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**The Struggle of Women for their Political and Social Rights in
Britain in the Twentieth Century**

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for a Master Degree in Literature and Civilization

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Dedication 1

I dedicate this work to.

The almighty Allah, my creator, my source of inspiration, Wisdom and knowledge

Without his willing and assistance, my dissertation would not have been accomplished

satisfactorily

Without his strength and power, I would not have been reaching this degree that I am now

having

My parents who were of a great support and assistance, whose dreams for me have

resulted in this achievement

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charge of this study

My dear friends, colleagues, classmates for encouraging me

All my teachers who were of role models during my journey of study

The ones who have taken a special place in my heart and in my life as well

Miss. Nadjet

Dedication 2

I, Miss AHMID Khaoula, dedicate this work to:

My Allah who gives me the power and knowledge to challenge
the difficulties

To my lovely mother-Nardjes- and to my heroic father- Hocine-
whom their words help me to regain my strength when I fall down

To my beloved brothers and sister and to
my big family

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Abstract

This dissertation is a comprehensive study which explores the history of women in Britain during the twentieth century in which women had a long road of struggle for their political and social rights so that they could obtain equal rights-which were deprived of for many centuries and specifically during the reign of Queen Victoria- as men do. This study attempts to reveal the real suffering women had gone through to gain their freedom with all its aspects either politically such as the right to vote or socially such as the right of being regarded as individuals and not as servants. Thus, the research aims to highlight the radical changes that women brought to the British history as well as to their societies through adopting different strategies whether peacefully or aggressively. The methodology that has been adopted in this research is analytical description by which the researchers have provided a thorough description of women's political and social strife and a qualitative analysis of short corpus composed of articles, letters and quotes related to certain eminent females who have made changes in the British history. The main conclusion drawn from this research is that women's efforts were effective in many ways in which they have upgraded their position from hardship to prosperity. Their efforts were acquainted with endless sufferance which results in the removal of the majority, if not all, the stereotypical images in the society and in having mostly equal rights as men have. Further research is needed to identify other achievements and victories -females had reached- for the sake of reviving women's legacy over the centuries.

Key Words: Britain, Political Rights, Social Rights, the Twentieth Century, and Women's Struggle.

List of Abbreviations

BWLM: British Women's Liberation Movement

CR: Consciousness-Raising

LGBT: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender

MP: Member of Parliament

NUWSS: National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies 1897

ROC: Remembering Olive Collective

V. A. Ds: Voluntary Aid Detachments

WLM: Women's Liberation Movement

WSPU: Women's Social and Political Union 1903

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General Introduction

For many centuries, women in Britain had lived without rights; they were seen as inferior and submissive to men, and thus they had gone through endless suffering and oppression and they were treated in a dehumanizing way. However, with the end of the Victorian Age, women started to uncover and get rid of the boundaries constructed by their societies. Even though their attempts during this century had failed, women did not surrender and continued to fight for their rights and to lead a life characterized by freedom.

The twentieth century was the century when women had gathered their strengths and fought for their political and social rights in different images; some of them have chosen militant and forceful means, others have chosen to be more peacefully in their ways for demanding equal rights. Despite the obstacles encountered by women during their journey for equality, their sufferance did not go in vane; women had finally reached the victory and were granted most of their political and social rights.

1. Statement of the Problem

It is undeniable that history repeats itself and the study of history would provide readers with new insights about the actual and the future events and problems women and the world are encountering nowadays or would face in the coming years. In most of the times, women tend to be more sympathetic when it comes to issues and concerns of the same gender. As many researchers who have shown interests concerning the topic of women's strife for their rights, we, as females, have the tendency to investigate and enrich our knowledge as well as to confront assumptions on the undertaken topic.

2. The Purpose of the Study

The present work aims at investigating the suffering and the long journey women had gone through in order to obtain their political and social rights which they were deprived of and forbidden for many centuries. The study also seeks to show the hard times and the different strategies women had adopted and endured for the sake of gaining freedom and equality.

3. Research Questions

The present study seeks to provide answers to the following questions:

- 1-What were the circumstances that led women to strive for their political and social rights?
- 2-What were the strategies and the techniques women had employed to achieve their goals?
- 3-What were the results of women's struggle and fighting during the twentieth century?

4. Research Hypotheses

For the sake of answering the aforementioned questions, basic assumptions are postulated:

- 1- WWI and WWII were among the major circumstances that cause women suffering and despair; therefore, they craved change and sought equality.
- 2- To gain their political and social rights, women had undertaken different techniques like participating in conferences, writing petitions, leading movements and formulating unions.

3- After a long fight and suffering, women had become equal with men and had gained their entire rights.

5. Scope of the Study

The main concern of the study is to shed light on the real struggle women had gone through in order to earn their political and social rights.

6. Limitations of the Study

This research is subject to some limitations. One of these limitations was the limited access to data; we have used secondary resources in some areas in our study for the reason that we could not get access to the original sources and this would limit the number of sources which would appear in the reference list. There were also some topics which were not historically recorded; instead, there were only few researchers who have reflected upon those topics and this limitation has relation to the topic under study and its period as well.

The previously mentioned limitation had minor impact on the process of conducting our research and we hope that such constraints would not occur in future studies.

7. Significance of the Study

Women's rights and concerns were a debatable topic for the previous centuries and even nowadays. Despite the fact that women had gained most of their rights during the twentieth century, they are still oppressed and persecuted in many ways and in many countries. Therefore, the topic under study is chosen for investigation due to the possible fundamental contributions this work will be providing for other researches. Future researchers would find the current study as a helpful framework for conducting a comparison between women's status in the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries, and

hence, to investigate the advancement of women's rights throughout the centuries. This study would also eliminate the gap in the literature by resurrecting the forgotten women's achievements and legacy. In addition to that, this research would show the strong sense of solidarity shared among worldwide females.

8. Methodology and Investigation Tools

The work adopts a descriptive analytical method in order to better understand the hard conditions in which women had struggled by providing a thoroughgoing description of the twentieth century British society as well as to reveal the strategies women had adopted to achieve their goals and live equally as men. A short corpus of certain historical documents was compiled and analyzed qualitatively for the sake of enhancing the readers understanding of the women's real struggle.

9. Structure of the Study

The present study is composed of three main parts: two theoretical chapters and a practical one. The first theoretical chapter is devoted to a socio-historical background of the twentieth century Britain in which women had lived in order to explain and describe the conditions that led them to revolt and demand their rights.

The second theoretical chapter displays the long journey undergone by women to achieve their goals and to succeed in gaining equality with men. This chapter is considered to be the main core of the dissertation for the reason that it focuses on the real suffering that women had in their route to equality.

Through the last chapter which displays the practical implications of the dissertation, researchers provide examples of certain prominent females who had made changes in the history of women in Britain, along with the analysis of some related historical documents.

Chapter One

Women During the Twentieth Century

1.1. Introduction

Before studying the techniques, ways and movements that have been adopted by women to obtain their political and social rights, it is necessary to make an investigation about the period and society in which women have lived in. The twentieth century was a turning point in the British history and more precisely in women's lives either socially or politically; women have passed through difficult circumstances such as: the First World War, the Second World War and hunger strikes. This chapter will provide a socio-historical overview of the British society and women in particular before and during the twentieth century focusing on the political and social life, economy and the position of women in Britain.

1.2. Overview of the Position of Women in Victorian Era

In the 19th century, Britain entered a changeable period that was called the "Victorian era" (1837-1901) or the Empire Age. Women in this period were neglected by their societies. Therefore, Evans (2011) described the position of women in this period:

It is easy to see that it was far from democratic. At the beginning of Victoria's reign, about a fifth of adult males were entitled to vote. That proportion increased, through parliamentary reform acts passed in 1867 and 1884, to one-third and two-thirds respectively. No women could legally vote in parliamentary elections until almost 18 years after Victoria's death - and the queen herself was no suffragist. Women did, however, play an increasingly influential role both in locally-elected school and poor law boards and in local government from the 1870s onwards. ("Politics", para.1, 2, 3)

In the beginning of this quote, Evans started with a description of the political situation in the Victoria's reign. He stated that Britain at this period was far from democracy; so according to his words, there was no equality between genders (males and females). Evans emphasized on the structure of the government that was all in the hands of men; there was no role for women to play in politics even if the queen was a woman, the Queen had no right to vote.

At that time, there was an attempt by the British philosopher: John Stuart Mill who tried to include votes for women in the 1867 Reform Bill, but this attempt had failed and the power of men was in the road of increasing due to the industrial revolution (late18th, early19th) (McDowall, 1989). Although the attempt of the influential thinker in the history of liberalism: Stuart Mill, the British society refused to give women their political or even their social rights to participate in their society, and this was the result of the materialistic world which gave men the entire power to make women only take care of their children and houses.

According to McDowall (1989), the nineteenth century was characterised by the industrial revolution which had increased the power of men, and their feelings about property. As a result, they were forcing women to work like slaves in their factories and workhouses, taking sexual advantages of them, taking their wives properties when they marry them, beating them whenever they desired to. Furthermore, women were not able to get divorce even if they were able to pay the legal cost and they could not receive any degree when they were allowed to study in separate women's colleges such as Oxford and Cambridge. However, their working conditions started to improve when they found support in the trade union movement. In 1888, the union's aim was to present the idea that when women do the same work as men, they should receive equal pay. In conclusion, the

task of convincing working men to respect the equal rights of their wives, particularly when they are housewives, was hard to be done.

1.3. Women and Politics

In the twentieth century, women in Britain were struggling for their political rights. Before the submission of the 1918 Act, the British societies disagreed with the right of women to vote; particularly for married women whom their husbands voted instead of them. As far as their societies were concerned, the local election that gained in 1869 was sufficient for them and no need for parliamentary representation ("History", 2018).

For women, the admission to parliament had become possible in 1918; however, their number rose until 1987. In addition to that, black women could be representatives in parliament due to the increase of ethnicity from the mid-1920s. As Norris and Lovenduski (1995) wrote:

Despite rising expectations, from 1945 to the mid-1970s there were no substantial gains for women in parliament. The number of women MPs rose significantly in the 1987 and 1992 elections, but in this regard the British parliament continued to lag behind most other European countries. Issues of black representation were raised by the growing ethnic minority population from the mid-1920s onwards. (p. 11)

1.4. Women and Society

The general belief that most people share is that the main core of the society is the family in which women is considered as the corner stone of her home .This belief was not constructed from vain ; each person who has a critical thinking would notice that society would never stand without a well-constructed family. Women have played a significant role during the twentieth century starting with their contribution to both World Wars and reaching to the changes they made in the history of Britain.

1.4.1. Home and Family

The British family is a worthy topic to be under study especially during the twentieth century in which Britain has witnessed radical changes in many fields of life, among which "home and family concerns". In his article, Jane Lewis has provided a description of women and society in Great Britain, in particular family size issue among middle class and working class families and its results on women's lives. He stated that:

During the inter-war period, working class wives of regularly employed men could begin to cook by gas and think about moving to a house with a bathroom on a new estate. For middle class women it is possible that the modern suburban house of the inter-war years, better equipped with labour saving devices, with either a resident servant or daily help and a smaller number of children, provided women with more leisure than either the large household staffs of the Victorian period or the usually servantless houses of the post-World War II years. Most important was the decline in family size. (Lewis, 1985, p. 2)

It is undeniable that women who had frequent pregnancies would suffer in their lives and this suffering is seen in the ignorance of their bodies. One of the reasons that added to the suffering of women was the inability to obtain access to birth control pills until the introduction of the contraception pill in 1961. The use of the aforementioned pills would decrease the rate of fertility among women and this would reduce their suffering.

1.4.2 Women and the Two World Wars

Some of the most exciting recent works have sought to reconstruct women's contribution to both World Wars since women's history was not fully registered especially before the twentieth century. As their rights were ignored during the nineteenth century, the importance of writing about women's history and lives were also ignored and

underestimated. Throughout the twentieth century, women had played a pivotal role specifically during the First and Second World Wars.

1.4.2.1 The First World War (1914-1918)

The social status of women has changed within the beginning of the First World War. For instance; people were having the belief that married women had better not to work as Lewis has mentioned: "Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was believed to be more respectable for married women not to work"(1985, p. 3). However, this belief had been changed sooner with the need of factories for women's participation in the field of employment. "At the beginning of the war, women were expected just to weep while men is doing the whole job by fighting and defending the country as it was sung by Kingsley" (Bell, 1917). In fact, the work of women was not limited to weeping and remaining at home, instead they were having jobs exactly as men have. In his article, Bell (1917) demonstrated the number of women who worked as nurses at the outbreak of the war: "At the outbreak of the war, besides the trained Military Nurses, there were the Territorial Nurses some 3000 strong, 60,000 of the British Red Cross and St. John of Jerusalem, and over 100,000 V. A. Ds" (p. 4). He had also stated the different jobs women had during the First World War:

In 1914, before the war, there were fewer than 200,000 women workers (mostly in textile factories) in Great Britain. During the war in 1917, 198,000 in government offices, exclusive of civil service and local government which employ 146,000 more; over 800,000 making munitions alone; over 200,000 in engineering and chemical works and other branches of metal trades; over 100,000 employed on the land; besides thousands of others at work as mechanics, drivers of motors, ambulances, street cars and omnibuses, cabs, in every kind of work on the railways, as letter carriers, and as clerks in banks and offices of every description.(p. 6)

Although women's hard jobs during the war, their numbers have not been counted, perhaps never will be, and the end is not yet (Bell, 1917). According to M. Rayner-Canham, G. Rayner-Canham, and College, it was the war itself that opened up the possibility of academic advancement though some especially talented women had obtained junior academic positions, such as demonstrator, prior to the outbreak of war (1999). Unfortunately, most of the opportunities women obtained during the First World War had vanished since the war-related factories had been closed and men chemists had returned from their war duties; and it was to be the Second World War before the situation improved. (F. Rayner-Canham & W. Rayner-Canham, 1996; Rossiter, 1995; as cited in M. Rayner-Canham et al., 1999)

1.4.2.2. The Second World War (1939-1945)

The enquiries of what had happened in the Second World War remained essential to understand the opportunities that were historically available for women and what women had done with them. Lewis (1985) stated that the expansion of jobs for women during World War I achieved no lasting effect. But women's consciousness was changed by their war-time experiences. Therefore, women were still not able to settle back to do the domestic routines they were practicing before the outbreak of the First World War.

According to what has been published by the Ministry of Defence (2015) under the title of “The women of the Second World War”, British women took on a variety of jobs during the Second World War, while thousands of men were away serving in the armed forces. Women were also running households, recycling, reusing and cultivating food in allotments and gardens. They were called up for war work from 1941, in roles such as mechanics, engineers, munitions workers, air raid wardens, and bus and fire engine drivers (“The women of the Second World War”, 2015). The number of working women and their ages was illustrated in details: “At first, only single women, aged 20-30 were called up, but

by mid-1943, almost 90 per cent of single women and 80 per cent of married women were working in factories, on the land or in the armed forces” (“The women of the Second World War”, 2015, para3). In her words, Kathryn J Atwood stated that women at the Second World War did not consider themselves as heroes, instead they followed their consciousness and thought of their works as something necessary. Although many women paid the ultimate price of their contribution, all of them helped win the war. (“The women of the Second World War”, 2015)



Figure1. 1. Factory worker at the Royal Ordnance Factory in Newport
(©Crown Copyright 2014 IWM) (“The women of the Second World War”, 2015).

As shown in Figure1.1, Dame Laura Knight depicts Ruby Loftus, ‘an outstanding factory worker’, screwing a Breech-ring at the Royal Ordnance Factory in Newport during the Second World War. (“The women of the Second World War”, 2015)

1.4.2.3 The Post-War Time (1945-1990s)

It is undeniable that each country which had experienced war, would be engaged in difficult circumstances; as a result, Britain has lived hard times after the Second World War. According to Quinault (2001), the outcomes of the Second World War are still seen everywhere; there were vacant bomb-sites in the major cities and particularly in London. He demonstrated how the British society was influenced by the war: “Most grandfathers

had served in the First World War, most fathers in the Second, and most young men were currently called up for two years of National Service” (p. 1).

When speaking about Women in the Post-war time, Quinault has differentiated between working-class women who wore scarves and middle class women who wore hats; this entails that class division is apparent among the British society. Another clear example of class division was in the educational system; private schools were confined to a wealthy minority, however the great majority was sent to state schools, besides that most of young people who went to university were middle class males who had often been privately educated and that means that few women had joined the university. (Quinault, 2001)

[In 1950], women were generally not expected to have proper careers, but to seek short-term employment before they married and had children. After the war, many young women gave up paid work and raised a family at home. They benefited from some labour-saving electrical appliances like washing machines and vacuum cleaners, but still spent much of their time on domestic chores like cooking, washing and cleaning. (Quinault, 2001, p. 4).

After the two wars, women had experienced miserable circumstances; the contraception pills were still not introduced, thus women were not able to control the fertility rate and this would reduce their chances in managing time to work outside home. Moreover, they were not benefiting from equal pays for doing the same work as men do; this kind of discrimination would increase the suffering of working women and women in general. According to Alva Myrdal and Viola Klein (1956) as cited in Summerfield (1998), the impact of the war on women is seen in three ways. Firstly, they believed that sex discrimination is absent in terms of employments. However, if this belief was true, women would not demand equal rights for equal pay and they did not obtain it till 1970. Secondly, they argued that the “reorganization of working conditions to meet the needs of women

workers assumed such dimensions that it may well be called a social revolution” (Myrdal & Klein, 1956, second edition 1968, p. 52-54; as cited in Summerfield, 1998, p. 208). Thirdly, they claimed that the number of married women in post-war paid work is reduced despite the fact that women after the war wished to stay in work. As Summerfield has commented on the aforementioned effects, he had stated that:

The thrust of their argument was that what the war had proved possible could be repeated in the 1950s and '60s: married women could be persuaded to join the labour force, and they could combine responsibilities to their homes and to the work place without having detrimental effects on either. (1998, p. 208)

Another impact of wars on women is stated by Marwick (1968; 1976; as cited in Summerfield, 1998); women wore shorter skirts, smoked in public, travelled alone and had sex outside marriage. Marwick considered all these acts and behaviors as signs of self-confidence and a more public and visible role in paid work, politics and social life played by women. Finally women had free time either to care of themselves or to have a job outside home; this was because of the technological progress and the mass production of modern appliances such as fridges, washing machines, electric stoves etc. (Binard, 2017)

1.4.3. Problems of Immigrants

Britain has experienced many social problems, especially after the two World Wars. One of the major social issues was the problem of immigration. According to (McDowall, 1989), at first, immigrants were not noticeably different from the British citizens since they were Europeans. However, in 1950s, the first black immigrants started to arrive from the West Indies, looking for work. He added, by 1960, the number of coloured immigrants in Britain had increased to reach 250,000, as a result; troubles with young whites started to arise. “Later, Asian immigrants started to arrive from India and Pakistan and from East Africa. Most immigrants lived together [,] in poor areas of large

cities” (McDowall, 1989, p. 177). The new immigrants were mistakenly blamed at times and particularly when unemployment had grown. In fact, they were given the dirty and the unpopular work in factories and hospitals (McDowall, 1989). The British people blamed the immigrants for the reason that they are stealing their work positions; however, the immigrants were the ones who would accept to do the dirty jobs. Thus, immigrants in most of times are expected to suffer when they first entered the new country, simply because they are considered as strangers who had not the right to live as the indigenous people. Such suffering still exists nowadays; Spracklin (2018) stated that many new immigrants face various barriers among them the employment issue. Immigrants find difficulties in “getting their credentials recognized and relevant local work experience” (“Employment section”, para. 1). In Britain, the case was not different; “black people found it harder to obtain employment, and were often only able to live in the worst housing” (McDowall, 1989, p. 177). Hence, the role of the government is seen not only by passing laws to provide the black people with equal treatment, but also by controlling the number of immigrants (McDowall, 1989).

The Figure 1.2 shows a picture of “immigrants from different Commonwealth countries tended to live together in particular districts. In Southall, west London, many Punjabis, Gajaratis and Sikhs from India settled down, opening shops and becoming successful in trade (McDowall, 1989, p. 178). Despite the difficulties they face, immigrants seem to be naturally integrated in the British society.



Figure 1. 2. Immigrants from different Commonwealth countries living in Britain (McDowall, 1989, p. 178).

1.5. Women and Economics

The field of economy has a great impact on the lives of women, particularly in the twentieth century, in which Britain had been exposed to various events such as the two World Wars and the Cold War which in turn had influenced most aspects of life.

1.5.1. Overview of the Economic Life During the 20th Century

In the first half of the 20th century, Britain lost its position of economic superpower. The main reasons for this were the two world wars in which Britain became indebted to the USA and it was badly damaged, especially by World War II. The second reason was the loss of the Empire, which had provided cheap raw materials and markets for British goods. Other reasons which were basically economic were the continuing lack of investment at home, decreasing productivity and the growing inability of the traditional industries (i.e. mining, steel and iron, shipbuilding and textiles) to compete with other industrial states, especially the USA: by the end of the 1970s, Britain had fallen behind all the leading industrial nations of western Europe. The situation described above led to the restructuring of British economy: new industries appeared; traditional ones were closed or restructured. The discovery of North Sea oil, in the 1970s-'80s, was another economic asset. Britain kept its position of world importance mainly in financial services. (Nangonová, 2008).

1.5.2. Women and Economy

The relation between women and economy is demonstrated through women’s work outside home and whether they are affiliated to a particular economic organization, union or alike. Lewis has stated that during the early twentieth century, “the young female worker had an indirect relationship to her union and work place” (1985, p. 3). He called it as indirect relationship “weak participation” for the reason that it was mediated by female kin who often found their first jobs and paid their union dues. Working-class families have benefited through the female’s relationship with the trade-union to the extent that it raised the wages of the male breadwinners since they were served at home by their wives; however, women did not benefit from their work, and instead, they were forced to handle the double burden of household and the work itself (Lewis, 1985). He stated that the government welfare legislation provided working women little assistance through national insurance “which assumed female economic dependency to be the norm” (Lewis, 1985, p. 3). More details are demonstrated in the following table:

Table1. 1

Female Participation in the Labour Force

	Working Women as % of all women			Women as % of
	Single	Married	Total	total labour force
1861	"	"	42	31
1871	"	"	42	31
1881	"	"	39	30
1891	"	"	38	30
1901	"	"	36	29
1911	66	10	37	29
1921	67	9	36	29
1931	70	11	37	30
1951	72	24	40	31
1961	77	34	46	33
1971	70	49	55	37
1981	69	57	61	39

*Covers women aged 15-64 for 1861-1951; 15-60 for 1961-71; and 16-70 for 1981.
*All ages. *Source: Census of population (Lewis, 1985, p. 3).

In Table 1.1, the number of working women remained consistent during the period (1861-1871); rather, it was clearly progressing from 1871 to 1981. This progress reflects the increasing need of women in the field of work. However, when the matter concerns gender, it is obvious that the percentage of women in Labour Force is weak in comparison to male's participation.

When women decided to enter the field of employment, they thought that they would be fully independent and enjoy the wage they earn; however, they received an additional suffering by working inside and outside home and at last, their husbands "breadwinners" benefited from the wage. The idea would be accepted to some extent if women were treated equally as men; in other words, men and women should do the housework together, work together and benefit from the wage together and no one is above the other. However, equality between genders was not fully established during the first half of the twentieth century. The 20th century witnessed many changes concerning the position of women in the field of employment and particularly their struggle for equal pay which is more detailed in the second chapter.

1.6. Conclusion

This first theoretical chapter mainly tried to line out some essential points related to the position of women in Britain throughout the twentieth century. This chapter started with a short account of the Victorian Age conditions in which women have lived; and it continued with a more detailed investigation of the status of women in different fields such as: politics, society, economy and immigration; and their contributions in many historical events such as the two World Wars. It mainly focused on the difficulties and the unbearable circumstances women had passed through during this century; it highlighted

how women were treated and viewed in such male dominated society. These hard experiences would pave the way later on for women to gain their freedom and live equally just as men do. The long journey of how women obtained such equality will be discussed in the second chapter.

Chapter Two

The Long Quest of Women's
Suffering for Equal Rights

2.1. Introduction

Women in Britain started to fight for their rights from the late nineteenth century; however, their attempts had failed until the early years of the twentieth century. This chapter tries to shed light on the long quest women had gone through to achieve equal rights with men: They formed organizations and unions. Moreover, they went through strikes and campaigns and they have led serious movements for political, social and economic equality. Women had adopted such actions either peacefully or forcefully in order to prove that they are fully human beings who should attain their entire rights. It also highlights the noticeable achievements women had accomplished concerning the right for voting, parliamentary representation and working conditions.

2.2. Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain

In the past, women were described as slave and their societies were dominated by men. For the British society, woman must stay at home and care for her children and husband. At the end of the nineteenth century, women were looking for their right to vote; in order to reach their political rights, women in Britain organized the suffrage movement. "In 1897 in Britain local groups of women who demanded the vote joined to form the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) which was moderate and its members were called suffragists" (Lambert, 2019, "Women's Rights in the 20th Century", para. 3), this organisation was the primary step to gain their rights. However, Purvis (2016) stated that things have changed when Pankhurst, along with her daughters Christabel and Sylvia, formed the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in 1903, starting the suffragette movement. At first the suffragettes used peaceful ways but they changed them to forceful ways as a result to anti-suffragists (as cited in Purvis, 2002). "Deeds not Words" was an expression that had been used by the suffragettes to illustrate that their movement should be more than words or speeches. As Murray (2011) said that

the use of such irregular and forceful means as breaking windows, throwing stones and cutting telephone and telegraph wires by the suffragettes led them to be stopped by the police; one of them was Emily Wilding Davison who went on hunger strike and tried to kill herself and after her death, they wrote "Deeds not Words" on her gravestone. This slogan used in many places to state the difference between the suffragettes and the suffragists.

In accordance with what has been mentioned before, the suffragists were different from the suffragettes; "Hume argues that the NUWSS was the real force behind the women's suffrage movement and the WSPU only the flash" (Robson, 1983, p. 258) and this difference was illustrated in the means which were used to gain the right to vote. The NUWSS was formed by the merger of the National Central Society for Women's Suffrage and the Central Committee and Millicent Garret Fawcett was the leader of this organisation. Unlike WSPU, NUWSS used legal ways to gain their right to vote for example: letters, newspapers...etc. During the WWI, the NUWSS continued their campaign under the slogan "Until we win! We demand the vote!" and the suffragists supported Britain at the war time and helped women to have their right to vote. This movement was important in the history of women in Britain (Aldridge, 2019). Although, the suffrage movement was opposed by the Anti-Suffrage League, there was group of men who supported the suffrage movement. This group was called the Men's League for Women's Suffrage which was formed in 1907 by 42 men like Henry Nevinson, Israel Zangwill, and Hugh Franklin (Bates, 2018).

The suffrage movement in Britain did not include only white women but also the ethnicity and Mukherjee (2017) in her lecture at the University of Bristol stated that:

British society, particularly London, has been ethnically diverse for centuries. In the 1910s, when the British suffrage movement was at its height, there were men

and women from all around the world, and particularly from other parts of the British Empire, living in the UK. These included ayahs (nannies), students, lascars (seamen), peddlers and merchants from India, China, the Caribbean and Africa, not to mention familiar migrants from Europe.

Although the female suffragettes were almost exclusively all 'white' in Britain, they were not campaigning along racial lines to only enfranchise white women, as had been the case in places such as Australia or the United States.....There was no discrimination based on race. Even today, Commonwealth citizens resident in the UK can vote in elections even if they are not British nationals. (para. 1-2)

The general idea that had been stated in the previous quote by Mukherjee is that the suffrage movement was not only done by the British women, but it was also done by the ethnicity who lived in Britain, not like the suffrage movement in U.S and Australia which was only ruled by the white women.

Noakes stated that the result of the activities that had been done by women through the suffrage movement during the First World War led the British society to look to women as similar to men in doing the same job. Moreover, he mentioned that:

The initial enthusiasm of the suffragists and suffragettes for war work helped to move the cause of women's suffrage towards the centre of British politics, and when women's organisations began to re-assert claims for franchise reform, they were received more sympathetically than they had been before the war. (2006, p. 59)

Due to the suffrage movement, the Parliament submitted many acts and one of them was "The Representation of the People Act" (1918) in addition to the "The Equal Franchise Act" (1928).

2.2.1 The Representation of the People Act (1918)

In 1918, Britain began to take the road to equality. During the "Speaker's Conference", both houses of the parliament debated about the measure from October to the last of January. On February 6th, the houses agreed to choose one completed bill which was the Representation of the People Act (1918) and the later was accepted by the king George V. The Representation of the People Act introduced many principles that solved the problems of suffrage, and one of the main principles was the "women suffrage" (Ogg, 1918).

Previously “After further reform Acts in 1867 and 1884, 40% of adult men did not have the vote, and no women did” (Day, 2018, para. 5). Before the W.W.I, 60% of males with amount of property had the right to vote (Collinson, 2018) till the Representation of the People Act had been submitted to give men and women that right, especially women who worked hard during the First World War. According to Fraser 1918, the Representation of the People Act (1918) introduced that Woman had the right to:

1. Be a parliamentary elector constituency.
2. Vote in a university constituency.
3. Vote in a local government.

For woman to obtain her right to vote, “(1) she must have attained the age of thirty years”, and “(2) she must not be subject to any legal in capacity” (Fraser, 1918, p. 65). However, the Representation of the People Act (1918) did not give the two millions of the

working class and the poorest women their right to vote, even if they were 30 years old since they did not meet the property that was based by the 1918 Act (Muggeridge, 2018).

In the sections above, many researchers stated that women in Britain were still not having the right to vote unless they are 30 years old and are “either property owners or local rates payers” (Muggeridge, 2018, p. 2). However, women who were neither property owners, nor local rates payers, could not vote. Women in the British society were not equal with men till the Equal Franchise Act was introduced in 1928.

2.2.2 The Equal Franchise Act (1928)

Through what has been demonstrated previously, the Representation of the People Act (1918) gave the right to vote just to women in the age of thirty and who met property. Moreover, this act has introduced inequality; it did not provide the voting right to “...working class women, women from ethnic and religious minorities, disabled women and LGBT+ women, leaving no one behind” (Butler, 2018, para. 4). For achieving the equality, women in Britain did not stop their struggle for getting the equal right to vote; thus, the Equal Franchise Act had been submitted.

In July 1928, the Equal Franchise Act was passed in which all women in Britain had the right to vote in the age of twenty regardless the property that was based by the Representation of the People Act (1918) (Muggeridge,2018). After the 1918 Act, women introduced the Women’s Emancipation Bill in 1919 which allowed them to have the same rights as men and to enter to the two Houses of parliament; however, the government removed the Bill and replaced it by the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act which had forbidden them from gaining the equal political rights (Takayanagi, 2015). Although this act did not give women the same political rights as men, they did not surrender to achieve the equality with men. For instance, “Millicent Fawcett [leader of the National Union of

Women's Suffrage Societies], who had continued campaigning for equal suffrage into her elderly years, was invited to Parliament to see the Bill voted through. She died the following year” (“Council for the curriculum”, 2017, p. 4).

2.2.3. The Women's Party (1917)

During the 20th century, women were struggling for their political rights; Emmeline Pankhurst did not stop her dream for obtaining the equality. She discontinued the WSPU's activities and supported the government by asking women for working in the war time (cea Rewarding learning, 2017). Emmeline and Christabel, who were the leaders of the WSPU, changed it to the Women's Party. They argued that the WSPU was only for getting the right to vote, whereas the Women's Party was created to support their citizenship during and after the war time (Purvis, 2002).

On November 2nd, 1917, Emmeline, Christabel, Annie Kenney, and Flora Drummond associated to sign for the Women's Party (Purvis, 2016). This party introduced different aims such as: military, economy, social, and politics. For military, “The aims of the Women’s Party in regard to the war were patriotic, anti-pacifist and imperialist, reiterating many of the ideas that Emmeline and Christabel had articulated earlier in various speeches and campaigning literature” (Purvis, 2016, p. 6). It also aimed to stop the Germans from getting the British nationality. Economically, the Women's Party aimed at rejecting the Marxist role and reducing the hours of work and the last word ruled by the parliament (Purvis, 2016). For the social aims, Purvis stated that the Women's Party will change the status of women in Britain:

The social reform post-war programme, designed to appeal especially to women, was feminist and radical in that it demanded equal pay for equal work, equal marriage laws (including equal conditions of divorce), equality of parental right,

the raising of the age of consent, equal opportunity of employment, and equality of rights and responsibilities in regard to the social and the political service of the nation. A system of maternity and infant care was called for, with parents making a financial contribution according to their income, as well as a guarantee that all children would receive an education that would make them worthy citizens. Co-operative housekeeping was also considered necessary, in order to reduce the burden of the married woman, with co-operative housing schemes that had a central heating and hot water supply, central kitchens, a central laundry, medical services, and, if desired, a crèche, nursery school, gymnasium and reading room. (Purvis, 2002, p. 302)

Moreover, the Women's Party in politics called for Emmeline to enter the parliamentary election, but she chose her daughter, Christabel Pankhurst, to replace her (Purvis, 2016). “The Women’s Party fielded many candidates in the General Election of 1918, including Christabel herself. However, none were elected” (Smith, 2003, p. 115).

2.3. Women in the Parliament (1918-1997)

Although the Women's Party had failed, it was considered as a primary step for women to enter the British parliament. Keen (2015) said that women started to be in the parliament since 1918, he wrote:

Since 1918, 450 women have been elected as Members of the House of Commons. In 1918 Countess Constance Markievicz became the first women to be elected as an MP though, elected for Sinn Féin, she did not take her seat. Nancy Astor was the first women to take a seat in the House of Commons. (p. 3)

As stated above by Keen, the number of women that represented in the British parliament has been increased since they had the right to vote. This was because of the struggle of women and the hard works they made in the WWI. To illustrate the increase in the number of women that represented in parliament, there is the Table2.1 of women candidates by party:

Table2. 1

Women Candidates by Party 1918 to 1997

	Con		Lab		LD		SNP		PC		Other		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1918	1	0%	4	1%	4	1%	-	-	-	-	8	2%	17	1%
1922	5	1%	10	2%	16	3%	-	-	-	-	2	3%	33	2%
1923	7	1%	14	3%	12	3%	-	-	-	-	1	4%	34	2%
1924	12	2%	22	4%	6	2%	-	-	-	-	1	2%	41	3%
1929	10	2%	30	5%	25	5%	-	0%	-	0%	4	7%	69	4%
1931	16	3%	36	7%	5	4%	1	20%	-	0%	4	6%	62	5%
1935	19	3%	33	6%	11	7%	-	0%	-	0%	4	9%	67	5%
1945	14	2%	41	7%	20	7%	-	0%	1	14%	11	8%	87	5%
1950	29	5%	42	7%	45	9%	-	0%	-	0%	11	7%	127	7%
1951	25	4%	41	7%	11	10%	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	77	6%
1955	33	5%	43	7%	14	13%	-	0%	1	9%	1	2%	92	7%
1959	28	4%	36	6%	16	7%	-	0%	-	0%	1	2%	81	5%
1964	24	4%	33	5%	24	7%	-	0%	1	4%	8	8%	90	5%
1966	21	3%	30	5%	20	6%	-	0%	-	0%	10	10%	81	5%
1970	26	4%	29	5%	23	7%	10	15%	-	0%	11	7%	99	5%
1974(F)	33	5%	40	6%	40	8%	8	11%	2	6%	14	5%	137	6%
1974(O)	30	5%	50	8%	49	8%	8	11%	1	3%	23	8%	161	7%
1979	31	5%	52	8%	52	9%	6	8%	1	3%	74	11%	216	8%
1983	40	6%	78	12%	75	12%	9	13%	6	16%	72	13%	280	11%
1987	46	7%	92	15%	106	17%	6	8%	9	24%	70	22%	329	14%
1992	63	10%	138	22%	143	23%	15	21%	7	18%	205	22%	571	19%
1997	69	11%	157	25%	140	22%	15	21%	7	18%	284	17%	672	18%

Note. Con – Conservative, Lab – Labour, LD – Liberal Democrat, SPN - Scottish National Party, PC - Plaid Cymru.

Source: Keen (2015); as cited in Rallings and Thrasher (2010).

Table2.1 showed the increase in the number of women candidates since 1918; furthermore, the percentage of candidates rose to 11% until 1983. In addition to the Table2.1, there is the Figure2.1 which is about women MPs that elected at general election by party.

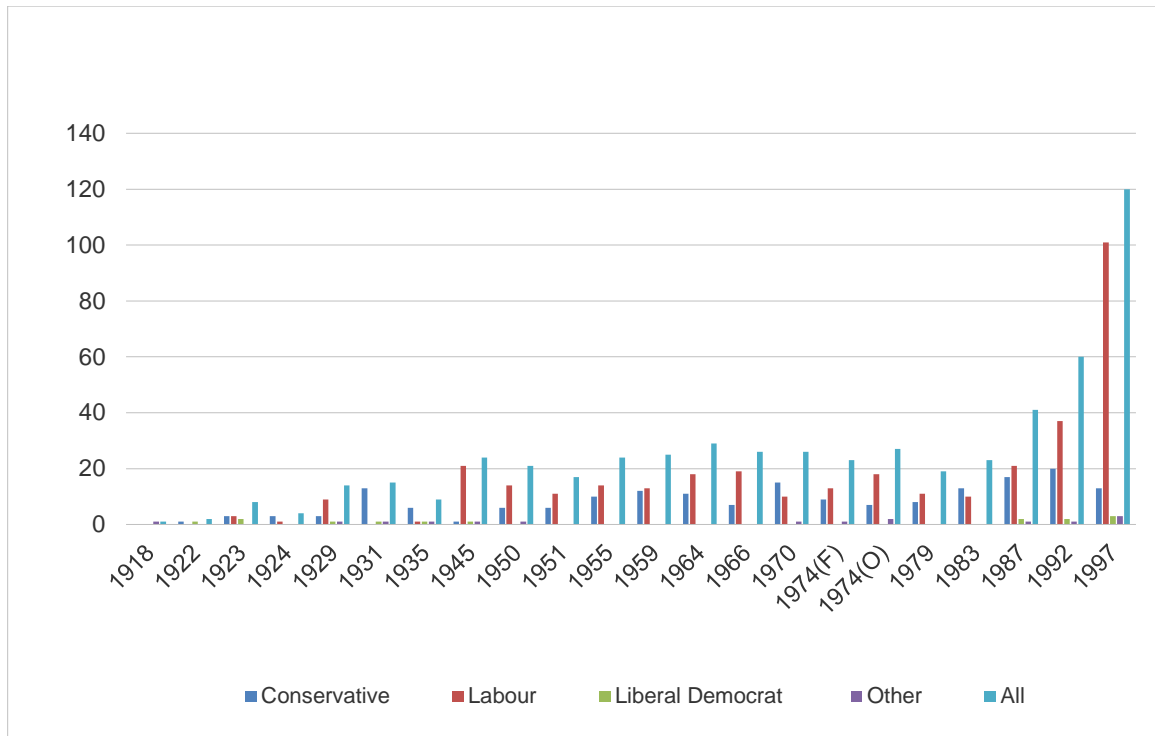


Figure 2. 1. Women MPs elected at General Election by party 1918 to 1997 (Keen, 2015; as cited in Rallings and Thrasher, 2010).

The Figure 2.1 showed that: “Until 1997 women had never comprised more than 10% of all MPs, and until the late 1980s the proportion had always been below 5%. The proportion rose to 18% following the 1997 General Election when 120 women were elected”(Keen, 2015, p. 6).

As a result to the admission of women in the British parliament, the legislative has been changed to ensure equal treatment for women. This legislative gave greater attention to women and children; it focused on making the law suitable for women, for example the Women’s Emancipation Bill 1919 which led the government, in accordance with its own Sex Disqualification, to prohibit inequity between genders for obtaining jobs. Furthermore, after the WWII, Britain's economy expanded rapidly due to the Great Depression of the 1930s and the government began to effect on women especially in the social and economic issues, however, women MPs continued to change the legislative in the last 10 years of the 20th century (“Parliament UK”, 2015).

2.3.1. Women and the House of Commons

The Representation of the People Act 1918 was the first step for women to be represented in the British parliament. As it has been mentioned before, there were 17 women candidates in 1918 one of them was Countess Constance de Markievicz who did not take seat in the parliament.

Since 1918 the numbers of women who have been elected to the House of Commons started to increase: From 1918 to 1938 there were 37 women were elected to the Commons and in the late of the 20th century [1997], the number reached 120 ("Parliament UK", 2015). Each woman MP had different trends and roles according to her position in parliament, such as Lady Astor who was the first woman in the conservative party to take her seat in the parliament in [1919] and joined the House of Commons in 1921 by Margaret Wintringham (Kelly, 2018). Astor was known for introducing the Intoxicating Liquor Act; this act was illustrated by Twose:

During the 1920s, Nancy made several speeches in Parliament. A staunch teetotaler herself, she introduced the first Private Member's Bill sponsored by a woman, becoming the Intoxicating Liquor (Sale to Persons under 18) Act 1923, which raised the legal age for consuming alcohol in a public house from 14 to 18, a law which remains to this day. (2018, "Political career", para. 4)

The Labour Party had most of Women MPs in the House of Commons. When Arabella Susan Lawrence met Mary MacArthu, a leading women's trade unionist and committed socialist, Lawrence left the Conservative and entered to the Labour Party to be with the working-class women. Because of the voice of working-class women, Lawrence was elected and chose to be as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the President of the Board of Education in 1923, but she lost her seat in 1924 due to the weak position of the

Private Secretary (Perera, 2010). However, "...the first female Labour MP to take the oath was Dorothea Jewson, on 9 January 1924" (Kelly, 2018, p. 9).

In addition to the white women, the black women also had the right to take their seat in the House of Commons. Diane Abbott was the first black woman to be elected in the House of Commons. In 1982, she was elected to Westminster City Council serving until 1986 and in 1987; she took her seat in the Commons (Thomas, 2015).

2.3.2. Women and the House of Lords

The House of Lords is the second house in the parliament. "Previously women in Britain could not have the right to be a Lord since the House of Lords is just for lords not ladies even if they inherited a peerage title. This was the views of the Earl of Glasgow, as he stated:

"This is a House of men, a House of Lords. We do not wish it to become a House of Lords and Ladies" ("Parliament UK", 2015, p. 10). However, Viscountess Rhondda (Margret Mackworth Haig) who inherited the peerage title from her father because he has no son. In 1920, she started her campaign to take a seat in the Lords. Lady Rhondda had a remarkable role in the British society; she was businesswomen and the leading equalitarian feminist. On the basis of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 [no discrimination between genders], Lady Rhonda claimed that women had the right to be in the Lords. In 1922, the "Committee for Privileges" accepted her attempt to sit in the House of Lords, but the Lord Chancellor, Lord Birkenhead, objected to the admission of Lady Rhondda; as a result, she lost her seat in the Lords ("Parliament UK", 2015).

Before the Life Peerages Act 1958 was introduced by the parliament, the women could not have the right to seat in the Lords. There were two attempts to admit women peers in parliament according with their peerages title. These attempts were:

On 16 July 1930, a division on a motion to admit hereditary women peers in their own rights into the House failed with 49 votes in favour to 55 against. This concluded the campaign until after the Second World War when interest renewed. One petition obtained 50,000 signatures but was never presented to Parliament.

In 1949, the House of Lords acknowledged that it was willing to give hereditary women peers the 'same rights, duties and privileges as are now enjoyed by male peers'. This motion passed 45 votes to 27, but legislation did not follow for 19 years.

(Brown, Purvis, & Taylor, 2018, "The continuing campaign for equality", para. 2-3)

In 1958, the parliament introduced the Life Peerages Act which gave women permission to access to the Lords, but they could not become hereditary peers until 1963. There were four women who introduced to the lords; the first one was Baroness Swanborough (Dame Stella Isaacs) who founded the Women's Voluntary Service. Despite the fact that Stella Isaacs was the first to be introduced to the House of Lords, Baroness Wootton of Abinger (Barbara Wootton) became the first hereditary peers. She was against the "capital punishment". The third woman was Baroness Elliot of Harwood (Dame Katharine Elliot) who was the first woman whose voice had been heard in the Lords. The last one was Baroness Ravensdale of Kedleston (Mary Irene Curzon) who took her life peers title since 1921. Although women made small role in the House of Lord, they took different positions such as Leader of the House, Chief Whip and Lord Speaker ("Parliament UK", 2015).

2.4. The British Women's Liberation Movement in the 1970s

One of the major movements which women had lead was the British Women's Liberation Movement (BWLM). The BWLM was a national movement that was founded by: Sally Alexander, Françoise Barret-Ducroq, Barbara Caine, Martin Pugh, Lynne Segal, and Sheila Rowbotham (Barbara, 1997; as cited in Binard, 2017). Barbara stated that those founders mentioned two major events that took place in 1970, which they consider it as the start mark of the movement: the first BWLM Conference in Oxford and the protest against a Miss World beauty competition held in London which brought the attention of the movement into the public and media arena. There were also two central concepts which were crucial in the development of the BWLM: 'consciousness-raising' and the slogan 'The personal is political 'which appeared first in the United States. (Carol, 2006; as cited in Binard, 2017)

According to Binard (2017), the BWLM was characterised by the creation and the existence of thousands of women's groups throughout the country who led different types of public actions "that ranged from demonstrations, protest marches, strikes to music festivals, artistic events or drama performances; from workshops to conferences, that were heavily publicised and analysed thanks to a flourishing multifaceted feminist press" (Binard, 2017, p. 3). During the early 1980s and under the conservative government of Margaret Thatcher, the BWLM has lost its impetus; however, it has had profound effects on the way women see themselves and are seen in society (Binard, 2017).

The first national WLM conference discussed four demands:

- “1. Equal pay
2. Equal educational and job opportunities
3. Free contraception and abortion on demand

4. Free 24-hour nurseries” (Timeline of women’s liberation movement, 2019)

2.4.1. Achievements in Working Condition

The BWLM fought for the right for women to gain equal occupation opportunities; women were not allowed to enter such professions as law, medicine, journalism and publishing, business, finance and politics. It also highlighted women’s unpaid work at home and demanded equal pay for equal work outside home. “Women’s liberation in Britain enlisted the support of trade unions and working-class women whose participation had been vital to the success of the suffrage movement of the early 20th century. The Women’s Liberation Movement built on this history of cross-class alliance.” (Team, 2013)

After a long fight, the Equal Pay Act was enacted by the Queen Elizabeth 2:

By and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in the Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1. (1) (a) for men and women employed on like work the terms and conditions of one sex are not in any respect less favourable than those of the other; and

(b) for men and women employed on work rated as equivalent ...the terms and conditions of one sex are not less favourable than those of the other in any respect in which the terms and conditions of both are determined by the rating of their work.

11. (2) In this Act the expressions "man" and "woman" shall be read as applying to persons of whatever age.” (Tullo, 1970, pp. 1,10)

Through the enactment of the Equal Pay Act (1970), women obtained equal rights with men in terms of working conditions.

2.4.2. Consciousness-Raising

Consciousness-Raising (CR) was one of the main concepts behind the establishment of the BWLM, although the concept originated in the United States. The phrase was coined by Kathie Sarachild aiming to make working women aware of their oppression (Susan, 1999; as cited in Binard, 2017). Women had been taught that their happiness is associated with marriage and motherhood just as the case with Algerian societies in which some young women who are not aware of how life works, think that they would find happiness in marriage. However, the reality was different; “[many] women were dissatisfied with their lives but found it difficult to pin down the problem” (Binard, 2017, p. 8). In order to overcome such obstacles, women had joined the CR groups which were “composed of ten to fifteen women who would take turns hosting weekly meetings in their homes. Like in any other gatherings of the WLM, there were no leaders, no hierarchies” (Binard, 2017, p. 8). According to Binard (2017), the purpose of such groups was not to solve members’ private problems, but to help them discover the wrong thoughts which should be seen as political problems that required collective solutions. For him, CR groups were effective for thousands of women in realising that their primary duties were not the domestic ones. Women had also realized that their problems were common and not personal and so they have learnt how to become more assertive and to challenge existing values (Binard, 2017). CR groups had also given women the framework “to look at their personal lives and at themselves in a political way” (Binard, 2017, p. 9).

2.4.3. The Personal is Political

"The Personal Is Political" was one of the main purposes the CR groups aimed to achieve. Later on, this political slogan would be used among feminists to express the idea

that “the personal experiences of women are rooted in their political situation and gender inequality” (Kelly, 2017, para. 1).

“The Personal Is Political” was associated with a paper written by Carole Hanisch and published in “Notes from the Second Year: Women’s Liberation” in 1970 and was widely reprinted and passed around the Movement and beyond in the next several years. Hanisch (2006) stated in her article that this paper and the theory it contained did not come out of her individual brain, instead, it came out of a movement (the Women’s Liberation Movement). This paper was written against those who were trying to either stop the WLM or to push it into directions they found less threatening. Women, who consider themselves “more political”, have formed groups in many cities such as: New York, Gainesville and New Orleans. these groups have been called “therapy” and “personal” in which women have met not to solve their personal problems but rather to come out with a conclusion that personal problems are political problems and hence there are no personal solutions but only collective actions for a collective solution. (Hanisch, 1969)

The phase “The Personal is Political” served the WLM “...by providing a framework for the everyday enactment of a feminist subjectivity that challenged structures of oppression and critically reoriented cultural understandings of how and why women’s experiences mattered” (Rogan & Budgeon, 2018, p. 1). It had also a profound effect on the second-wave feminism by “shaping the development of social analyses and theories, encouraging new types of activism, and widening the scope of issues that could be defined as “feminist issues.” For example, it was one of the premises underlying the creation of feminist “consciousness-raising groups”.

The idea that the “personal is political” continued to influence later feminist theorizing. For example, American feminist scholar and activist bell hooks stressed the origins of feminist theory in women’s personal experiences. To this end, she

discussed her own childhood experiences as a young black girl, in which she felt constrained in her family by gender ideologies. Because hooks could not identify or communicate with her family regarding this, she responded by engaging in a childlike version of "theorizing" to better understand her condition. Theory and politics were not distant and abstract relative to her personal life; rather, they were intimately connected. (Kelly, 2017, para. 5)

Hooks was only one example among thousands of women who had realized that their problems and concerns are not personal; instead, they were political and should be solved politically by raising their awareness about their social and political rights and also by being equally treated as men.

2.5. The Literature of Feminism During the 20th Century

Women during the twentieth century had adopted different ways such as movements, strikes, unions and many others. Literature with all its forms was one of the effective means women had for the purpose of expressing themselves and their concerns which were mainly rolling around gaining equal rights with men. Even though women authors during 1840s were not “perceived to have the credibility that male authors had” (Engtchr5, 2009, para. 1), they continued to write and some had even used a male pen name only to enhance their reception in the male-dominated industry such as George Eliot. One of the prominent female writers of the twentieth century was Virginia Woolf who had explored “the effects of government, the Church and the general social order on the lives of women” (Anonymous, 2017, para. 2) in her book "Three Guineas-1938". There were also another book entitled "Life As We Have Known It: The Voices of Working-Class Women-1931" which was written and edited by Margaret Llewelyn Davies.

In 1908, females have founded Women Writers’ Suffrage League which has produced important collections such as *Voices and Votes: A Literary Anthology of the*

Women's Suffrage Campaign which was edited by Glenda Norquay (Ziarek, 2008). According to Ziarek, these texts, which aim for direct intervention, helped feminists represent themselves in public debates and political struggles. For example, Elizabeth Robins' "The Convert" (1907), "adapt popular and conventional literary genres of melodrama, autobiography, the conversion narrative, or more direct polemical tracts for the instrumental political purposes of persuading the audience, gaining new converts to the cause, and changing social structures" (Ziarek, 2008, p. 23). There was also another ground breaking book: *Sex, Gender and Society* (1972) which was written by the British feminist writer "Ann Oakley" who was one of the dominant members of the CR groups. She had also produced under the BBC television the drama: *The Men's Room* (1991).

2.6. Conclusion

For many centuries, women in Britain had lived in awful conditions; however, with the beginning of the twentieth century, things began to improve. This chapter highlights the main techniques women had adopted to achieve equal rights with men. They continued to lead movements such as the Women's Suffrage Movement which encompasses the NUWSS (1897) and the WSPU (1903), and the British Women Liberation Movement (1970) which contributed in the development of the women's working conditions and in raising women's awareness. This chapter also provides account of women's achievements in the field of politics. Women have attained equal franchise (1928) through the Representation People Act (1918). They had also the right to be a member of the parliament and their number had been increasing throughout the century. Despite the long suffering women had endured, they finally gained most of their political and social rights.

Chapter Three

Females Responsible for
Making Changes in the
British Women's History of
the Twentieth Century

3.1. Introduction

This chapter is mainly practical, which displays some prominent females who have made changes and contributed to the development of the British women's history over the twentieth century. This practical chapter mainly highlights common knowledge about these great women and their highly efforts and contributions. It also tries to provide certain extracts and quotes said or written by or for the meant females, followed by brief analysis for each. Such featured women who have granted uncountable sacrifices, have really marked turning points in the British history of women during the 20th c.

3.2. Millicent Fawcett

Millicent Fawcett was born in Aldeburgh, Suffolk in 1846. She was an educated woman and she was influenced by John Stuart Mill who encouraged the women's suffrage. Fawcett was one of the suffragists and the leader of the NUWSS, where she argued that women must have the right to vote as men. She had also disagreed with the use of the militant means as the suffragettes (Pettinger, 2018).



Figure3. 1. Millicent Fawcett (Pettinger, 2018)

3.2.1. Case Study: Millicent Fawcett's Letter to David Lloyd George

At the early 20th century, women were continuing their suffrage movement and they used such documents to gain their rights for instance, the letter written by Millicent Fawcett (1912) to David Lloyd George:

Dear Sir,

In view of the most deplorable proceedings of the Militant Suffragists belonging to the Women's Social & Political Union and the consequent harm which may result to the whole Suffrage Movement, may we beg to remind you of the following facts:-

(1) That those guilty of the disturbances of Friday and Monday last are a small and decreasing minority among Suffragists. The lists of those appearing before the Magistrates show the same names repeated again and again. There cannot in our judgment be more than a few hundred in all who have put themselves under the leadership of the Social & Political Union for the commission of lawless actions.

(2) The great bulk of organised Suffragists throughout the country have conducted their campaign in a strictly law-abiding and constitutional manner.

(3) The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies have not only conducted their own work on law-abiding lines, they have emphatically and repeatedly protested against the use of violence in any form. These protests have appeared in the press in November 1908, October 1909, and so [*sic*] recently as December 9th 1911. They were repeated at a meeting in London on March 5th 1912 and they are thoroughly and cordially endorsed by our whole organisation.

(4) The lawless section of the suffragists have since November last lost no opportunity of attacking and decrying the Conciliation Bill which all other great National Women's Suffrage Organisations support. A weakening in the support of the Conciliation Bill would be welcome to that small section of Suffragists who have lately made themselves conspicuous by wilful attacks upon private property.

We, therefore, make a strong personal appeal to you not to punish the great mass of law-abiding suffragists for the faults of the small section of law-breakers; and above all not to

back the policy of these law-breakers by withholding your support from the Conciliation Bill.

We are, on behalf of the Committee,

Yours faithfully,

MILICENT G. FAWCETT -President

EDITH PALLISER - Hon. Parl. Secretary

K.D. COURTNEY - Hon. Secretary

FRANCES STERLING - Treasurer (pro tem).

(p.72)

This primary source is a formal letter that had been written by Millicent Fawcett to liberal government minister David Lloyd George before the WWI in 1912 in Britain. Fawcett was the leader of the NUWSS and she played a great role in the suffrage movement. Through this letter, she aimed to criticise the suffragettes and to show the differences between the suffragists and the suffragettes. Moreover, Fawcett aimed also at telling David Lloyd George that the NUWSS was not the responsible for these illegal activities and to look again for the conciliation bill.

At the beginning of this letter, Millicent Fawcett criticised the WSPU, which is composed of the suffragettes, for the reason of the awful consequences that touched the suffrage movement. In addition to that she disagreed with the forceful means they used, as she said: "In view of the most deplorable proceedings of the Militant Suffragists belonging to the Women's Social & Political Union and the consequent harm which may result to the whole Suffrage Movement". In order to improve her judgement, she introduced such facts; for example, she stated that: "There cannot in our judgment be more than a few hundred in all who have put themselves under the leadership of the Social & Political Union for the commission of lawless actions".

In this letter, Fawcett contrasted the suffragists with the suffragettes. She said that the suffragettes who were "the lawless section of the suffragists" used illegal ways with the police especially when the Conciliation Bill had failed; a Bodleian libraries blog (2010) stated that: "The Bill's failure led to increasingly militant tactics from the frustrated Women's Social and Political Union"(para. 3). However, for Fawcett the suffragists who were the NUWSS did not use any harmful means and they disagreed with the way that the suffragettes had been used with the police as she said in her letter "The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies have not only conducted their own work on law-abiding lines, they have emphatically and repeatedly protested against the use of violence in any form".

As a conclusion, Fawcett shed the light on criticizing the way that the suffragettes used in order to tell David Lloyd George that the rejection of the conciliation bill had not been related to a small group of lawless section of the suffragists. Although the suffragettes' activities were illegal, it was as a reaction to the ignorance of the government.

3.3. Emmeline Pankhurst

A leading British women's rights activist, Emmeline Goulden Pankhurst was born in Moss Side, Manchester on 14 July 1858. She married Richard Pankhurst in 1879, who was a lawyer and supporter of the women's suffrage movement, which was led by her, and "the author of the Married Women's Property Acts of 1870 and 1882, which allowed women to keep earnings or property acquired before and after marriage"(BBC, 2014, para. 1). "In 1889, Emmeline founded the Women's Franchise League, which fought to allow married women to vote in local elections" (BBC, 2014, para. 2). At the beginning of the twentieth century, exactly in 1903, she has founded the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) aiming to achieve the right to vote using forceful means. Like many suffragettes, Emmeline was arrested many times and went on hunger strike herself, resulting in violent force-feeding. "Hunger striking prisoners were released until they grew

strong again, and then re-arrested” (BBC, 2014, para. 3). This period of militancy was ended in 1914, when Emmeline decided to put her energies in supporting the war effort. As a result of Emmeline’ efforts, the Representation of the People Act (1918) gave voting rights to women over 30 and shortly after women were granted equal voting rights with men in 1928, Emmeline died on 14 June (BBC, 2014).



Figure3. 2. Emmeline Pankhurst (1909)

Source: Museum of London/Heritage Images/Getty Images (Lewis, 2017)

3.3.1. Case Study: Emmeline Pankhurst's Quotes

Emmeline’ words have strongly influenced the way women see themselves and have created the image of the strong women in the British society. These are some of her best quotes as they were stated by Steafel (2018):

1. "I had to get a close-hand view of the misery and unhappiness of a man made world, before I reached the point where I could successfully revolt against it" — From her autobiography, *My Own Story*.
2. "I would rather be a rebel than a slave" — From a speech in 1912.
3. "I know that women, once convinced that they are doing what is right, that their rebellion is just, will go on, no matter what the difficulties, no matter what the dangers, so long as there is a woman alive to hold up the flag of rebellion" — From a speech in 1912.
4. "Deeds, not words, was to be our permanent motto" — From *My Own Story*.

5. "The education of the English boy, then as now, was considered a much more serious matter than the education of the English boy's sister. My parents, especially my father, discussed the question of my brothers' education as a matter of real importance. My education and that of my sister were scarcely discussed at all." —
From her autobiography.

In the Quote 1, Emmeline was describing how she succeeded to rebel against moral code which was made by men and against the miserable situation that women were living in. She had taken a necessary step in her road by having a thoroughgoing investigation and deep-close view to the world men have created describing it as the unhappy and the miserable. From a psychological interpretation to this quote, Emmeline has drawn the attention to an important idea which tells that "do not touch a dog until you know its owners" which means that when someone decided to engage in a certain matter, he/ she has to have an extensive study of that specific matter and its surrounding area.

"I would rather be a rebel than a slave" was the most famous quote said by Emmeline who believed that women are not born slaves, instead; they are just free like men. Freedom for her was the concept of having the right to do whatever should be done to achieve a common benefit which was for her "obtaining the right to vote". Emmeline has chosen the militant and the forceful road to reach her and other women's purposes and she was strong enough to do so.

The quote number 3 reveals that Emmeline believes more in the psychological side of the human being and if a person is convinced that he/she is doing the right job/deed, he/she will surely continue to do it and never stop. The same idea was applied to women to whom Emmeline was addressing the Speech in 1912. She was having a self-confidence that the rebellion will go on when women are convinced that what they are doing is the

right thing to be done. The rebellion will continue even if there is just one woman who is holding the flag.

"Deeds, not words, was to be our permanent motto" was the expression that differentiated the suffragette from the suffragist who had adapted more peaceful means to achieve their aims. This phrase was the initial and the permanent flag and motive behind the whole movement. This flag reflects the means the suffragette had adopted to **gain** their right to vote; "they have broken windows, cut telephone and telegraph and had thrown stones" Murray (2011). "Deeds not Words" was written on the gravestone of Emily Wilding Davison, one of the suffragettes, who went on hunger strike and tried to kill herself.

Through the quote number 5, Emmeline was illustrating how women were undermined in the British society even within the same family by providing an example from her own life. She was telling her own suffering when her family made a clear sort of discrimination by discussing her brother's matter of education seriously, but not hers or her sister's.

3.4. Nancy Astor, Viscountess Astor

Nancy Astor born in the United State in 1879 and she moved to Britain in 1905. In 1919, Lady Aston became a member in the British parliament and she took her seat the House of Common. She had been known as "Hitler's woman in Britain" due to her resistance to war. During her serving period in the Commons, she defended women's political rights and encouraged them to be in the civil service. Lady Astor died in 1964 ("New World Encyclopedia contributors ", 2018).



Figure 3.3. Nancy Astor, Viscountess Astor (Sargent, 1909)

3.4.1. Case Study: Extract of Lady Astor's Maiden Speech in the Commons 1920

During Astor's tenure in the House of Commons, she made her first maiden speech in 24 February 1920:

Viscountess ASTOR: I shall not begin by craving the indulgence of the House. I am only too conscious of the indulgence and the courtesy of the House. I know that it was very difficult for some hon. Members to receive the first lady M.P. into the House. [HON. MEMBERS: "Not at all!"] It was almost as difficult for some of them as it was for the lady M.P. herself to come in. Hon. Members, however, should not be frightened of what Plymouth sends out into the world. After all, I suppose when Drake and Raleigh wanted to set out on their venturesome careers, some cautious person said, "Do not do it; it has never been tried before. You stay at home, my sons, cruising around in home waters." I have no doubt that the same thing occurred when the Pilgrim Fathers set out. I have no doubt that there were cautious Christian brethren who did not understand their going into the wide seas to worship God in their own way. But, on the whole, the world is all the better for those venturesome and courageous west country people, and I would like to say that I am quite certain that the women of the whole world will not forget that it was the fighting men of Devon who dared to send the first woman to represent women in the Mother of Parliaments. Now, as the west country people are a courageous lot, it is only right that one of their representatives should show some courage, and I am perfectly aware that it does take a bit of courage to address the House on that vexed question, Drink....

Do we want the welfare of the community, or do we want the prosperity of the Trade? Do we want national efficiency, or do we want national inefficiency? That is what it comes to. So I hope to be able to persuade the House. Are we really

trying for a better world, or are we going to slip back to the same old world before 1914? I think that the hon. Member is not moving with the times...

He talks about the restrictions. I maintain that they brought a great deal of good to the community. There were two gains. First, there were the moral gains. I should like to tell you about them. The convictions of drunkenness among women during the War were reduced to one-fifth after these vexatious restrictions were brought in. I take women, because, as the hon. Member has said, most of the men were away fighting....

I do not think the country is really ripe for prohibition, but I am certain it is ripe for drastic drink reforms. [HON. Members: "No!"] I know what I am talking about, and you must remember that women have got a vote now and we mean to use it, and use it wisely, not for the benefit of any section of society, but for the benefit of the whole. I want to see what the Government is going to do.... (Astor, 1920, p. 1)

This historical document is an Extract speech from the speech delivered by the Lady Astor in the Commons in the 24th of February 1920 and this extract was divided into sections. Nancy Astor was another woman who changed the history of women in Britain and this speech was the primary step made by Lady Astor when she became a member of the parliament. Throughout this speech, she aimed to illustrate for the hon. Member in the House of Commons that her journey to become MP was difficult; and to make them see that women could do everything they want by hard work. In addition to that she wanted the British government to find a solution in order to develop their country.

Inside the first section, Lady Astor said that the hon. Members in the House of Commons did not accept her admission to the Common and it was difficult for them to find a woman in the parliament, as she said: "I know that it was very difficult for some hon. Members to receive the first lady M.P. into the House". Inside this section, Nancy Astor compared between her experience in the House and the Pilgrim Fathers who traveled to America and she gave an example, as she said: "...I suppose when Drake and Raleigh wanted to set out on their venturesome careers, some cautious person said, "Do not do it; it has never been tried before"; as a result she wanted to illustrate that nothing is possible to

do if you have strength and courage. Furthermore, she shed the light on the power and courage of the western women and she was pleased to be one of them.

Throughout the rest of the sections, Lady Astor focused on the situation of the country and the restrictions and its results. She explained that their country is, still, not developed like the other European countries and they have to work as a unity, as she said: “Do we want the welfare of the community, or do we want the prosperity of the Trade? Do we want national efficiency, or do we want national inefficiency? ”. In addition to that she stated that the government made such good restrictions as “the convictions of drunkenness” in order to develop Britain. However, the drink reforms did not apply completely, as she said in her speech: “He talks about the restrictions. I maintain that they brought a great deal of good to the community.... I do not think the country is really ripe for prohibition, but I am certain it is ripe for drastic drink reforms”. Moreover, Lady Astor highlighted the power and the courage of women to obtain their rights as she said: “...and you must remember that women have got a vote now and we mean to use it, and use it wisely, not for the benefit of any section of society, but for the benefit of the whole”.

As a result, Lady Astor wanted to show the hon. Members in the House of Commons that the powerful country grew not only by one part of the society but by the whole society: men and women.

3.5. Margret Thatcher

Margret Thatcher was one of the important British females who have changed the British women's history in the 20th century. In 1979, she became the UK's first women prime minister. Thatcher led the conservative party from 1975 to 1990 and her serving as prime minister was the longest one in this century. Margaret Thatcher died on 8 April 2013("New World Encyclopedia contributors ", 2018).



Figure 3. 4. Margaret Thatcher, the first female prime minister of Britain (Gregory, 2013)

3.5.1. Case Study: An Extract from Joseph R. Gregory's Article: Margaret Thatcher, 'Iron Lady' Who Set Britain on New Course, Dies at 87

...she led her Conservative Party to three straight election wins and held office for 11 years — May 1979 to November 1990 — longer than any other British politician in the 20th century.

In October 1980, 17 months into her first term, Mrs. Thatcher faced disaster [*sic*]. More businesses were failing and more people were out of work than at any time since the Great Depression. Racial and class tensions smoldered. Even her close advisers worried that her push to stanch inflation, sell off nationalized industry and deregulate the economy was devastating the poor, undermining the middle class and courting chaos.

At the Conservative Party conference that month, the moderates grumbled that they were being led by a free-market ideologue oblivious to life on the street and the exigencies of realpolitik. With electoral defeat staring them in the face, cabinet members warned, now was surely a time for compromise.

Her resolve did the trick. A party revolt was thwarted, the Tories hunkered down, and Mrs. Thatcher went on to achieve great victories. She turned the Conservatives, long

associated with the status quo, into the party of reform. Her policies revitalized British business spurred industrial growth and swelled the middle class.

But her third term was riddled with setbacks. Dissension over monetary policy, taxes and Britain's place in the European Community caused her government to give up hard-won gains against inflation and unemployment. By the time she was ousted in another Tory revolt — this one over her resistance to expanding Britain's role in a European Union — the economy was in a recession and her reputation tarnished. (Gregory, 2013, para. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

This document is an extract from an article written by Joseph R. Gregory in 2013 about Margaret Thatcher who was the first women prime minister in Britain. This article is divided into different sections and each one highlights a special event in the political career of Margaret Thatcher. Throughout this article, Joseph Gregory aimed to show that women like Margaret Thatcher made a great role in the history of Britain

At the beginning of this Article, Joseph R. Gregory described the position of Margaret Thatcher in the parliament. He said that Thatcher was the first women or even the first politician that led the conservative party for three times during the 20th century. According to Gregory, it means that the British society began to change their views on women. Through this extract he shed the light on two terms in her career: the first and the third term. Furthermore, Gregory explained that Margaret Thatcher faced many challenges when she led her first term in 1980 due to the "Great Depression, racial and class tensions". Even if the conservative party was depressed, Thatcher as all women in the 20th century did not stop and worked hard to build her country as Gregory stated in his article: "Thatcher went on to achieve great victories. She turned the Conservatives, long associated with the status quo, into the party of reform. Her policies revitalized British business

spurred industrial growth and swelled the middle class". Gregory described that although Margaret Thatcher was a powerful woman; her third term highlighted the overheating economy in Britain due to "dissension over monetary policy, taxes and Britain's place in the European Community".

In the final analysis, Margaret Thatcher worked hard in her 3 terms even if she faced many problems; however she challenged them in order to develop Britain. As a result of her work and courage, she became known as the Iron Woman. This extract showed that women did not stop to obtain their political and social rights, at the same time they did their job as men or even better than them.

3.6. Olive Morris

Olive Morris was a community activist who was born on 26th June 1952 in Harewood, St Catherine's, Jamaica. When she was nine years old, she and her brother joined her mother and father in south London (Roux, 2017).

"Olive Morris was a key figure in Black British and Black British feminist history. A member of the Brixton Black Panthers, she also founded the Brixton Black Women's Group, was a founding member of Organisation of Women of Asian and African Descent and was at the forefront of London-based squatter movements in the 1970s"(Atluri, 2009, para.8).

Morris died of cancer in 1979. Johnson (2018) has stated that despite the fact that Morris was the woman who started feminism in the black British community and who is often defined as the fearless black British, her memory got missing in black history until the year 2008 when a "Remembering Olive" campaign began. Now, her legacy is kept by adding her story to history lessons in many schools in black communities across Britain (Johnson, 2018) and a council building in Lambeth bears her name.



Figure 3.5. Olive Morris

Source: Photo credit: Lambeth Archives (Osborne, 2017).

Despite the great achievements made by Morris, her speeches and sayings were rarely recorded or registered as she was herself forgotten. Here is a reflection of Tara Atluri, who is a Professor in the Sociology department at York University, on the "Do You Remember Olive Morris?" project and the "Remembering Olive Collective".

"Do You Remember Olive Morris?" was a project in which a collection of women were using the internet to reactivate forgotten activist histories. Chidgey reports on that: "In 2006, while researching the history of black British activism at Peckham library, Ana Laura Lopez de la Torre came across a photo from a Black Panther demonstration at Coldharbour Lane in Brixton" (2010, para. 1) and that picture was the one of Olive Morris.

"Remembering Olive Collective" is the collection of Olive Morris which comprises her personal papers and photographs, and 30 oral history interviews with those who knew her and were involved in the political struggles of the 1960s and 1970s (Hustle, 2018). This collection was launched in 2009 by ROC members at Lambeth Archives.

3.6.1. Case Study: Tara Atluri Reflection on the "Do You Remember Olive Morris"?

Tara Atluri starts her reflection by describing a photograph of Olive Morris, saying that it was a colourless picture in which Morris appeared barefoot, holding a placard that read: "Black sufferer fight police pig brutality". As it is known, Morris is a black girl who fought against state and police repression and campaigned for access to education, decent living conditions for Black communities (Lopez, 2018); her words in the placard reflect that she was a fearless fighter for black rights and women's rights specifically.

It began with the impassioned[*sic*] vision of London-based Uruguyan artist Ana Laura Lopez de la Torre who, in conjunction Liz Obi – a prominent community activist and friend of Morris', created a project that will encompass the creation of public archive, training for volunteers and public events that celebrate Morris' life and the significance that remembering figures like her has for contemporary Black feminism in the United Kingdom. Obi holds the only living archive of memorabilia and historical artefacts that document Morris's activist work in the UK. (Atluri, 2009. para. 3)

Atluri in the above quotation stated that the project was created by the artist Ana Laura Lopez de la Torre along with Liz Obi who is the friend of Morris. The project will include the creation of public archive, training for volunteers and public events that celebrate Morris' life and the importance, of remembering figures like her, this project has for contemporary Black feminism in the United Kingdom. The women who were involved in the Remembering Olive Collective came from different countries; this shows the strong side of women when it comes to remembering and honoring a part of the feminist legacy whatever the difficulties are.

I have also been deeply inspired by the work of the women who are part of the Remembering Olive Collective. Women who come from India, North America, Latin America, Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and the UK[;] who meet monthly in Brixton to honour the life and spirit of Olive Morris through a continuous will for change. (Atluri, 2009. para. 9)

Atluri in her reflection explained the coming plans of the collective which would make a trip to Manchester “to interview former members of the British Black Panthers and others who knew and worked with Olive Morris” (Atluri, 2009, para. 10). According to her, the collective in 2009 was interviewing former members of the British Black Panthers and others who knew and worked with Olive Morris. Atluri and the ROC members were working closely with the Black Cultural Archives and the Lambeth Archives in order to ensure that the life and work of Olive Morris and other Black British feminists is preserved (Atluri, 2009).

Atluri has written in her reflection how she was inspired by Olive Morris: “I find myself wondering why I, a brown woman from India, who immigrated to Canada and now finds herself in the UK was drawn towards Olive Morris” (Atluri, 2009. para. 15). She felt that there is something inside her that drives her to be engaged in any event or project that has a connection with Olive Morris: “I find myself laughing at all this heady introspection, thinking that someone like Olive Morris, who was a grassroots activist, feminist, Black Panther, squatter and internationalist would have probably just told me to shut up and do something” (Atluri, 2009. para. 15). Through this expression, it is clear that Atluri was strongly affected by Morris so that she was imagining that if Morris was alive, she would told her to react and do something rather than just talking.

3.7. Conclusion

Before the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, women in Britain were not given the value they deserve; they were neither registered historically, nor even given the right to publish what they have written. However, when women started to fight for their rights and make changes in history, some of them gained popularity and thus they started to be recorded. This chapter highlighted certain outstanding women, either British or from other nationalities, who strongly made apparent changes in the history of women and the British history in general. For the purpose of showing the practical side of the dissertation, this chapter tried to display the analysis of some documents and quotes related to those great women. Thanks to them, women now are enjoying the lives they have chosen and they are holding the same positions as men do.

General Conclusion

This study is concerned with presenting the real suffering women had gone through in order to possess and have advantages of their political and social rights. The primary objective was to determine the long journey women had carried out and the specific techniques and strategies they had adopted to fight for their freedom and equality within the British society. Furthermore, through this study, we aim to show the strong side of the feminine part of the society; hence, to come to the conclusion that women did not gain their entire rights during the twentieth century.

This work was carried out under a descriptive analytical method; researchers have presented a thorough descriptive analysis of the twentieth century Britain in which women had struggled and went through hard times to reach their objectives and to become free from the limitations imposed by their societies.

The present research is divided into three chapters. The first theoretical chapter was devoted to the socio-historical background of the British society during the twentieth century for the sake of giving a clear framework to the circumstances that led women to revolt against the laws imposed by the male-dominated society, and to take real decisions to break such laws and enjoy the taste of freedom and equality. More specifically, this chapter spotted light on the social, economic and political status of women and Britain from the beginning till the end of the twentieth century passing through major events such as the two World Wars which were of apparent effects on women's field of work, and thus on their way of thinking; while men were fighting during the wars, women were taking their places at work. Another important point this chapter highlighted was the problem of immigrants who came from different countries seeking better life within the British

society. Despite the difficulties and the miserable life immigrants had encountered, they could finally live in particular districts and become successful in trade and so forth .

The second theoretical chapter displays the long road women had followed in order to gain equality with men. To achieve their goals and raise their awareness about their actual roles in the society, women had formed unions, groups and led movements such as the Women's Suffrage Movement which was divided into two opposed movements: the suffragists who, were the members of the NUWSS (1897), used legal strategies (letters and petitions); whereas, the suffragettes who, were the members of the WSPU (1903), used illegal strategies (breaking windows and throwing stones). The outcomes of the Women's Suffrage Movement had resulted in the introduction of the two acts: The Representation of the People Act (1918) which enfranchised men as well as women over the age of 30 with regard to some conditions and the Equal Franchise Act (1928) which gave women over the age of 21 the right to vote as men regardless the former conditions. These two acts paved the way for women to be present in the British parliament. The first woman to be elected to the House of Commons was Countess Constance Markievicz (1918); however, Nancy Astor was the first woman who took that seat in the Commons. Furthermore, the admission to the House of Lords was difficult for women until the submission of the Life Peerages Act (1958). In addition to the Women's Suffrage movement there was the British Women's Liberation Movement (1970) which aimed to gain equal pay and equal educational and job opportunities...etc. This study also discussed the role of feminist literature in raising women's awareness and changing the society's attitude toward them.

The third chapter in the current study represented the practical part in which researchers have displayed certain prominent females who changed the history of women in Britain. A short description was provided for each female along with the analysis of different case studies for each one of them. These females were: Millicent Fawcett,

Emmeline Pankhurst, Nancy Astor, Margaret Thatcher and Olive Morris. This work exposed the analysis of some historical documents which were written by those females (a letter, a speech and quotes), and others which were written about them (the article written about Margret Thatcher and the review written about Olive Morris). The aim of the former analysis is to illustrate that women have used different mechanisms and worked hard in order to change the history of women in Britain by upgrading their position within the society.

As a conclusion, it can be said that women in Britain during the 20th century might be surrendered to their fate as a housewives; yet, they refused to be considered as stones and challenged their societies. Women in Britain used all their power to possess their rights; they used peaceful ways, militant ways and went on a hunger strike in order to live equal life exactly as men. It is true that women succeeded to fight and earn most of their political and social rights; however, they did not maintain full equality with men and their struggle is still in continuity even nowadays.

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المخلص

تتناول هذه الأطروحة دراسة شاملة حول تاريخ المرأة في بريطانيا خلال القرن العشرين، حيث خاضت النساء كفاحاً طويلاً طلباً لحقوقهن السياسية والاجتماعية، حتى تتمكن في نهاية المطاف من الحصول على حقوق-حرمت منها لعدة قرون وبالتحديد خلال حكم الملكة فيكتوريا- متساوية مع الرجل. فمن أهم المواضيع التي تم التطرق إليها في هذا البحث هي مسألة اظهار المعاناة الحقيقية التي مرت بها النساء من اجل نيل حرياتهن مثل الحق في التصويت و الحق في اعتبارهن فرداً ضمن المجتمع لا كالخدم. وبالتالي، يهدف هذا البحث إلى تسليط الضوء على التغييرات الجذرية التي أحدثتها النساء عبر التاريخ البريطاني وكذا على مجتمعاتهن من خلال تبني استراتيجيات مختلفة سلمية كانت أم عدوانية. ولقد اعتمدت في هذه الدراسة على منهجية ذات وصف تحليلي، حيث قدم الباحثون وصفاً دقيقاً للنزاع السياسي والاجتماعي الذي خاضته المرأة بالإضافة الى تحليل نوعي لمجموعة صغيرة مكونة من مقالات ورسائل و اقتباسات ذي صلة ببعض النسوة البارزات اللاتي أحدثن تغييرات عبر التاريخ البريطاني. وفي الاخير، تم التطرق الى عرض النتائج الرئيسية التي استخلصت من هذه الأطروحة والتي من اهمها أن جهود المرأة كانت فعالة في نواحي متعددة؛ فعلى سبيل المثال أنها رفعت مكانتها من الخضوع إلى الاجلال حيث كانت جهودها مصحوبة بمعاناة لا نهاية لها والتي أدت إلى إزالة غالبية الصور النمطية في المجتمع -إن لم تكن كلها- كما أن تلك الجهود أثمرت في نيلها جُل الحقوق التي يتمتع بها الرجال. وتبقى الحاجة الى مزيد من الدراسات المتواصلة حول هذا الموضوع لتحديد الإنجازات والانتصارات الأخرى - التي حققتها الإناث - من أجل إحياء إرث المرأة على مر القرون.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحقوق الاجتماعية، الحقوق السياسية، القرن العشرون، بريطانيا، كفاح المرأة