged in during the Victorian Period, and employing a variety of social details related to life in their time. Another significant result of the analysis is that her novels present both the positive and the negative aspects of women's work in three main areas, which are domestic service, needlework and nursing; negative aspects of such employments outnumber the positive ones in these novels. Considering this, it has been asserted that these novels utilize social realism mainly to reveal the problematic aspects of

such employments for women, pointing out the changes in society that could achieve better working conditions for women. They also make it clear that they encourage women's work and progress in different fields, through their frequent criticism of idle middle-class or upper-class ladies.

Mary Barton and *Ruth* reflect both positive and negative aspects of women working in domestic service. While *Ruth* renders to the reader mainly a positive picture of working as a servant through the characters Sally and Ruth, which proposes domestic service as a reasonable option for working-class women provided that it is carried out in well-mannered middle-class or upper-class families; *Mary Barton* presents a negative portrayal of domestic service through its presentation of the job as further limiting women's already limited freedom with its removal from their lives of some privileges such as gossiping with neighbors, with its rigid rules and regulations as to working hours and dress codes, and with its long and monotonous working hours spent in attendance on others.

Mary Barton and *Ruth* present needlework in a negative way mainly through their heroines Mary and Ruth, by especially referring to the low salaries offered, long and monotonous working hours, and the health problems caused by the work. Analyses of these novels have also found that *Ruth* draws a more detailed picture of needleworkers in its scenes, showing dressmakers engaged in their work in unpleasant conditions. Taking this into consideration, it can be claimed that such details are utilized in the novel to arouse sympathy for its so-called fallen character Ruth.

Nursing is not given much space in these novels and mainly rendered to the reader with Ruth as a sick nurse. Through the ideas of its characters and experience of Ruth, inadequate training in the field, incompetency and cruelty of some nurses are implied in the novel. Despite these negative aspects, Ruth is implied to gain redemption in her society with this job, in which she helped lots of sick people sometimes by not taking money and by risking her own life.

Gaskell also courageously presents the challenges awaiting women in factory work, in both *Mary Barton* and *Ruth*. Through the ideas and experiences of her characters, she reveals the Victorians' association of the job with the increasing numbers of prostitutes in the society and with dissolution of family ties which they considered to result from women's ignorance of their families due to their long hours of work in factories. However, as especially seen in *Mary Barton*, they do not relate women's morality to the type of employment they are engaged in by emphasizing factory women's intelligence, unattractive faces and indifferent manners towards the men who try to communicate with them. Moreover, both of these novels reflect the Victorians' idea of separate spheres for men and women and the widespread ideology of domestic space for women. Although they support women's factory work as a necessity for survival, and even show how rejecting it could be the main factor in a woman's fall, as seen in Esther's case when she is abandoned with her sick child in *Mary Barton*, they appear to prioritize jobs considered suitable for women's celebrated domestic nature by showing characters who have the experience of factory work lacking domestic skills and not showing any factory women engaged in their work.

Both of the novels handle the issue of prostitution through their characters and do not imply any association between their situation as fallen women in the society and their working in a job. Rejecting this simple association, they challenge society by investigating and reflecting the pathetic circumstances such as lack of parental guidance and knowledge about world that lead to their fall. In this regard, as Webster claims, this implication is related to Gaskell's Unitarian beliefs that man is not inherently sinful and mainly the environment shapes the individual (Webster 6). Gaskell asks for empathy from the reader for these women, by presenting their plight and repentance. These women are also implied to achieve redemption through their good deeds at the end of these novels.

The analysis of the uses of physiognomy and phrenology in descriptions of working and non-working women in the two Brontë novels brought out the result

that Brontë mainly uses physiognomical science in descriptions of women in these novels, and she repeatedly and consistently utilizes certain facial features such as foreheads/brows, eyes, hair and chins in her descriptions, enabling the reader to find certain aspects of personality in the women who possess these features. Moreover, the implications of these physiognomical details in the novels are in line with what they indicated in the Victorian scientists' understanding of physiognomy, and they are supported by the characters' actions and general descriptions given, most of the time, by the narrators in these novels.

Another finding to be noted is that these novels utilize physiognomical and phrenological science in a way that distinguishes working women from non-working women in certain characteristics of personality such as high mental and intellectual capacities, diligence and resistance against the confining Victorian society. As the narrators of these novels, Jane and Lucy provide most of the physiognomical and phrenological analyses. They tend to describe non-working women in ways that indicate a lack of intelligence, originality and strength of character, whereas they occasionally point out the existence of such characteristics in working women. However, the novels mostly provide the physiognomical and phrenological analyses of strong middle-class working women who can be pioneers in leading to changes that can improve the conditions of women in their society, while describing lower class women in stereotypical terms.

While in *Jane Eyre* Miss Temple is presented as an ideal woman of her era, with her unrelenting, courageous, honorable and intelligent personality, which is indicated by her "dark eyes", "large arched forehead" and "the whiteness of large front", and also by her deeds and behavior, in *Villette* Madame Beck is praised for her disciplined personality which makes use of self-control and rationality in her behavior, as implied by her regular facial features. Apart from these women, other middle-class working women such as the Rivers sisters Diana and Mary (in *Jane Eyre*) and Mademoiselle St Pierre (in *Villette*) are rendered in physiognomical terms even though they are not given detailed descriptions. Mlle St Pierre's

negative reading reflects the fact that Brontë's texts do not discriminate in their treatments of working and non-working women if these female characters demonstrate a personality bereft of power, industriousness and resistance.

It has been revealed that Brontë criticizes non-working women for their several shared characteristics through her use of physiognomy and phrenology which abounds in their descriptions. It has also been found out that in physiognomical and phrenological readings *Jane Eyre* makes a sharper distinction between working and non-working women than *Villette*, which might be related to the fact that upper-class ladies who indulge themselves in their idleness abound in the earlier novel. In *Jane Eyre*, facial characteristics such as "low brow", "developed under jaw", "large and prominent chin", "eyes devoid of ruth", "haughty lips", and "dark hair" are commonly observed in upper-class ladies and imply their materialism, pride, passionate personalities and scornful treatment of working-class women, which might be an indirect criticism to the society which celebrates these women as ideal for their remarkable beauty, extreme attention to physical beauty and preference for the domestic sphere.

In *Villette*, Polly Home and Ginevra Fanshawe, as non-working women, are given special attention in terms of their facial characteristics, and criticized as seen in their physiognomical descriptions which indicate a shared characteristic of their need for the support of a male figure; these characteristics are Polly's "fixed and heavy gaze" and "small, overcast brow" and Ginevra's "pink and flaxen attributes", "blondeness" and "fragile style of beauty".

The analyses showed that Brontë's appliance of the Victorian understandings of depression, insanity and self-control in her representations of working women in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* are mainly found in presentations of her protagonists Jane and Lucy, and it is used particularly to demonstrate their feelings and ideas about, or conditions in, their employment. In both cases, these conditions, combined with the protagonists' personalities, lead to their psychological collapse. Both of these women nurture a Romantic idea of freedom from all restrictions even though they

are aware of the fact that they cannot fulfill such a dream, considering that all humans have certain physical, social, psychological or financial dependencies on others. In this regard, this study has laid bare the fact that Jane and Lucy still cling to the idea of an employment to achieve some freedom in the society even though they acknowledge that such a freedom is not the same as the one they yearn for. Nevertheless, they consider working a better choice than marriage, which they believe to confine the existence of women more, and which the contemporary women usually preferred.

Both Jane and Lucy experience stress related to their employment although they differ in their reasons. They both follow Victorian ideas in trying to use self-control to avert psychological collapse, as seen in their frequent efforts to deceive themselves that they are content with their life and luckier than other working women. As indicated in the Victorian theories of depression which claimed that stress could lead to mental and psychological breakdown in anyone, the stress of this imposed self-control negatively affects Jane and Lucy. They undergo a period of partial insanity, which is caused by conflicts between their passions dictating that they act freely and in line with their desires, and reason putting limits to the ways in which they allow themselves to act. Their loss of self-control lasts until reason seizes their passions and feelings, as the Victorians believed, and they regain their old states again.

It has been found that Jane makes use of self-control mainly to adapt to an unpromising future, and to the monotonous nature and narrow scope of all her employments. Her excessively anxious state of mind appears after she accepts Mr. Rochester's proposal of marriage. Rochester's desire to buy expensive jewellery and luxurious clothes for her makes Jane realize her financial dependence on him over and over again, and she also recognizes his effort to possess her physically as an unacceptable form of mastery, treating her as if she was his slave even before their marriage. Considering these things, Jane fears losing the limited freedom she has gained with her job after the marriage. She applies self-control over herself;

however, as implied by Victorian understandings of temporary insanity, her permanently stressed state causes her to lose self-control, resulting in terrifying dreams and a half-accepted hallucination by Jane (which is in fact Bertha Mason).

As Jane does in *Jane Eyre*, so does Lucy Snowe impose self-control over herself to hide her fiery personality from others, and to keep her social status and sanity in *Villette*. Lucy is not shown as happy in any of her employments before her last job of ruling her own school. She suffers from stress in all of these jobs in which she is not the boss and, as is the case with Jane, she mainly uses her self-control to avoid reacting emotionally to the problems encountered in her jobs. She especially suffers from a more severe mental conflict and depression during the time she works at Madame Beck's school where she is exposed to the surveillance and penetrating gaze of Madame Beck and other characters. She applies too much control over herself and chooses loneliness, which leads to her falling ill and experiencing what seem to be hallucinations to her. In this regard, it can be asserted that her use of too much control leads to her depressed state, and with this collapse Brontë contradicts the celebrated benefits of self-control (to avoid insanity) in the Victorian understanding of insanity and self-control. Lucy's anxiety lasts until she establishes her own school with the help of the absent Monsieur Paul and she seems truly happy for the first time in the novel.

All in all, it is possible to say that although Gaskell and Brontë differed in the predominating kinds of realism they used in their representations of working women, they share the same concern of reflecting the problems of working women of their society in their novels. Both of these writers show the needs for and benefits of decently paid employment for women. An important point is that these writers courageously reveal the problems bothering working women, most probably with the idea that such presentations can lead to transformations in society. Another significant finding is that they employ every appropriate technique or method in their use of social or psychological realism, an example of which can be seen in the uses to which they put their narrators. Gaskell's use of social realism

in presenting the working women of her time is supported by the use of the third-person narration, which gives a sense of rendering to the reader the social realities of the Victorian Period in a scientific and objective way, as desired by social realists. On the other hand, with her first person narrators Brontë effectively conveys to the reader the psychological theories of her time through a portrayal of the inner lives of her two working protagonists in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*. Reflecting such consistency, even in the use of narrators, in their appliance of social and psychological realism Gaskell and Brontë leave us these fascinating novels of women, their space and work in Victorian society.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tez Viktorya dönemi romanlarında çalışan kadın tasvirlerini, Elizabeth Gaskell'in *Mary Barton* ve *Ruth* romanlarında toplumsal gerçekçilik kullanımının ve Charlotte Brontë'nin *Jane Eyre* ve *Villette* romanlarında psikolojik gerçekçilik kullanımının analizi ile göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışmada toplumsal ve psikolojik gerçekçilik açısından yapılan analizler, Gaskell'in ve Brontë'nin, kadınların çalışma alanlarındaki kısıtlayıcı durumlara rağmen, kadınlar için çalışma fikrini benimsediklerini ve eserlerini üretirken bu kadınları çevreleyen toplumsal, ahlaki ve psikolojik problemlerden etkilendiklerini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Çağlarının çalışan kadınları için gösterdikleri bu endişeye ve ilgiye rağmen, Gaskell ve Brontë, romanlarında bu kadınları, onların yaşam şartlarını ve problemlerini farklı şekillerde gösterirler. Gaskell, toplumunun diğer problemlerini betimlemede kullandığı toplumsal gerçekçiliği bu romanlarında çalışan kadınları gösterme de kullanırken, Brontë temel olarak bu kadınların tasvirinde çağının psikoloji teorilerinden yararlanır.

Gaskell'in *Mary Barton* ve *Ruth* kitaplarında toplumsal gerçekçilik açısından yapılan analizler, Gaskell'in çalışan kadınların tasvirinde toplumsal gerçekçiliği, çağının toplumsal gerçeklerine yönelik birçok detay vererek, çalışan kadınları sosyal ilişkilerinde göstererek ve toplumun bu kadınlarla ilgili düşüncelerini yansıtarak kullandığını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Diğer bir önemli sonuç ise Gaskell'in bu kitaplarında temel olarak üç çalışma alanına (ev işi, nakış işi ve fabrika işine) yoğunlaştığı ve bu işleri hem olumlu hem de olumsuz şartlarıyla ortaya koyduğudur. Gaskell bu çalışma alanlarının şartlarını ortaya çıkarırken karakterlerinin düşüncelerinden ve deneyimlerinden yararlanır. Yapılan analizler Gaskell'in daha çok, bu çalışma alanlarının olumsuz yönlerini vurguladığı ve kitaplarında yansıttığını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu durum göz önünde bulundurularak,

Gaskell'in bu romanlarında kadınların çalışma alanlarının daha çok olumsuz yönlerini göstererek, toplumda bu çalışma alanlarında yapılması gereken değişikliklere dikkat çektiği iddia edilmiştir. Bunların dışında, Gaskell'in kadınların farklı alanlarda ilerlemesini desteklediği ve bu metinlerde çalışmayan elit tabaka kadınlarını sıklıkla eleştirdiği saptanmıştır. Bu eleştirilerin en bariz örnekleri, *Mary Barton* isimli romanda John Barton'un elit tabaka kadınlarını bütün gün alışveriş yapıp, piyano çalmakla suçladığı kısımda ve Ruth'un kendi adını verdiği eserde çalışmayan soylu sınıf kadınlara hayatın anlamına dair ne bildiklerini sorduğu kısımda bulunur.

Mary Barton ve *Ruth* evlerde verilen hizmetin hem olumlu hem de olumsuz yönlerini bu alanda çalışan kadın karakterler kullanarak, onların deneyim ve sosyal etkileşimlerini yansıtarak ve Viktorya toplumunun bu alan hakkında görüşlerine yer vererek gösterir. *Ruth,* Sally ve Ruth isimli karakterleriyle evlerde verilen hizmet çeşitlerini olumlu bir şekilde okuyucuya yansıtır. Bu bağlamda, özellikle Sally işverenleriyle sevgi, saygı ve samimiyete dayalı güzel bir ilişki içinde gösterilir. Böyle bir ilişkinin nedenleri ve Sally'nin işinde sahip olduğu ayrıcalıklar okuyucuya verilir. Sally'nin yanı sıra, Ruth da Bradshaw ailesinde sürdürdüğü çocuk bakıcılığı işinde birçok avantaja ve ayrıcalığa sahiptir. Ruth'un tipik bir günü, maaşı ve işverenlerinin ona karşı tutumu okuyucuya detaylı bir şekilde sunulur. Ruth'un bu işi, ona, bağımsızlık, ayakları üstünde durabilme ve dünya tecrübesi ve bilgisi kazandırır. Thurstan ailesinden aldığı eğitimden ve Bradshaw ailesinde işiyle kazandığı deneyimlerden sonra, Ruth artık kötü niyetlere ve sahtekârlıklara kurban gidecek bir kadın değildir. Bay Bellingham'ın evlilik teklifini reddetmesi bunu kanıtlar niteliktedir. Bütün bunlara dayanarak, iyi tutumlu orta sınıf ya da elit sınıflar olması kaydıyla, *Ruth* romanının, ev işini çalışan sınıf kadınına makul bir seçenek olarak sunduğu iddia edilebilir. Bu şekilde, bu çalışma alanı, kadının yaşam alanını kısıtlayan ve ona köle muamelesi yapan bir alan olmaktan çıkar.

Ruth'a kıyasla *Mary Barton,* ev hizmetini negatif bir şekilde gösterir. Bunu yaparken, Mary ve John Barton'un bu işle ilgili olumsuz görüşlerinden (ki bunlar Viktorya toplumunda bu çalışma alanıyla ilgili görüşlerdir) ve Alice Wilson'ın eski iş deneyiminden yararlanır. Bu çalışma alanı, kadınların zaten kısıtlı olan özgürlüklerini; çalışma saatlerine, giyinme şartlarına yönelik katı kural ve düzenlemeleriyle, başkaları için harcanan yoğun, sıkıcı ve uzun çalışma saatleriyle daha da kısıtlarmış gibi yansıtılmıştır. Alice özellikle işi yüzünden ailesine zaman ayıramadığından yakınmaktadır. Ailesini iş bulmak için terk ettikten sonra annesini bir daha göremediği için büyük bir üzüntü içinde gösterilmektedir. Ayrıca, Alice'in romanın bir yerinde neden ailesini ziyaret edemediği hakkında yaptığı konuşma Alice ve zamanın çalışan kadınlarının bu çalışma alanında nasıl sömürülere maruz kaldığını açık bir şekilde göstermektedir.

Nakış işi *Mary Barton* ve *Ruth* isimli eserlerde toplumsal gerçekçilikle gösterilen diğer bir çalışma alanıdır. Bu çalışma alanı Gaskell'in romanlarında en geniş kapsamlı incelenen meslektir. *Mary Barton* ve *Ruth*'un kahramanları da bu iş alanında çalışır ve bu romanlarda bu çalışma alanına dair birçok detaylı bilgi sağlanır. Bu romanlar, nakış işini, düşük maaşlara, uzun ve monoton çalışma saatlerine ve bu çalışma alanının sebep olduğu sağlık sorunlarına değinerek oldukça negatif bir şekilde yansıtırlar. *Mary Barton*'da nakış işçilerinin çalışma şartları ve içinde bulundukları olumsuz durumlar, okuyucuya Mary ve Margaret yoluyla aktarılır ve roman bu karakterlerin maaşlarına, çalışma saatlerine ve sağlık problemlerine değinir. Üzerine yoğunlaşılan bu konular, okuyucuya birçok toplumsal detayla aktarılır. Örneğin, karakterlerin maaşları kiralarıyla ya da günlük iyi bir yemek öğününün fiyatıyla kıyaslanır. Bu gibi toplumsal detaylar romanın gerçeğe benzerliğini güçlendirir. Başka bir örnek ise, ucuz giyim üretiminde çalışan Margaret'ın işi yüzünden kör olmasıdır. Körlüğüne sebep olarak, geceleyin kendi evinde kendi mumlarıyla sürdürmeye çalıştığı işi gösterilir. Margaret'ın karşılaştığı bu durum Viktorya dönemi üzerine yazılan birçok kitapta, yaygınlığı dile getirilen bir durumdur. Bunların yanı sıra, bu romanlarda yapılan analizler *Ruth*'un *Mary Barton*'a kıyasla nakış işinde çalışan işçilere dair daha çok detay

verdiğini saptamıştır. *Ruth* bu işçileri mesai saatleri içinde okuyucuya yansıtır, onlara yemek olarak ne sunulduğunu ve onların yemeklerini nasıl yediklerini bile anlatır. Bu detaylar romanın sözde günahkar karakteri Ruth'a empati uyandırmak için kullanılmış olabilir. Diğer bir deyişle, dehşet verici çalışma şartları, roman okurlarının Ruth'u, evlilik dışı ilişkisini değerlendirirken, göz önünde bulundurmaları için okuyucuya sunulmuş olabilir.

Gaskell hem *Mary Barton* hem de *Ruth* isimli eserlerinde, fabrikalarda çalışan kadınların sorunlarına değinir. Viktorya toplumunun bu çalışma alanına yönelik ön yargısını karakterlerinin düşünce ve deneyimleriyle okuyucuya aktarır. Bu bağlamda, romanların bu mesleğe yönelik değindiği konular, bu mesleğin toplumda sayıları gittikçe artan hayat kadınlarıyla bağdaştırılması, fabrikada çalışan kadınların evlerini ve ailelerini çalışma saatleri yüzünden ihmal etmeleri ve bunun sonucu olarak ailelerin dağılmasıdır. Bunlara ek olarak, bu romanlar, Viktorya toplumunda yaygın olan, kadınlara ve erkeklere ayrılan farklı alanlar ideolojisini de yansıtırlar. Bu ideolojiye göre kadına ayrılan alan evidir ve kadının çalışmasına iyi gözle bakılmaz. Bu çalışmada yapılan incelemeler, bu romanların kadınların fabrikalarda çalışmalarına, hayatta kalabilmeleri için bir zorunluluk olarak baktıklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bunun bir örneği *Mary Barton*'da hasta çocuğuna bakmak zorunda kalan Esther'dir. Esther işsiz kaldığı için hayat kadını olur. Fakat, bu romanlar fabrika işine ılımlı yaklaşsalar bile, kadının benimsenen evcimen yapısına uygun işlere öncelik verirler ve bu tür işleri okuyucuya daha detaylı aktarırlar.

Mary Barton'da fabrikada çalışan kadınlar, dış görünüşleri ve davranış biçimleri açısından detaylı bir şekilde anlatılırlar ve kavrama güçlerine ve zekâlarına vurgu yapılır. Ayrıca dikkat çekici olmayan çehrelerine ve kendileriyle iletişim kurmak isteyen erkeklere karşı ilgisiz tutumlarına da yer verilir. Yansıtılan bu özellikler, bu çalışma alanının toplumda sayıları artmakta olan hayat kadınlarıyla özdeşleştirilmesi fikrini çürütmeye yönelik verilmiş olabilir. Roman, Viktorya toplumunun bu mesleğe dair olumsuz düşüncelerini, çoğunlukla John Barton'un

fikirleriyle yansıtır. John Barton, Esther'in evi terk ettikten sonra hayat kadınlığı yaptığını düşünür ve ondaki ahlaki değişime işinin sebep olduğunu iddia eder. Bu yüzden, Mary'nin fabrikada çalışması olanaksızdır. Mary bir terzinin yanında işe başlar, fakat roman onu yüksek mevkiye ulaşma hayalleri olan hayalperest bir genç kız olarak yansıtır. Mary hayallerine ulaşmak için Harry Carson ile görüşmeye başlar ve bu şekilde Esther'in yolunu izler. Mary'nin bu şekilde yansıtılması, romanın, kadının ahlakının işiyle özdeşleştirilmesi fikrine karşı olduğunu ortaya koyar. Romanda fabrika işine kadınlar için ahlaki bir tehlike temsil eden bir sorun olarak bakılmasa da, fabrikada çalışmakta olan kadınlara ve onların içinde bulundukları olumsuz şartlara asla değinilmez. Romanda sadece fabrika deneyimi olan birkaç kadın karaktere yer verilir. Bu bağlamda, Bayan Wilson bu meslekte çalışan kadınları temsil eden başkarakterdir ve konuşmalarında genellikle fabrika işinin, kadının ev işlerindeki becerisini olumsuz etkilediğinden bahseder. Örneğin, eski bir fabrika işçisi olarak, kendisinin, evliliğinin ilk zamanlarında patates pişirmeyi bile bilmediğini iddia eder. Bunun ve fabrika işiyle bağlantılı birçok sorunun, evlilikleri olumsuz bir şekilde etkilediğini ve ailelerin dağılmasında başlıca neden olduğunu düşünür. Bütün bunlar bu romanda kadınların fabrikada çalışmalarının genel anlamda desteklendiğini fakat bu alanda çalışan evli kadınlar üzerine endişe duyulduğunu açıkça göstermektedir.

Mary Barton hayat kadını meselesini Esther ve Harry Carson'la gönül eğlendiren Mary ile gösterir. Her iki durumda da, bu kadınları değerlendirirken, onların yaşam şartlarını göz önünde bulundurur. Hiçbir zaman, bu karakterlerin ahlakını, işleriyle bağdaşlaştırmaz. Viktorya toplumunda var olan bu basit bağdaşlaştırmayı reddeden bu roman, Esther'in hayat kadınlığına atılmasına neden olan dış etkenleri ve içler acısı durumları yansıtarak topluma meydan okur. Sevgilisi tarafından terk edilen Esther hasta çocuğu ile çaresiz kalmıştır ve makara ve mezurasıyla evde nakış işi yaparak para kazanmaya çalışır. Kirasını ödeyemediği için, Esther'in nakış aletlerine ev sahibi el koyar ve hiçbir seçeneği olmayan Esther hayat kadını olarak yaşamını devam ettirmeye başlar. Bu bağlamda, Esther'in nakış aletlerini elinden alan ev sahibi dolaylı olarak onun ahlaksızlığına neden olmuştur ve tüm toplumu

temsil etmektedir. Romanda verilen bu mesajın, Gaskell'in Üniteryen fikirlerini açığa çıkardığı söylenebilir. Gaskell'e göre, insanoğlu doğuştan günahkâr değildir ve çevre insanı ve onun hareketlerini şekillendiren temel faktördür. Gaskell bu fikrini romanlarında hayat kadınlarını sergilerken sıklıkla kullanır ve bu kadınların çektiği ızdırap ve pişmanlıklarını yansıtarak okuyucudan onlar için şefkat göstermelerini ister. Bu fikirler *Ruth*'da da görülmektedir. Roman sürekli Ruth'un kötü yola düşmesine neden olan çevresel faktörlere ve Ruth'un masum kişiliğine dikkat çekmektedir. Ruth'un bu günahı işlemesini işiyle bağdaşlaştırmasa da, terzi yanında atölyede çalışırken harcadığı monoton saatleri, berbat çalışma şartlarını ve Pazar günleri işçilere sağlanan özgürlüğü, Ruth'un evlilik dışı ilişkiye girmesine neden olan küçük faktörler olarak göstermiştir. Ruth'un ailesel destek ve cinsel bilgi eksikliğini, bu günahı işlemesine neden olan en önemli faktörler olarak sunmuştur. Esther'in durumunda olduğu gibi, Ruth da romanın sonunda, yıllarca acı çektikten sonra, toplum tarafından bağışlanmış gibi gösterilir. Esther'in affedilmesi Mary'nin kötü yola düşmesini engellemesindeki rolüyle gerçekleşirken, Ruth hasta bakıcısı olarak çalışıp birçok hastaya yardım ettiği işi sayesinde bağışlanır.

Brontë'nin adı geçen romanlarında, çalışan ve çalışmayan kadınların üzerinde fizyonomi ve frenoloji ile yapılan analizler, Brontë'nin bu romanlarında kadınların tasvirlerinde daha çok fizyonomi kullandığını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Brönte, bu romanlarında, kadınların alınları, kaşları, gözleri, saçları ve yanaklarına odaklanmış ve onlara yönelik belirli niteliklere sıklıkla yer vermiştir. Romanların bu özelliği okuyucunun bu karakterlerin kişiliğini daha kolay anlamasına yarar sağlamıştır. Karakterlerin özelliklerine dair verilen bu nitelikler Viktorya dönemi bilim adamlarının bu özelliklere yüklediği kişilik özellikleriyle örtüşmektedir. Bu karakterin genel davranış biçimleri ve anlatıcı tarafından sağlanan genel özellikleri de karakterlerin tasvirinde, yüzü okuma bilimine ait detayların ima ettiği kişilik özellikleriyle örtüşmektedir.

Bu romanların anlatıcıları olarak, romanda bulunan fizyonomik ve frenolojik tasvirlerin çoğunu Jane ve Lucy yapar. Jane ve Lucy'nin fizyonomi ve frenolojisi, kendileri ve romanlardaki birkaç karakter tarafından, sadece birkaç kere verilir. *Jane Eyre* de okuyucu en azından Jane'nin yeşil gözlere, koyu saça ve düzgün olmayan fiziksel özelliklere sahip olduğunu bilir; fakat *Villette*'de Lucy'nin dış görünümü neredeyse tanımsız kalır. Bu, Lucy'nin toplumda deli olarak etiketlenmemek için, asi ve gelenekleri reddeden kişiliğini aşırı öz denetimle okuyucudan gizleme çabasından kaynaklanıyor olabilir. Romanlarda yapılan incelemelerin bir diğer sonucu ise bu romanların fizyonomi ve frenoloji kullanımı ile çalışan kadını, çalışmayan kadından ayırdığıdır. Buna göre, çalışan kadınlar çalışmayan kadınlardan zihinsel ve entelektüel kapasiteleriyle, çalışkanlıklarıyla ve bu kadınların yaşam alanının kısıtlayan Viktorya toplumuna karşı gösterdikleri direnişle ayrılırlar. Çalışan kadınlar genel olarak zeki, güçlü ve üretken olarak gösterilirken, çalışmayan kadınların çoğunda bu gibi özelliklerin yokluğundan bahsedilir; fakat bu romanlar çoğunlukla toplumda değişikliklere yol açabilecek güçlü orta sınıf kadınların frenolojisi ve fizyonomisine yer verirken daha düşük sınıflardan gelen kadınları basmakalıp bir şekilde okuyucuya aktarırlar.

Jane Eyre ve *Villette*' te yapılan analizler, *Jane Eyre*'nin *Villette*'e kıyasla, çalışan ve çalışmayan kadınlar arasındaki farklılıkları daha çok ve belirgin bir şekilde yansıttığını göstermiştir. Bunun sebebi, *Jane Eyre*'de zamanlarını boş geçirerek harcayan yüksek sınıf kadınların çokça bulunması olabilir. Bu iki romanda, güçlü orta sınıf kadınların fizyonomik ve frenolojik tasvirlerine yer verirken, işçi sınıfı kadınları yüzeysel bir şekilde tanımlarlar. *Jane Eyre*, Lowood yatılı okulunda öğretmen olarak çalışan Miss Temple'ı; güçlü, direnen, cesaretli, onurlu ve akıllı kişiliğiyle, döneminin ideal kadını olarak görür. Miss Temple'ın bu özellikleri, romanda büyük ve kıvrımlı alnı, alnının ışıldayan beyazlığı, kara gözleriyle ve romandaki davranış biçimiyle okuyucuya sunulur. *Villette*'te ise Madame Beck'in davranışlarında öz denetim kullanan, mantıkçı ve disiplinli kişiliğine, fizyonomisi aracılığıyla yer verilir. Madame Beck'in kişiliğini gösteren diğer yüz özellikleri; dar alnı, ince dudakları ve her zaman tetikte olan gözleridir ki bunlar onun sert,

soğuk ve otoriter kişiliğini yansıtır. Madame Beck'in bu özellikleri sıkı okul yönetiminde kendini gösterir ve bu yönetimin baskısını hisseden Lucy, çok fazla öz denetim uyguladığı için psikolojik bir çöküntüye uğrar. Bu kadınların dışında, *Jane Eyre*'de Diana ve Mary (Rivers kardeşler) ve *Villette*'te Matmazel St. Pierre detaylı ya da olumlu olmayan şekillerle fizyonomik tasvirlerle okuyucuya aktarılırlar. Bu bağlamda, Mlle St Pierre oldukça negatif bir biçimde, fizyonomisiyle, okuyucuya aktarılır. İp gibi ince dudakları, dolgun ve geniş yanakları ve donuk gözleri; müsrif, kibirli, tehlikeli ve soğuk kişiliğini ima eder; ki bu özellikler onun lükse düşkün ve çalışmaktan nefret ettiği hayatıyla da gözler önüne serilir. Mlle St Pierre'nin fizyonomisi ile bu derece negatif gösterilmesi, Brontë'nin bu gibi özellikler gösteren kadınlar için, ister çalışsın ister çalışmasınlar, nefretini açıkça ortaya koyduğunu açığa çıkarmıştır.

Bu çalışma, Brontë'nin çalışmayan kadınları paylaştıkları birkaç özellikle fizyonomi ve frenoloji aracılığıyla eleştirdiğini ortaya koymuştur. *Jane Eyre*'de, düşük kaşlar, gelişmiş alt çene, dolgun ve geniş yanaklar, şefkatten yoksun gözler, kibirli dudaklar ve koyu saç yüksek tabakadan gelen kadınlarda sıklıkla görülür ve bu özellikler onların materyalistlik, kibirli, tutkulu ve küçümseyici kişiliklerine atıfta bulunur. *Jane Eyre*'de, Bayan Reed ve Bayan Ingram fizyonomik tasvirleri açısından dikkat çekerler. Bu, onların Jane'i küçümseyen ve ona kaba davranan başlıca karakterler olmalarından kaynaklanabilir. *Jane Eyre*; çalışmayan kadınların entelektüel ve zihinsel eksikliklerine de ifadesiz çehrelerine yaptığı göndermelerle atıfta bulunur. Hayatlarını sürdürmek için, çalışmak yerine evliliği seçen bu kadınlarda, bu gibi özelliklere sıklıkla yer vererek, Brontë bu kadınları ideal kadın olarak adlandıran Viktorya toplumunu dolaylı yoldan eleştirir.

Villette'de çalışmayan kadınlar olarak Polly Home'a ve Ginevra Fanshawe'e yoğunlaşılır ve bu karakterlerin fizyonomik detayları onların hayatlarında bir erkek figürü gerekliliğine dikkat çeker. Polly ve Ginevra'nın bu kişilik yapılarını ortaya çıkaran fizyonomik özellikleri; Polly'nin sabit ve yoğun bakışları ve küçük kaşları, Ginevra'nın pembe ve sarışın rengi ve kırılgan olarak adlandırılan güzelliğidir.

Polly, uysallığı, evcimenliği ve erkeklere karşı aşırı evcimen tutumu ile (ki bu özelliklerine fizyonomisi ile de atıfta bulunulur) Viktorya toplumunun evdeki melek rolündeki kadınını temsil ederken, Ginevra; bencil, çıkarcı ve boş kişiliğiyle Lucy'nin nefret ettiği kadın tipini temsil eder. Bu kadınların tasvirinde kullanılan fizyonomi ve frenoloji, bu kadınları ideal olarak nitelendiren Viktorya toplumuna yönelik bir eleştiri niteliğindedir.

Bu çalışmada yapılan analizler Brontë'nin, Viktorya döneminin depresyon, akıl hastalıkları ve öz denetim uygulama hakkındaki görüşlerini, daha çok Jane ve Lucy'nin okuyucuya aktarımında dile getirdiğini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Dönemin bu konulara ilişkin inanışları, Jane ve Lucy'nin işleri hakkındaki inanış, düşüncelerini ve çalışma şartlarını yansıtmak için kullanılmaktadır. Her iki durumda da, çalışma şartları bu karakterlerin psikolojik çöküşüne sebep olur. Bu iki kadın da oldukça romantik, her türlü kısıtlamayı reddeden bir özgürlük kavramını benimserler ve bunu başaramayacaklarını bilirler. Her ikisi de, insanoğlunun birbirlerine fiziksel, sosyal, psikolojik ya da ekonomik açıdan bağımlı olduğunu ve bütünsel bir özgürlük kavramının bu nedenlerle mümkün olmayacağını kavrar. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma Jane ve Lucy'nin toplumda biraz daha özgürlük kazanmak amaçla çalışma fikrini benimsediklerini saptamıştır. Her ikisi de evliliğin kadınlar için zaten kısıtlı olan özgürlük kavramını daha çok kısıtladığını düşünür ve çalışma fikrini benimserler.

Jane ve Lucy işlerine bağlı stres yaşasalar da bu stresin sebebi her ikisinde de farklıdır. Viktorya dönemi, stres altında olan herkesin zihinsel ve psikolojik sorunlar yaşayabileceği fikrini benimser ve bu fikir Jane'in ve Lucy'nin geçici psikolojik sorunlarında kendini gösterir. Her ikisi de özgürce ve diledikleri gibi yaşamalarını gerektiğini söyleyen tutkuları ve her şeyi akıllarıyla yönetmeleri gerektiğini söyleyen mantıkları arasında bir ikilem yaşarlar ve bu ikilemi bastırmak için çoğunlukla öz denetim (Viktorya döneminde akıl hastalıklarını engellemek ya da iyileştirmek için kullanılır) kullanırlar. Dönemin toplumunun da inandığı gibi,

bu psikolojik çöküş süreci, karakterlerin mantıkları duygularına hükmetmeye başladığında normale döner.

Ekonomik açıdan başkalarına bağlı olmanın ağırlığını erken yaşlarda öğrenen Jane, çocukluğundan itibaren ekonomik özgürlük ve bağımsızlık peşindedir. Jane çalışarak biraz daha özgürlük kazanabileceğini düşünür ve evlilik fikrine başvurmaz. Jane'nin hayali her türlü kısıtlamayı reddeden bir özgürlüğe ulaşmaktır ama bunun imkânsızlığını bilir. Yine de, romanda birçok kez bu tutkusu ve mantığı arasında ikilemler yaşar ve bu ikilemleri engellemek ve bastırmak amacıyla öz denetim kullanır. Öz denetimi, özellikle işlerinin kısıtlayıcı özelliklerine, monotonluklarına ve ümit vaat etmeyen geleceğine alışmak için kullanır. Mesela, sıklıkla kendini diğer çalışan kadınlarla kıyaslar ve kendi durumunu çok daha iyi bulur. Başka bir örnekse, Thornfield'teki bakıcılık işini bir patronun varlığıyla daha çok sevebileceğini söyleyerek kendini kandırmasıdır. Jane, Thornfield'teki işine gitgide alışır ve Bay Rochester'in evlilik teklifini kabul ettikten sonra kendini gittikçe artan bir stres altında bulur. Jane'nin stresi Rochester'in aşırı ataerkil davranışlarından kaynaklanır. Rochester Jane'e sürekli pahalı elbiseler ve takılar almaya ve ona kölesi gibi davranmaya başlar. Bu Jane'e Rochester'e ekonomik açıdan bağlılığını hatırlatır ve Jane, evlenince, işiyle kazandığı özgürlüğü kaybedeceğini düşünür. Jane görüşme saatlerini kısıtlayarak ve evlendikten sonra bile çalışmaya devam edeceğini söyleyerek öz denetim uygulamaya çalışır ama başarılı olamaz. Özellikle, evliliğinden bir gece önce gördüğü rüyalar ve sözde halüsinasyon (aslında bu halüsinasyon değildir, Bertha'yı görmüştür) psikolojik çöküşünün göstergeleridir. Jane, Bertha gerçeğini öğrenince mantığının gösterdiği yolu seçerek Thornfield'ı terk eder ve yeni bir iş aramaya başlar çünkü gerçek anlamda ilk kez aç ve evsiz kalmıştır. Küçük bir köy okulunda öğretmen olarak çalıştığı son işinde de, hayatıyla pek mutlu ve tatmin değildir. Yine öz denetim kullanarak, seçtiği bağımsızlığın Rochester'le yaşayacağı köle hayatına kıyasla daha iyi olduğuna kendini inandırmaya çalışır.

Jane gibi, Lucy de, Viktorya toplumunda kadınlar için akıl hastalığına sebep olabileceği düşünülen tutkulu kişiliğini saklamak için, öz denetim kullanır. Jane'e kıyasla, daha çok öz denetim yapar ve bu onun okuyucudan bile kişisel hayatına ait bilgileri saklamak istemesinde açıkça görülür. Lucy kendisinin patron olmadığı her üç işinde de mutlu değildir çünkü kimseden emir almak istemeyen ve bütünüyle özgür olmak isteyen bir yapısı vardır. Jane gibi o da, işinin kısıtlayıcı durumlarına alışmak için öz denetim kullanır. Hasta bakıcılığı yaptığı ve gayet kısıtlayıcı olan ilk işinde bile kendisini mutlu olduğunu ikna etmeye çalışır. Lucy özellikle Madam Beck'in okulunda çalışırken büyük bir depresyona girer. Madam Beck'in sürekli gözetleme ve casusluk yapan kişiliği Lucy'nin kişiliğini daha çok gizleme çabasına girmesine sebep olur. Kendini ele vermemek için, Lucy yalnızlığı seçer ve kendini tamamen işine adar. Bu yalnızlık, okulda zihinsel ve fiziksel sorunları olan bir öğrenciyle yapayalnız bırakıldığı bir tatilde dayanılmaz bir hal alır. Ailesi tarafından istenmeyen çocuk da teyzesi tarafından alınınca, Lucy kendini çok yalnız hisseder ve çevresindekileri sevdikleriyle güzel zamanlar geçirirken hayal etmeye başlar. Lucy bütün bunlara dayanamaz ve aşırı bir biçimde kullandığı öz denetimini kaybeder. Bu bağlamda, Lucy'nin depresyonu aşırı öz denetiminden kaynaklanıyor gibi gösterilmiştir ve bu şekilde Brontë'nin öz denetime dair düşünceleri Viktorya toplumunda olumlu yanları olduğu düşünülen öz denetimle çelişmektedir. Lucy Doktor Bretton ve annesi sayesinde (Lucy'nin vaftiz annesi) iyileşir ve Madam Beck'in okuluna dönerken işi hakkında yeniden olumsuz düşünceler sergilemeye başlar. Bu işe sadece, kendi okulunu kurmak hayaliyle katlandığını söyler ve okulunu Mösyö Paul sayesinde kurduğunda ilk defa mutlu ve tatmin görünür.

Sonuç olarak, Gaskell ve Brontë çalışan kadını gösterirken kullandıkları realizm çeşitlerinde farklılıklar gösterseler de, ikisinin de amacı çağlarının çalışan kadınlarının çalışma şartlarını, problemlerini ve durumlarını açıkça ve korkusuzca göstermektir. Her ikisi de, bu sayede toplumda, bu kadınların çalışma alanlarını iyileştirmeyi amaçlarlar. Bu çalışmadan çıkan diğer bir sonuç ise, bu iki yazarın kullandıkları teknik ve metotların kullandıkları realizm çeşitlerine uygun olmasıdır.

Örneğin, Gaskell sözü geçen romanlarda sosyal realizme uygun, objektif ve bilimsel üçüncül kişi anlatım kullanırken, Brontë karakterlerinin psikolojisini yansıtmak için bilerek ya da bilmeyerek birincil kişi anlatım kullanır. Anlatıcılarının seçiminde bile böyle bir tutarlılık ve uygunluk sergileyen bu yazarlar, bize insanoğlunun ızdırabını gözler önüne seren büyüleyici eserler sunarlar.

APPENDIX B: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	x
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	
Enformatik Enstitüsü	
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	

YAZARIN

Soyadı : KAHVECİ
Adı : RANA
Bölümü : İNGİLİZ EDEBİYATI

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : REALISMS AND WORKING WOMEN IN THE NOVELS OF GASKELL AND BRONTË

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans [x] Doktora [ ]

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. [ ]
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. [ ]
3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. [x]

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:

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