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**Gender Role in the Victorian Era:  
A Case Study of Charlotte Bronte's  
The Professor**

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
For a Master Degree in English Literature and Civilization**

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## Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my lovely parents for their unconditional support, patient, and love.

To my dear brothers and sisters, who have provided me with encouragement.

To my partner in the work, to all my colleagues and teachers at the university.

To anyone who read this work.

*Aida*

I thank Allah the Almighty for giving me the strength and patient to accomplish this work

I dedicate this humble one to my dearest parents

To my lovely husband, Yakoube, who supported me until the end

And I do not forget my sisters, my brothers, my grandmothers, my grandfathers, my friends,

my partner in the work, and to all the teachers

of English in the world.

*Nacual*

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## Abstract

The present research deals with the gender roles during the Victorian Era and the literature produced during the period that reflects the social status of women in the patriarchal society. In The Professor, Charlotte Bronte highlights the female journey towards the independence and equality. The study under investigation aims at investigating the gender roles during the Victorian Era and the way women tended to reject the limitation of their role to housewives and mothers. To reach this objective, we conducted an analytical study depending on two different theories, feminism and gender role theories namely; biological and structural. Thus, the gender role presented through the protagonist's eyes challenges the Victorian imposed roles, but it still did not make women free and independent.

**Keywords :** Gender role, The Professor, patriarchal society, Victorian Era.

تهدف هذه دور الجنس في العهد و يكتوري الذي يصور مكانة .  
في رواية , لتحقيق الاستقلالية والمساواة. تهدف الدراسة الحالية أيضا  
لتحليل ادوار الجنس في العهد الفي طريقة النساء في رفضهن لدورهن الذي يقتصر على كونهن زوجات وربّ  
بيوت فقط. وللوصول الهدف المنشود قد تمت دراسة تحليلية لرواية لتي اعتمدت على نظريتين: النظرية  
النسوية و نظرية الجنس وبالتحديد النظرية البيولوجية والهيكالية. وكننتيجة لذلك ف كلا الجنسين قد تم التعبير عنها  
من خلال وجهة نظر البطل ومن وجهة نظر الكاتب التي جعلت كلا من البطل والنساء اللواتي يقابلهن يتحدون القوانين  
يكتورية المطبقة في المجتمع. لتنتهي الدراسة بمحاولة تحقيق حريتها رغم عدم نجاحها الكامل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: , , , العهد الفي .

## Table of Content

Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgements.....	II
Abstract.....	III
General Introduction.....	1
Chapter One The Status of Women in Victorian Age , Feminist Narratology, and Gender Theory .....	5
Introduction .....	6
Section One : The Status of Women in Victorian Age .....	6
1 Women in Victorian Literature .....	6
2 Limitations of Women during the Victorian Age.....	8
2.1 Economic Status .....	8
2.2 Conventional Status .....	10
2.3 Educational Status .....	10
2.4 Marriage.....	11
2.4.1 Married Women .....	13
2.4.2 Unmarried Women .....	15
3 The Rejection of Female Limitation in the Victorian Era.....	16
4 Charlotte Bronte as Main Figure of Victorian Age.....	19
4.1 Bronte's Writing Style .....	20
4.1.1 Feminist Themes .....	21
4.1.2 Lack of Complexity .....	21
Conclusion .....	22
Section Two : Feminist Narratology, and Gender Theory .....	23
Introduction .....	23
1 Concepts of Narrator and Focalization .....	23
2 Feminist Narratology .....	24
3 Gender Role .....	26
3.1 Biological Theory.....	27
3.2 Structural Functional Theory .....	29
4 Gender Trouble .....	29
Conclusion .....	32
Chapter Two : Investigating the Gender Role in The Professor .....	33
Introduction .....	34

Section One: William Representation of Woman Voice .....	34
Section Two: Female Role in The Professor.....	40
Section Three : New Concept of Women and Marriage .....	42
Conclusion .....	48
General Conclusion .....	49
Works cited.....	52

# General Introduction

Victorian age is one of the most significant periods that literature passed through. It was characterized by its true reflection of the social image at all respects. Literary writers played a great role to picture what has been happening at that era, without which it could not be recognized how much women suffered to take their rights.

Speaking of the Victorian writers, Charlotte Bronte is, without doubt, an outstanding novelist who was famous, and still, of her female characters by whom she could fight the social impressions on the women. Thus, she could tell that women are strong enough to be dealt with differently.

Her Jane Eyre, Villette and The Professor turned Bronte into a successful literary figure. Not only on the thematic level but also her special style makes her one of the most charming female writers at that age.

As all the narrative texts, Bronte narrates her points of view through the tongue of her female characters. Taking into consideration that Victorian era characterized by its gender troubles. Bronte played as a defender of women and their rights in contrast to men.

Through her black and white, the readers could make an assumption of how women characterized at all times and, at the same time, how they really wanted to be pictured. That gender problem which was there in every word in Bronte's narrative texts makes her worth studying the gender roles in the Victorian era through her eyes.

There are different studies which tackled Bronte's novel The Professor and the matter of gender role. The researcher Hauwermeiren Van Gerlinde (July, 2008) deals with "Are We Men's Equals or Are We Not?": Gender in the Bronte Sisters' Novels. She finds that Bronte's works unmistakably bear traces of their personal uniqueness, while inevitably also displays signs of shared influences. That proves to have an impact on their representation of gender issues. Bronte works criticize Victorian convention in an obvious or unobvious way, as well

as share double standard considering questions of gender. Bronte appreciation of marriage based on equalities and love. The more interesting thing is to concentrate on the characteristics which varied her works from that of others.

Gregusova Dominika (2017) tackled Charlotte Bronte: Her Development as a Writer and Common Features of Her Novels. She reached that Bronte started writing and thinking of authorship since she was a child, so she had early artistic development. Charlotte never reach such successful imaginative novels if it was not for her liberal upbringing. In order to understand her work, the reader has to focus in detail on her life. Also, she is brave to address women question in her work. She hides behind a male protagonist in The Professor. She definitely explores the theme of gender issues and did so on many different levels: as focusing on its social aspect and its influence in changing the course of people's lives.

The third researcher Emilija Funtek (September 2018) dealt with Charlotte Bronte Narrative Mode in The Professor, Jane Eyre and Villette. She reached that the function of narrative is reporting facts. The notion of narrator is related to focalization. However both notions cannot determine what has been called narration. Bronte started revolution in Victorian literature because women at that time wrote only love stories from their point of view. Her novels are written in the first-person narrator and dominated by the gift of speech. She created reader's who are intended to fulfill the needs of specific character. Bronte advocates gender equality and her female characters kept down their passionate feelings. In the other hand her male characters had privileges that support them to achieve their goals and show the superiority of their gender.

This research aims at investigating the gender role in The Professor by Charlotte Bronte. Further, it investigates how this gender role challenge the established customs of the Victorian age. Accordingly, this thesis attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- How does Bronte present the gender role in her novel?
- 2- In what ways do the main characters of the novel challenge the established Victorian gender role?

We hypothesize that Bronte presented the gender role through her characters and their acts in the novel. It stands principally on the point of view of the protagonist to show how the characters challenge the established Victorian gender role.

The present study is descriptive analytical. It depends on two main theories to reach out the research objective: gender theory and Feminism.

The present study stands principally on narrative and feminist analysis of the present corpus based on the main theories of feminist narratology and gender theories.

This paper divided into two chapters. The first chapter includes two sections, the first one deals with the situation of women in the Victorian age. It gives a contextual background of the current study, while the second section discusses the main theories of feminist narratology and its relationship with gender role. The second chapter is taking us into the analysis in which the investigation of the gender role will start its journey.

Chapter One :  
The Status of Women in Victorian Age  
, Feminist Narratology, and Gender  
Theory

## Introduction

The word literature is an important word which reflects the circumstances of the period in which a literary work is produced. As well as, it is a means for introducing an artistic and a new realistic mode of writing. The Victorian Era witnessed rapid development in prose-fiction especially the novel and emergence of male and female writer. Through their works , they narrate or criticize the life of Victorian woman. Many female writers try to find solutions by expressing their ideas that rejected the Victorian customs. They also demand equality between genders. This chapter divided into two sections. The first discusses the status of women in the Victorian age, while the second tackles the feminist narratology and gender role.

### Section One : The Status of Women in Victorian Age

The Victorian age was described as the golden age of the English novel. However, this kind of literary genre was concerned with serious social issues which were mostly related to the Victorian woman. So, this chapter attempts to discuss the Victorian age literature and its characteristics in addition to the role of woman in the Victorian period. It also will shed the light on the feminist writer Charlotte Bronte as the main figure of that age.

## **1 Women in Victorian Literature**

The literature, which was written during the period of Queen Victoria's reign from 1837 to 1901 in England, was called Victorian literature. It was either poetry, fiction, essays, or letters. This Victorian Literature was characterizing the period and it was considering as one of the great changes that the age witnessed. The historical writer Margaret Oliphant describes this change as "a period of transition, in which many great names were falling into silence, and the men who were destined to take their places were but slowly pushing to the front" (01).

During the Victorian era, literature has been replaced by prose. Victorian age was, according to the historical critic Diaches David, the great age of English novel (1049). Besides, Victorian literature became very important and powerful because it relies on a realistic mode of representation. According to Evans Ifore, England witnessed new values in the production of fiction and audience reading, between 1870 and 1880, there was an increase in the number of people who could read both men and women (262). Thus, Cuddon John Anthony demonstrates that the novel was the dominant and major genre at that time. Due to some journals and magazines, its publication became popular. Nevertheless, works of pre-Victorian writers had characterized by its historical fiction and satire as works of Jane Austen and Walter Scott.

As mentioned before, the Victorian period associates with a realistic works that reflects the Victorian world mainly its social issues, concerns, and moral values. So, the Victorian novel was the ideal form to describe the basis of life.

During this period, many female writers emerged and contributed to the growth of the novel. Some of them published their works using their real names in contrast others wrote under a male pseudonyms in order to cover the issues of inequality and women's situation in Victorian society in addition to gain recognition. Bomarito Jessica and Whitaker Russel claims that women in better circumstances became either travelers, readers, or writers. Their writing was not appreciated by the male masses. This obliged them to publish under a male pseudonyms. In other words, women's suffering and troubles were important for women novelists who are more aware of their social rights. So, their themes were related to women's oppression, hardship, success, freedom, career, and ambitions.

## **2 Limitations of Women during the Victorian Age**

In 19<sup>th</sup> century, and in such a patriarchal society (Victorian society), the status of women and their importance were neglected in all domains. They faced different difficulties although England was a powerful and wealthy nation.

### **2.1 Economic Status**

Victorian society viewed them as an ideal women. "whatever their social rank, in the eyes of the law women were second-class citizens"(Gallagher 57). They did not have identity nor fair rights because of the Victorian laws which were discriminatory ones. This law discouraged women and did not allow them to improve themselves. As a result, they were an oppressed and abused member in their society. This Femininity's ideal encapsulated in model daughter, wife, and mother.

Both sexes, men and woman, were put in separate spheres. They only came together either at breakfast or dinner. The ideology of separate spheres was according to the characteristics of women and men. In other words, females belonged to the domestic sphere due to the fact that they are weak and morally superior to men. Their job was to prepare the next generation. However, men were in the public sphere.

In Anglo Saxon period, women were gained a set of rights but they lost all of them in the Victorian era. Perkin Joan states that women had rights to property, to a share in control of domestic affairs and of children, and to divorce or legal separation, departing with the children and half the material goods. According to Victorian conventions, woman was considered as the inferior sex, weak physically and mentally. She should be under her husband or father's control. It was believed that men were the superior sex in most areas of life.

Victorians followed their queen. They considered her as a great example of loyal and obedient wife. The Queen Victoria represented the ideal womanhood. Abrams Lynn views her as "an icon of late-19<sup>th</sup>-century middle-class femininity and domesticity"(para.3). So, the pure woman, for them, is associated with the private sphere (the home). This sphere protected woman, guaranteed the feminine purity, and made home as heaven.

Victorian age had its own social classes. Each class determined woman's life, to which she belong. The role of women remained unchanged in social categories. They were deprived of taking an important job. More specifically, woman of the higher class, Nobility class, enjoyed life. Her daily activities were visiting family, friends, sewing, dancing, reading and writing letters. She was highly educated. This wealthy women liked and preferred going to evening parties. They wore expensive clothes with jewels.

Woman of middle class was expected to educate, help her family in business and try to get married into nobility. Women of those two classes could be active outside the domestic sphere and had nannies to take care of their children and teach them. Also, middle class women helped poor ones in their free times and guided them.

However, lower class women were very poor, and treated unfairly. They had only the choice of working to survive. They often earned low wages and worked in bad circumstances. Some of them sold food to others, repaired fishing nets, worked in factories, or ,as, servants. Others took menial jobs like laborers and prostitution. Commonly, these women remained single all their lives.

Barrett Kara confirms that woman who were involved in the work place were viewed as being damaged and somehow less worthy of a good life and reputation than those woman who were spared from the often brutal working conditions and hours which the woman faced. The working class women worked to death. The critic Neff Wanda Fraiken states that all

women were a problem not only the working ones (11). She shows the common belief of the Victorians. They considered women and children as a helpless creatures who needed men to protect and to support them.

Even women worked more, better, harder, and longer than men, they were paid lower wages. Mostly, the bad conditions in the mills caused the death of workers and prostitution.

## **2.2 Conventional Status**

On occasion, Victorian woman had conservative view related to dresses. They believed that all their dresses should be long, go all the way to the floor, and sleeved. They never wore pants or any dress showed their legs in public.

According to pattern of traditional family, women were supposed to remain at home and obey men. Almost all of them were housewives and accepted the domestic values. In the other side, man held an important position. They gain certain privileges due to their sex. They were the strong force in Victorian society. They worked and earned money. Anyway, the Industrial revolution changed somehow that beliefs. It gave woman a sense of security and an opportunity to earn money through working.

Thus, there were women worked either nurse, laundress, maid, teacher, or social worker. Some other wives stayed at home and earned money through selling milk, butter, and other farm products. Moreover, woman never traveled alone in Victorian society. Most of them traveled with family or husband.

## **2.3 Educational Status**

For Victorians, education is not important and not obligatory to women. They thought that wife should not appear more intelligent than her husband and woman could live without it. Perkin Joan claims that it was inadvisable for wives to appear to be more intelligent than their husbands, even if that were the truth (258). Though, some daughters, of

aristocrats and middle class, had very limited education. They were educated singing or painting at home.

Later on, Oxford and Cambridge opened their doors to women, however, many families refused to send their clever and intelligent daughters to them. Those families feared from the idea of unmarried women which they were expected to follow. According to Hughes Katheryn, woman, who devoted herself too enthusiastically to intellectual pursuits, was known as a "blue-stocking".

Victorians believed that women should be isolated from aspects as education, sex knowledge, and work. In this context, Mitchell Sally stresses that "a respectable girl should be completely ignorant about sex and sexuality until initiated by her husband on the wedding night"(269). In addition to that, sex and sexuality were prevented topics. People were not allowed to talk about them nor do sexual behaviors. Specifically, women were banned from reading about it. They should be naïve and innocent about it. Woman had to stay chaste until marriage. She was not allowed even to speak to man unless a married woman attended as a chaperone.

## **2.4 Marriage**

In Victorian law, man and wife were one person. That's to say she had no legal existence. She suffered inequality in marriage and society. it was believed that women belonged to the domestic sphere. That belief required them to lost ownership of wages, and to be excluded from land property. Before marriage, single woman and widows were allowed to own possessions. After it, their rights and property were given to the husband. Nsaidzedze Ignatius claims that the Victorian brides relinquished all their rights to property and personal wealth to their husbands. Then, they could dispose them.

Besides, wife and children were considered as one of husband's property. Her actions were under his direction. He had a complete control over her earning, property, and money even her body. He controlled all what her body produced such as sex, children, and domestic labour. That was because of Victorian laws which legitimated beating wives and marital rape. They were obliged to do as what their husbands desired. According to Porter Roy, a married woman had these following functions: obeying her husbands, producing heirs, running the house hold, and being ladylike an ambassadress of grace (41).

Victorian society viewed woman as weak, inferior, and more emotional. She was like slave in it. She should satisfy her family, her father, and her husband. She should devote herself for them without thinking. Gilbert Sandra and Gubar Susan say that woman became an evil when she tried to think about herself (601). She had to live an oppressed.

Generally, woman were expected to marry and perform her duties as wife or mother rather than educate. While women who failed in finding husbands, they also expected to remain uneducated. They expected to take position in childcare as a supporter to other members of her family or ,as, a governess.

In her life, woman had to endure the difficult circumstances. Wife should endure her husband's cruelty, violence, control, and verbal abuse. However, he had the right to participate in affairs with another woman. Furthermore, the wife did not have the right to speak, defend herself, or demand divorce. In fact, it was as social taboo. The husband was the controller and powerful.

In case of marriage, fathers had the right to take their children whenever they wanted and beat mothers without fear of prosecution. In addition to the inequality in divorce, Perkin states that:

A Divorce Bill could be obtained as a matter of right by an innocent husband against a wife found guilty of adultery un condoned by him: a wife who wanted a divorce had to prove not only adultery by the husband but aggravating enormities such as physical cruelty, bigamy or incest".(23)

While, husband "had only to prove simple adultery by his wife". And he could divorce her. After that, woman would lose her social position and her children who were remained under the husband's responsibility. Because of the belief that woman weak, unstable, and incapable of making rational decisions, children were from father's rights. In this context, there was a huge distinction between men's and women's rights. Victorian women's rights and privileges were limited or not existed. Both married and single woman lived with disadvantages and hardship.

#### **2.4.1 Married Women**

Marriage was the primary goal and an important step in Victorian women's lives. It was believed that a married woman was more respectful than an unmarried woman. As a result, the main purpose of them was to find appropriate husbands. Wollstonecraft argues that "the only way for woman to rise in the world is by marriage"(qtd. In Perkin 54).

According to Calder Jenni, Victorians saw marriage as a stake. It was bargain, for the upper class Victorians, in which the father of woman and the husband tried to get the most of it. Furthermore, it was different from one social class to another. William Bridges Adams thinks that, as quoted in Perkin, marriage was a matter not of love but of bargain and sale, in the upper classes, a legally sanctioned species of prostitution. However, females of the middle class were made to play a double part, housewives on ordinary occasions, and fine ladies when required. Among the poor, conditions of poverty destroyed any vestiges of refinement,

and nothing could be done to help poor women until their circumstances were improved (212).

He shows that women, from any social rank, were slaves. The rich person seeks an agreeable and well-taught harem slave, the poor man, an efficient working slave. However the middle class man endeavors to combine both of them.

Generally, Victorian woman were expected to desire marriage because it allowed them to become mothers. Hughes Katheryn states that girls usually married in their early to mid- 20s. The groom, typically, would be five years older. Men should earn money that helped him to support wife and future children. In the other side, Calder Jenni claims that "it was the wife who made the home, who cared for her children within it, who brought her husband back to it when work was done, who provided the hot dinners and created the atmosphere of comfort and protection"(27). Besides, the laws were based on the idea that women would get married and their husbands would take care of them. Their Wealth passed to their husbands before passing the 1882 Married Property Act.

The Victorian marriage was an indissoluble union. It ended only by death. At that time, the church did not give divorce. People could grant it as a legal separation in these cases, according to Mitchell Sally, adultery, extreme cruelty, or desertion. Couples were not able to remarry. If the husband wished to end the marriage with the right to remarry, he would need a certain act of parliament that allowed him to wed again. However, this parliamentary divorce was given to rich husbands who proved their wives had committed adultery. In addition to another kind of divorce which was 'wife sale'. This divorce took place in some rural regions. It gave the right to husband to sell his wife to another man with whom she committed adultery. Usually, this humiliated the wife.

In fact, there was injustice in divorce. In case the wife wished it, she "had to prove adultery plus aggravating offences by the husband"(Perkin 23), but man "had only to prove simple adultery by his wife". After it, Victorian women lost everything even their children, that's why most of them preferred to endure their husbands.

#### **2.4.2 Unmarried Women**

Unmarried woman was known as spinster in her Victorian society. Calder Jenni states that she was seen less feminine than her domesticated counterpart (128). Spinsterhood was considered as an anathema and people claimed that there was something wrong with the woman who did not marry. They thought that woman, in general, needed someone to take care of her.

Unmarried women were free but they did not have the Victorian social acceptance. They were used as a means of entertainment by men. However, woman of 20years old would not be as spinster. Those spinsters had unsatisfied position in their society. They were marginalized and criticized because they failed in building family but they protected their own property. For Victorians, their existence was as their death. They were seen less respectful and something abnormal. Greg William Rathbone claims that "there is an enormous and increasing number of single women in the nation, a Number quite disproportionate and quite abnormal, a number which [...] is both Productive and prognostic of much wretchedness and wrong"(11).

Moreover, unmarried women of the lower class worked as servants or in factories. Those of upper and middle class took care of their relative's nieces and nephews or served as companions to elderly relatives. As a result, women, by marriage, lost their rights specially to property and they, without it, suffered in the Victorian period.

The number of spinsters increased because of the war when a huge number of men went to fight. In addition to the mortality rate for boys was higher than for girls, and a large number of males who emigrated. Those women also depicted in literature as eccentric old ladies.

### **3 The Rejection of Female Limitation in the Victorian Era**

The Victorian era marked the rejection of social limitation that put on women. It was the period of radical change. During which woman started calling for their deprived rights and their social status. Woman's conditions were changed by the English Common Law. She was granted certain rights as taking care of her children, after divorce, who were under the age of seven. Men were had no right to treat her with cruelty. She had the right to own property and sue husbands; through passing various acts against Victorian customs and the traditional convictions as the Infant's Custody Act, the Matrimonial Causes Act, and the Married Woman Property Act.

The middle-class woman established movements searching for equality. According to Mitchell Sally, those women sought serious education, rather than the painting, piano playing, social graces, and general knowledge that were usual in girls' schools. They also tried to extend the range of women's employment.

Despite all those acts, women situation remained unsatisfactory during Victorian era. This Victorian woman problem was not resolved. The idea of women inferiority was more powerful than the force of law. Members of Victorian society did not accept the changes and it was hard for them to eradicate their beliefs and convictions. Many thinkers debated the submissiveness of woman. Thompson Nicola Diane states that:

Through the second half of the nineteenth century there was passionate discussion and agitation on matters such as marriage and divorce laws,

women's property and custody rights, and educational and employment opportunities for women, as well as vocal debate on female suffrage, which gained intensity later in the century.(12)

Furthermore, the emergence of 'woman question' argued her social, economical, and political position in the English society. It aimed to equality, special in, educational opportunities to women as men. It was interested by many females. King Jeannette says that woman's demand for emancipation from the duties of motherhood and family life, was hotly debated throughout the Victorian period (09).

Concerning the rise of the 'Woman Question'. There are events helped it such as the industrialization. When woman contributed in working in the industrialized fields. Moreover, the middle class women helped their husbands in trade and ruling their farms. They were well educated that's why they contributed in teaching in schools. The working class women who worked in factories, mines, and other unsafe jobs as, according to Mitchell Sally, chain making, brick making, and collecting trash from the city streets (46).

Till the end of the nineteenth century, Woman Question was the main topic in British novels, newspapers, and books. Through which writers and educators expressed their ideas on the status of women. Due to that action and those ideas, the picture of ideal woman changed from obedient and angel to an independent, strong, and free person who could decide and control his life without any man.

Victorian period was not characterized by equality between men and women but by the apparent difference between them. In this era, the gender roles can be understood through the varied roles ascribed to both genders, the females and the males. The patriarchic system was the norm. Women inherited the sphere that suited qualities of femininity as all deprived

and selflessness. They usually led a more secluded life. On the other hand, men possessed all kinds of freedom, were naturally the head and the guardian of family members.

Feelings as impatience or anger were never expected out of women. The concept of ideal women was very important. Through that husbands gained the property of their wives even if the marriage ended up in a divorce.

Further, men had certain responsibilities in the home as being providers; his work was meant to provide monetarily for the family. Protectors, Victorians took the role as family protectors very seriously. Superior, they had more rights than their female counterparts. Also, men were better able to make rational decisions than woman, better educated, and strongly considered superior in minds and body. In addition to be fallen, men saw themselves sinners who could be saved by a virtuous women.

Victorian men's daily dress were formal. They wore a coat, vest, and hat. Also, they would carry with them pocket watches, and often wore gloves. The ideal Victorian man should have characteristics as loyalty, intelligence, honor, faithful believer, spiritual and moral uprightness. He was free to choose what he wanted to do unlike woman.

Moreover, man expected his wife to know things like cooking, washing, and weaving, possess feminine qualities and innocence. According to Petrie Charles, Victorian woman was expected to be ignorant and idle. They also expected them to be sympathetic ear and morality teacher of the home. A successful Victorian male who kept his family safe, provided comfort, was able to work through any hardship, and succeeded financially. This made him respectable by his peers and other men in society. Besides, females dreamed of marrying this type of men.

As men had expectations for ideal women, Victorian women also had expectations for ideal men. Before marriage men had to gain women's respect and impress the rest of

society even their male gender. Men became as victims of social pressures. If they were not married, it depicted that they were not fully masculine because they did not have a family's support.

Men needed to know how to live successful life because they were not allowed to make mistakes people had in the past. So, they had to understand the conventions of life. Also, they must recognize the differences between wrong and right. It was a time where men expected to be dutiful and attentive husbands and fathers. Besides, the importance of sons was equal to the Victorian man's masculinity. They left behind to carry on the family name.

Women determined to marry only men who called earnest. According to Houghton Walter, there are two ways for being earnest: morally and intellectually. Mainly, he states "to be earnest intellectually is to have or to seek to have genuine beliefs about the most fundamental questions in life"(220). Further, "to be earnest morally is to recognize that human existence is not a short interval between birth and death ... but a spiritual pilgrimage from here to eternity in which he is called upon to struggle with all his power against the forces of evil ..."(221).

It was the responsibility of women to secure happiness at home, and to organize the servants or instructing them. However, being prostitute meant being unclear in the Victorian society. This was an excuse for the husbands to end marriage with his wife.

#### **4 Charlotte Bronte as Main Figure of Victorian Age**

Charlotte Bronte is regarded as one of the most outstanding English novelists, whose creative power made her prominent and popular author of Victorian age. She deprived materials from her life in order to write famous novels in the history of literature. Her novel The Professor was her first complete work that was rejected nine times by many publishing houses. Its first title was 'the Master' then it changed. The Professor eventually appeared in

print, as her last novel, in 1857 after Charlotte's death. Cohen William proves readers of this novel (1845-1846) had considered it minor, ill-conceived and un compelling (443). This novel was written after her experience as a teacher in Brussels. Although the novel's failure, Bronte wrote another successful works.

According to Nestor Pauline, contemporary critics consider her works as remarkable, powerful and real ones (99). Additionally, The Professor was a valuable source in which the writer tried to portray a marriage of equality.

Charlotte was born in an era of discoveries and sciences, an era of fixed conventions and values. An era of Romanticism and famous poets such as Byron, Keats, and Scott whose works influenced Victorian literature even her works. Commentators described the early Victorian period as the continuation of Romanticism when Charlotte began writing. However, her works were read and judged by Victorian audience. Their criticism was based on their Victorian beliefs.

Charlotte reflects her life and injustice rule of Victorian woman. She tried to overcome those social limitations. "She defied the Victorian conventions of middle class femininity" (Kornstein 11). Srayisah May Hassan says it is obvious to the minds that Bronte wanted to change the past and bad conditions of woman in that time as she herself had suffered of them (12). Her fiction was written to all people in society not merely for the feminine.

#### **4.1 Bronte's Writing Style**

Charlotte Bronte's style was distinct. It was characterized by its feminine themes and lack of complexity.

#### **4.1.1 Feminist Themes**

Bomarito Jessica and Whitaker Russel describes Bronte as challenging social norms, as quoted in Hermary Dorothy, through her female characters (01). Additionally, Dias Daise Lilian adds that Charlotte Bronte themes were related to her concerns and her writing were more volcanic and beautiful (01). Her world was romantic, sexual, surpernatural and spontaneous. She also defended on the women's identity.

In her works, she concentrated on inner struggle, emotions, and importance of childhood. Moreover, she tried to deal with conventions and female issues of Victorian society. She created heroines with the mind of their own and who searched for professional, emotional, and economic satisfaction. Charlotte focused on contemporary Victorian problems in education, religion and injustice from which woman suffered. She intended to show how these problems directly affected psychological side of characters and human life. So, her themes were related to women's independence, freedom, education, religion, job, career, and in general their rights.

#### **4.1.2 Lack of Complexity**

In her novel The Professor, she intended to create more realistic and homely work without dramatic style. This novel was contributed in Charlotte's artistic development. Its style was different from the other three novels. Gregusova Dominika proves that The Professor was, in fact, the only novel from the Bronte sisters narrated from the male point of View (47). Moreover, its narrative style and structure were simple. Glen Heather describes it as a narrative of self-help (72). It was more realistic novel which lacked complexity.

She used either first or third person narrator in her other novels. Their tones were simple and critical. However, The Professor lacked gothic overtones. According to Pollard

Author, Bronte superiority to the Gothic is more than an added infusion of moralism. Besides, Charlotte's novels did not include thriller element.

Charlotte Bronte used two literary devices in her works such as the method of autobiographical narrative. Specifically, the main character told the story using the pronoun "I". what made the novel more authentic and credible. Moreover, the world of the novel was described through a dominant point of view.

### Conclusion

As a conclusion, Victorian era witnessed changes in different domains even its literature. It was the period of analyzing the limited role of woman in society. Novelists, males and females, used their works to argue the position of woman and her deprived rights. Charlotte Bronte was one of those female writers who witnessed the Victorian bad conditions. Moreover, she tried to change the function of woman in Victorian society by writing more realistic novels and creating more independent and strong female characters. Charlotte and many other novelists criticized the stereotyped representation of woman and they asked for equality.

## Section Two : Feminist Narratology, and Gender Theory

### Introduction

Despite of the hard conditions; painful, segregation, depression and injustice inequality that women suffer from in men's society, women were able to stand up each time. They were able to seek to find solutions of their problems, they were able to speak and express their feelings, thoughts and troubles. Women makes their issue as a global issue. They convince all people around the world that men and women deserve equality in all opportunities, rights, duties, respect and treatments . This section discusses the following points: Narrator and focalization, feminist narratology, gender role, as well as gender trouble.

### **1 Concepts of Narrator and Focalization**

Every narrative work has a narrator. According to Bal Mieke the term narrator is central and very Important in the analysis of narrative work. What gives the text its particular character are the identity of the narrator, the degree and the way that identity is presented, and the choices that are involved in the text.

Narrative voice or narrator is a person who tells and convey the story, whether unseen character simply telling the story, or the first narrative person in which the story told directly through his voice.

The concept narrator and focalization are related to each other, that the narrator who tells the story and the focalization is from which point of view does the narrator narrates the story and both concepts are determine what has been called narration.

There are different identifications for this notion offered by the narrations theory, and most accepted one being "point of view" or narrative "perspective". Terms such as narrative situation which contained two aspects: narrative voice (who speaks) and focalization (who see).

Narrative manner and narrative point of view are also being used in narrative work. Bal Mieke argues that “typologies of narrative point of view do not distinguish between those who see in a narrative and those who speak”(43). Genette Gerard claims that a vital revision of the theory of point of view is precisely insistence on the difference between focalization and narrator (10).

She makes a distinction between narrators; she puts the term a homodiegetic narrator on a narrator that he is within the story. and the term heterodiegetic narrator on a narrator he is not a character in the story but in a way he hovers above and knows everything about it. She also gives the term autodiegetic narrator to a homodiegetic narrator if he is the protagonist of the narrative.

Culler Jonathan states that the purpose of examining the voice or the speaking of the character is to know who tells the story (86). Traditionally called first person narrator or third person narrator. When the narrator say "I" or "we" is a first person narrator, while if he say "he, she, they, it" or he use names of other characters he is a third person narrator. The difference between them is that: the first person narrator speaks about himself, while the third person narrator speaks about someone else.

The first person narrator can hold different roles. He can be a main character, minor character or participant, focal character and he can be observer in the story. His role as an observer not be to act but to deliver and describe things to the reader. Observer can disappear when the narration starts by making himself invisible after the story being introduced (culler).

## **2 Feminist Narratology**

Many people misinterpret feminism. They describe that women's demand is to be superior than men. To take the power from him. Women who are under the concept feminism they hate man and assert themselves to be above him. But the truth is not, feminism seeks to

make both sex equal to each other; the same rights and the same opportunities for all genders. It is not about hating men or to be better than him.

Many researchers and scholars define the term feminism differently. Some of them relate it to the feminist movement and others refer it to injustice life and inequality rights of women. Zara Huda Fares explained this expression as "... women need feminism because they suffer injustice ..." (01).

The main core of feminism is to treat women's suffering and to demand to be equal and to have the same opportunities and chances in communities governed and controlled by the rules and men's orders, and consider women as nothing "object". Zara Huda Fares added also "... women have traditionally dehumanized by a male dominated society, which they all patriarchy; and that has been always better to be a men..."

As there categories in the theory of narratology, in 1980s, a new approach of narratology came within the field of analysis. This approach is the feminist narratology. It is based on the assumption of "that gender is a category that is relevant to the analysis of the structural features of narratives" (Gymnich).

It is know that Feminism has always been concerned with the issue of gender. Thus, Feminist narratology, as Warhol defines it, is "the study of narrative structures and strategies in the context of cultural constructions of gender" (01).

For not going into debate in what does it meant to be feminist or what it was meant by narratology, it should be indulged directly to the characteristics of Feminist Narratology to have a clear vision about it. What highlights feminist narratology is its emphasis on the contextualization of narrative to understand the narrative itself. They propose that readers cannot rely only on the narrative structure to generate meaning; they have to place it in its historical context to come up with reliable interpretation to the text.

Another point in crucial importance that characterizes Female Narratology is the codes could be broke. Susan Gubar proposes that Female Narratology confirms that the binary of gender in feminist works is always present. In her attempt to characterize it more, she argues that “A male subject with a female object and / or obstacle *always* indicates conformity with patriarchal gender, and may also mark the erasure of a female hero”(12)

Feminist Narratology examines “the role of gender in the construction of narrative theory” (8). Consequently, Feminist Narratology does not depend merely on the systematic analysis to the text as narratologists insist; they also study the effect of gender on the works being produces.

The purpose of having Feminist Narratology as means of reading narrative is that it“ helps us to understand our response to the narratives we read and the role of gender played in our reading” (11).

### **3 Gender Role**

People often use the terms sex and gender interchangeably. They used "sex" to denote human females and males depending on biological features like chromosomes, hormones, sex organs and other physical features. While they use "gender" to denote women and men depending on social factors such social role, behavior, identity and position (Feminist Perspectives on Sex and Gender). When babies are born, their parents identify their sexes as males or females according to their biological features, as soon as their genders are known and their sexes are assigned.

Gender role can be understood as the varied roles attributed to the two genders "males and females". In other words, it is a separate patterns of personality traits, attitudes, interest and behaviors that are deemed as either male or female by one's culture.

Every culture in the world has gender role expectations for how women and men should act and behave. Sometimes it is related to biological factors and extrapolation of reproductive roles in society (“Gender Roles & Equality”). Best refers gender to " the psycho-socio cultural aspects, which are constructed by culture"(200). And he emphasizes on the role of culture in building and developing gender role by stating that “Culture has profound effects on behavior, prescribing how babies are delivered, how children are socialized, how they are dressed, what is considered intelligent behavior, what tasks children are taught, and what roles adult men and women will adopt" (202). Each culture has its own gender role, e i. gender looks differently across different cultures.

The study of gender role enables men and women to learn different roles. According to Mussen Paul:

It is a banal truth that an individual's sex role is the most salient of his many social roles. No other social role directs more of his overt behavior, emotional reactions, cognitive functions, covert attitudes and general psychological and social adjustments.... Nor is the ascription of any role more fundamental for the maintenance and continuity of society. Activities, tasks, characteristics and attitudes are assigned differently to men and women in all cultures .(707)

Researchers suggest different theories about how gender roles are developed and why these roles exist. Theories are such: biological theory, and structural functional theory.

### **3.1 Biological Theory**

Biological theory proposes that the distinction in male and female roles resulted from the biological differences inherent in both sexes. This differences centered on hormones, chromosomes, and brain structure. For instance, Maccoby Elenor experienced verbal, spatial,

creative, numerical, and analytical abilities. He concluded that the hormones and genetic structure contributed to females, they are being able to success in doing verbal tasks. Whereas males mastered and excelled in spatial, numerical, and analytical tasks. In creative tasks, if the problem needed and required logical solutions, boys excelled. But if the problem required new solution, girls excelled. Because of the difference between male and female in brain size and structure, Christen Yves resulted that: women were better in verbal tasks while males were better in spatial tasks and mathematics.

According to Copenhaver Bonny Ball, Biological theory concluded by two results. First, men, because of their surplus energy, passionate, aggressive behavior and greater strength he is considered as the protector and providers of entity for the family. Second, women, because of their conserve energy, reproductive capabilities, sluggish and passive behavior, are commonly concerned and associated with nurturing and domestic care.

Dobson James argues that women were biologically different, and their differences were innate and "resistant to change through the influences of culture" (33). Chodorow Nancy claims that the biological point of view presumes that women had " a natural mothering instinct, or maternal instinct, and therefore it is 'natural' that they are mothers or even that they therefore ought to be mother" (22).

Biological research has opened the door for discussions and further researches and projects to go deeply inside this theory. Wood Juliet summarizes that the value of the biological theory was the " identification of ways in which our choices are influenced by innate and relatively stable factors. Yet biological theories tell us only about physiological and genetic qualities of men and women in general" (42).

### **3.2 Structural Functional Theory**

The structural functional theory, according to Copenhaver, Bonny Ball based on the notion that a society should find an appropriate way to ensure survival. Meaning that women and men in a given society should understand their places and roles according to the culture and society needs. The central idea of this theory is the organization. As defined by Parsons Talcott the main purpose of organization was the "attainment of specific goal" (17), and this goal will achieved by the division of labor in groups that allowed group to produce something that the other group will use it. The division of labor considering males in the breadwinner capacity. And females in the domestic capacity, their roles is to prepare children for their futures as functioning adults in their groups. Parsons Talcott and Bales Robert emphasize on the role of the family in establishing stability and medium between the members of the family in which to socialize a child in "patterns of values" in which he can carry on society's structure (15). They conclude that:

It seems quite safe in general to say that the adult feminine role has not ceased to be anchored primarily in the internal affairs of the family, as wife, mother, and manager of the household, while the role of the adult male is predominantly anchored in the occupational world, in his job and through it by his status-giving and income-earning functions for the family.(14-15)

## **4 Gender Trouble**

Judith Butler points out that according to feminism the distinction between sex and gender is that: sex is biological while gender is constructed culturally. But she challenges that differences she said is a false distinction, arguing that this difference deconstruct the feminism's subject. She claimed that gender is not stable as sex and gender is not constructed culturally.

Butler points that sexed bodies cannot signify without gender and explicit existence of sex is an effect of gendering functioning. And she claimed that both of sex and gender are constructed as "gender is the cultural meaning that sexed body assumes" (Butler 57). It is shaped by laws, cultural, traditions and language. So gender is neither result of sex nor as apparently fixed as sex. She also underline that the construction of men will not be presented on male bodies only or women can present only the female one. Moreover construct status of gender might present the masculine and men in female body as a male one. Also women and feminine can indicate a male body as male one.

Butler suggests that if sex is culturally constructed as gender, so gender and sex are the same, it would no sense to define cultural as the social interpretation of sex, and it would be that there is no difference between the two terms. She concludes that gender is not to culture like sex is to nature; she explained that gender is the cultural means by which 'sexed nature' or 'nature of sex' is produced prior to culture .

Examining the quote of Simone de Beauvoir "one is not born a women but becomes one", she claims that gender is socially constructed. Females become women by acquiring the feminine traits and behaviors from a society and from their situation that situation determines the people's personality. Also, Beauvoir states that femininity is not shaped from sex biology, biology does not make that one who is born woman is automatically female. But she is shaped by learning her role as a woman from a society. She is the product of nature or others ' individuals' in the society.

Woman is not born docile, passive or emotional. She is a result of social forces specially in patriarchal society. Simone De Beauvoir argues that only female gender is marked while masculine gender is combined "... only feminine gender is marked, that the universal person and the masculine gender are conflated, they by defining women in terms of

their sex extolling men as the bearers of a body-transcendent universal personhood" (qtd. in Butler, 13-14). For de Beauvoir women are negative for men, the lack against masculine identity is distinguishing itself. In contrary, as quoted in Butler Judith, Luce Irigaray maintains that the female sex is not a lack that subjectively and negatively defines the subject in its masculinity. She reports that the feminine sex is a point of linguistic absence, the impossibility of grammatically denoted substance. And, so, the point of view that presented substance as an consistent and basis illusion of a masculinity discourse (15).

The difference of positions is that: each position can be understood as problematize to the locality of subject and gender. The presence of positions which, on the one hand, assume that gender is a secondary characteristic of persons and those which on the other hand state that, the concept and the notion of a person located inward the language as "subject", is a masculinity construction and privilege operantly which discarded the structural and semantic possibility of a feminine gender ( Butler 16).

Finally, she defines gender as "the stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within highly rigid regulatory frame that come together overtime to produce the appearance of the substance, of a natural sort of being"(43-44). Also, she points that gender is not something one "is" ,it is something one "does", it is a sequence of acts. She, as quoted in Salih Sara, states that the subject is free to choose which gender he or she going to proceeded and this subject has a number of "customs" from which to make determined choice of gender (56).

To sum up, Butler Judith suspects the belief that specific gendered behaviors are natural, and her theory explains the ways that one's gained performance of gendered behavior (what generally related with femininity and masculinity) is an act of sort; performance, implied on people by normative heterosexuality, she writes that " there is no gender identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its result"(34). She

indicates that there is no existing gender identity, it is a result of gender acts that "we perform". She furthermore wonder to what extent people's actions are designed for them by their place within a language. She claims stable subjectivity that authorize performing various gender roles cannot be assumed, and the act of performing gender formulates who "we are". Butler defines identity as an illusion retroactively created by one's performance (qtd. in Olsen Lind,17-18).

### Conclusion

Feminist writers choose their narration to criticize the stereotype of women and their suffering. Many of them tell their stories from their points of view. They challenge the norms of their societies which proved the superiority of men. They stress equality between both genders males and females roles. However, theorists suggest various theories that differentiate the gender role like biological theory and structural function theory. theorists faced some obstacles to define the concept of gender because it is an ambiguous one. It causes troubles and inability to put it under one definition.

## Chapter Two : Investigating the Gender Role in The Professor

## Introduction

Charlotte Bronte is an author who is famous by her interests with gender issues specially female one. In her novel The Professor, she focuses on female plight in the Victorian community in which they are totally disadvantaged. She creates the male character, William Crimsworth, in order to protect herself, speak freely and express her feelings and ideas because of the fact that women are not allowed to do so. Besides, the equality between genders is her major concern. This chapter attempts to discuss the following: William representation of woman voice, female role in The Professor in addition to the new womanhood and new marriage.

### Section One: William Representation of Woman Voice

In The Professor, Bronte tended to make use of a male character William Crimsworth, as the narrator of the story. His journey is about gaining financial independence as "I must live, and to live I must have what you call 'the needful', which I can only get by working" (Bronte 59). Thus, Glen Heather stresses that The Professor is "a narration of self-help"(72), because Bronte Charlotte says, in the preface of the novel, her hero Crimsworth "should work his way through life as I had seen real living men work theirs \_ that he should never get a shilling he had not earned\_ that no sudden turns should lift him in a moment to wealth and high station, that whatever small competency he might gain, should be won by the sweat of his brow" (xiii). And, that idea could be employed only for a male character who has the power of his gender to reach all these things. In this case, as the author is a woman and the professor is a narration of self-help. It is believed that William is merely a female voice, which represents the journey of woman towards the independence. Not only to gain financial independence but also to search for respectful social status and identity since his brother treats him as his servant as "do as I order...and no questions! You are my servant..." (Bronte, 49).

Then, William says that "I had got away from Bigben Close without a breach of resolution; without injury to my self-respect" (53), and "I felt light and liberated".

The narrator, William, has a physical weakness. He describes himself as " I was not so handsome; my features were less regular; I had a darker eye, and a broader brow –in form I was greatly inferior – thinner, slighter, not so tall" (20), and "I must be a slave". In other words, Bronte uses the word 'slave' to indicate that the protagonist is treated as inferior by his uncles and his cruel brother. That means, according to the biological theory, he is like a woman due to the fact that women who are the inferior in that period (Victorian one). Also, only females care with their physical features and beauty but William bethinks of it. That is to say his speech represents the female voice.

Characterizing the protagonist by these traits gave the reader the sense of implicating the narrator desires and wishes. As the narrator is female, Bronte chooses her protagonist to give her vague space to tell what women suffer from and what do they want to be.

The writer pretends being a man in order to express better her ideas, feelings, and interests. Through her hero, she, as a feminist writer, highlights the similarities between man and woman based on their inner and spiritual self rather than their sexed bodies, which patriarchal ideology discriminates against. According to Gilbert Sandra and Gubar Susan, The Professor examines the life of disposed female in patriarchal society, which Crimsworth figuratively represents, and gives voice to Charlotte Bronte's own anger and frustration.

Nestor Pauline claims that Bronte chooses her narrator to be a man in order to make herself more secure through taking on 'masculine authority' (38). Since the man has the power of his gender which allows him to achieve his goals. Lanser Susan explains that "the authorial mode has allowed woman access to "male" authority by separating the narrating "I" from the female body"(18). However, Bronte, as what Federico Annette believes, is not able to

separate her male "I" from her female body (200); she asserts that William Crimsworth at times feels sexually threatened. Specially, when Madame Pelet invites him to tea ,together with Madame Reuter, in her dining-room. William says" a queer idea glanced across my mind"(Bronte 84). Particularly, "I have heard of old Frenchwomen doing odd things in that line; and the gouter? They generally begin such affairs with eating and drinking, I believe."So, "there was a fearful dismay in this suggestion of my excited imagination". In this situation, William thinks as a woman. He scares from his fantasy of rape-seduction that obviously related to a female character. This feeling confirms the biological principle which stipulates the influence of innate factor on one's ideas and thoughts.

Although William's suffering, in the work, from his brother bad, intolerable treatment, and low wages, he does not complain. He endures that. William says "my tone was quiet. I always speak quietly" (24). He behaves as a woman because only she could endure the louder voice. Normally, the (Victorian) man has the right to say what he wants, not to speak quietly. Hence, his experiences working for his brother represent the problem of social interaction during the Victorian era. The elder brother Edward serves as an example of patriarchal power. Gilbert Sandra and Gubar Susan claim that His cruel and oppressive behavior is eventually rewarded by patriarchal society, which is ruled by similarly despotic men.

Also, Crimsworth feels lonely, without family, and is ignored in his brother, Edward 's party where he "looked weary, solitary, kept down like some desolate tutor or governess" (29). He is introduced to none of the young ladies. This stresses the alienation of people who fail to personify society's gender ideologies. It is clear that their relationship is like a battle. His brother was always proud of his richness. However, he reminded William of his poorness, and the later did not reply on him. "he could only regard me as a poor-spirited slave" (30), and

"I was silent" (32). Further, "I should have endured in silence" (36). In other words, those female qualities that William Crimsworth had, indicated that the writer is woman.

Under the Victorian roles, masculinity implies dominance whereas femininity denotes submission. The protagonist is a man so he has to present dominance, but he is a submissive person. He is victim of his uncles and his oppressor brother. Bronte's hero, William Crimsworth, reflects her female traits. Thus, he presents weak and he is constituted by violence. For instance, Edward says to him "I wish you were a dog! I'd set-to this minute, and never stir from the spot till I'd cut every strip of flesh from your bones with this whip"(50).

Moreover, William is patient under all that circumstances. Mr. Hunsden says that "...how patient you are..." (43). Even, when Edward treats him "...like a dog...". Differently, he is flunkey. Additionally, he felt in love with the directress of the school, Mademoiselle Zoraide Reuter, but this woman manipulates him. She is engaged to another. More than that, he does not think of revenge. He only starts to treat her with cold politeness and aversion unlike the expected behavior of any man. All these behaviors and qualities reflect the woman voice.

Indeed, the novel is dominated by hostility, repulsion, and resistance. Characters are presented as enemies. This is notable in William's relationship with his brother Edward.

The writer Bronte shows the aggressive individuals against each other in society. Thus, according to Lane Cristopher, freedom figured as rejection and independence from society. Moreover, Crimsworth is a younger brother who did not benefit from the status of his father. His antipathy from society is a result of his circumstances. He lives with his uncles then he "was sent to Eton" (Bronte 11). His social status and powerlessness are contributes to his effeminacy. It denies his legit of inheritance in such patriarchal society. It is evident,

Bronte defies the conventions that equated dominance with masculinity, and powerlessness with femininity.

The disharmonies between Crimsworth's gender and sexuality are illustrated by his bout of hypochondria crisis of his masculinity. Sexuality threatens self-control of individuals and it considered as hazardous to society. Thus, middle class woman is viewed as disadvantaged and angel for saving man from himself. Also, men should restraint themselves. As an example, Crimsworth hopes Frances help to tame his natural appetites. Victorians consider a male sexual restraint as the epitome of self-control as well as a sign of true gentility.

Also, William's hypochondriac proves Bronte's concerns with conscious self. Mainly, how one's mental well-being effectuates one physically. In other words, the character William struggles with disjunctions between his natural inclination and society's norms and ideals. He feels betrayed by his bodies which society employs as agents of repression. His inner struggles and identity crisis affect his health. He says that his "soul... had overstrained [his] body's comparative weakness"(270). And he "was temporarily a prey to hypochondria"(270-271).

Manyard John believes that Crimsworth's relationship with Frances produces his illness which is precipitated by his sudden sexual awakening. The mild and homely Frances arouses his repressed sexual desires for the more attractive Zoraide and his school pupils. In her presence, he feels safe and starts to let his guard down. This hypochondria appears in female form, as Starzyk Lawrence too locates it, in William's abandonment of his captivated indifference to his budding relationship with Frances.

Crimsworth's narrative is characterizes by his avowal of an unchanging superior persona. He is a man of "self-denying economy" (Bronte 27). According to structural

functional theory, Bronte's hero denies all parts in his character which do not conform the social ideal. Therefore, Crimsworth is a rebel against his nature, and a "rebel against circumstances"(19). Bronte critiques social promotion of repression and denial of self which are as barriers in the path of success. William Crimsworth is cognitively described as "Lazily mutinous" (44) ,"gentlemanlike irony", and "patrician resentment" with "no power" (45). Thus, he experiences contradictory emotions and characteristics which illustrate his divided character. His female qualities appears when his landlady believes him to be an example of "steadiness and quietness" (28), which characterizes only woman.

Moglen Helene confirms that Bronte tries to link Crimsworth's insecurities over his identity and masculinity to the bond with his mother, which Victorians saw as an emasculating influence. For example, William says "my boyhood was lonely, parentless...a sources, finding me lost in vague mental wanderings...strong desires and slender hopes...lure [d] me to her" (271).

Bronte disavowal gender's essentialism. This distances her from the majority of her peers. She uses the character of William Crimsworth to highlight the arbitrariness of gender through accenting his androgynous qualities. In other words, he conceives of himself in feminine terms, when he likens himself to a woman in stating "like some desolute tutor or governess"(29 ), and struggles to act and feel like a man. This signalizes the arbitrary nature of gender which assigned by society to male and female bodies.

Butler Judith stated that the attachment of feminine gender to women's bodies and masculine gender to men's bodies is arbitrary. Thus, according to him, the body can become the place of other gender identities. Actually, there are men with feminine qualities and women with male traits in their behaviors. Thus, according to Moglen Helene, Crimsworth's feminine qualities and traits can be read as a more accurate reflection of his character.

## Section Two: Female Role in The Professor

It is noticed that although William is a male, he had female traits in characteristics. Portraying him as female gave the impression of how women suffered mistreatment. Thus, the reader could hear the inner desires of how women wanted to be. As Bronte known for her gender issues type of subjects, she wonderfully made a paradox. The real state of women in that era and the ways in which women wants to be and desired to come.

Although all the severe critics Bronte faced, choosing man with female voice gave a strong sense of how women really strived for change. As a Victorian reader, we would better believe what a man says as he is powerful gender and we less consider what the opposite gender confess. Having in mind that women were underestimated and they could not have her simplest rights like education or job, Bronte presented other types of female characters who shaped the image of pure, independent feminist woman desired and wished to be.

Earlier, he stated that he could not desire women who are “childish” and “girlish” (Bronte 16). On the contrary, he declared his abhor towards marrying a women who is “doll or fool” (127). Instead, he wanted a woman who “understands” what he says and “appreciates” what he thought of .

Conventionally, Victorian men would chose puppet women who serve and take care of her beauty only. William, by the tongue of Bronte, characterizes his wife in different way by desiring a woman who is intellectual over her charming beauty. He shows that clearly when he states, “Frances’s mental points had been the first to interest me” (269).

Crimsworth noticed how man desired woman, upon what condition he would chose his wife. The norms was indicating that she must be super beautiful , childish, girlish, servant

and she has nothing in her life but being sexually desired creature. He concluded that he was different from other man and he was feeling superior just because of his “tastes which were unique”. That uniqueness came from his preference for “superiority for moral” over “physical charm”.

Although Frances has had beautiful “brown eyes “and fine skin, William was interested to her mental intellectuality. That was very unconventional behavior that era. Bronte used this charm pain to draw the attention of the reader of how women were seen and how they wanted to be seen. The paradox she used of man desire the intellectual properties of women, gained her strong voice of claiming that women have more than beautiful body to be admired of.

From another angle, Crimsworth continued to see women as a traditional patriarch. He described the woman who liked lodgings as a “slut of servant” (38). He also shows his patriarchal stereotype of woman as a sexual puppet. When he became tutor in girl’s school, he stated that how he could possibly “ gaze to the angels and their Eden”(89). The girls’ “dark-run like robes and softly braided hair, calling half angels” (99).

This fact started to change when he actually started to meet girls. He described Eulalie as “ low-country Madonna” (100). For Caroline as a “hot-blooded Maroon” (101). In the both description, William portrayed the stereotypes of women and how it was thought of her. Crimsworth , for us, indicated those types of description to show how he is feeling threatened by the power of women beauty.

Being just a woman, for man and for Victorians, means that you are created for desire, sex and satisfying the animal desire of man. Stating that by the tongue of William, which is very paradoxical to his own thought of choosing his wife, Bronte declared her

criticism to such ways of thinking. This philosophy, William, in this par, Gilbert Sandra and Gubar Susan stated, shows woman as mentally inferior and servile-class to men.

Crimsworth has not felt threatened by only the sexual attraction of woman but also her status as powerful woman in the society, which was highly unconventional for Victorians. Crimsworth is able to elevate himself in his own mind above the women he encounters, whom he finds threatening. Further, when Crimsworth states that he was “amused with the sort of business talent [Zoraide] displayed” (Bronte 94), the implications is that he is in fact overawed by her skill and acumen, and feels threatened.

Zoraide , as character, was not alike the usual Victorian women. Bronte gave her all the traits women could have and for which they could be admired. Mrs. Reuter was an intelligent and cheerful person who loved her work. She was also very cautious, quite, and independent. She liked to read the character of people who worked in her establishment, and to be superior than them as what she did with William. For example, "she was feeling after my real character; she was searching for salient points, and weak; points, and eccentric points..."(105).

Then, she engaged in a kind of game-playing with Crimsworth in order to discover "where her mind was superior". In fact, she was a talent and she succeeded in being respectful and free. William said that "...solicitude and business were in her eye \_ on her forehead..."(97). Equally William felt threatened by such type of women character.

### Section Three : New Concept of Women and Marriage

Bronte , as Jane Austen, was inclined to the issue of marriage in her pieces of literature. The philosophy of getting married was highly unsatisfactory for her. Starting by the

way by which women were chosen for marriage and for what purposes they were obliged to marry.

Giving womanhood a new model in traits and in thoughts paved the way for Bronte to criticize and introduce a new model for marriage. Through William and Frances's marriage, Gordon Lyndall states that Bronte tried to criticize the norms and expectation of marriage.

Bronte admitted the difference between the two genders that does not mean the dominance of one over the other. Accepting being married, for women, does not mean that she pays her independence when she utter the "yes". In case of our corpus, William realized that Frances need for independence in her job gives balance to their life and make it completely fruitful.

He admitted the fact that "duties she must have to fill and important duties; work to do and exciting, absorbing, profitable work"(Bronte 294), for "strong faculties stirred in her frame, and the demanded full nourishment".

Frances was not a very successful worker. Actually being a worker is an unconventional in principle. She suffered of controlling her classes, which William helped her in organizing, and controlling them. She went through several circumstances especially she was fired from the school. Under that, she did not pay her body or morals to have money. She was a woman to "respect more than to love" (277).

Although her weakness, Frances wanted always to be independent and free. She realized that her job complete her and gave her the respect she needs. As a result, she insisted to work after marriage. William loved her seriousness and ambition. He even accepted her condition of working after they be together. This act made him less traditional and more

acceptable of the fact that she is an independent person. Frances despised the idea of limiting her role only in home.

Consequently, she would be “unemployed and solitary I should get depressed and sullen, and you would soon tire of me” (268). Frances gave a full description of the status of woman in the Victorian age. Besides, she showed that she was against those ideas, which put woman under the line of domestic sphere.

Gordon Lyndall says that While women’s work and marriage co-exist here, this is only possible because of Frances’s nightly transformations from working woman to “angel in the house”. In this case, Frances changes her roles between now and then. Once she is a worker and other she is easy-to-manage wife. She was a double-life character which portrays the impossibility of ideal Victorian women.

After a while Crimworth states that “in the daytime [his] house and establishment were conducted by Madame the directress” (Bronte 274) while “at six o’clock p.m... Frances Henri... was magically restored to [his] arms” (276). Here William got rid lightly of his effeminacy and thus he constructed an acceptable masculine identity, which was unstable anyway.

On the other hand, Frances, by her true gender, remained socially oppressed. She was free in job , but she was also confined to the norms of society. Thus, gender serves two perspectives within the corpus. Once, played the role of how the society is distracted separating between the two genders. Other, served as symbol that denotes power, which seem to be unchangeable.

Gilbert Sandra and Gubar Susan said that Frances was not satisfied with her roles. She was acting like a disobedient pupil frustrated by feelings of confinement set social roles. This is most clear after their marriage, when Crimsworth describes how Frances “would vex,

tease, pique [him] sometimes... with a wild and witty wickedness that made a perfect white demon of her while it lasted” (Bronte 276).

The reader comes to know Frances only through what Crimsworth’s points of view about her. Later, Frances tends to be more complex character and what William shows about her is only a limited understanding. For not admitting, by any attempts, the equality between them, their marriage failed due to the social norms. In this respect, Molgen Helene stressed that characters are stuck in fixed posters that meets, under any circumstances, and at any level, the social norms.

In his attempt to picture the happiness in marriage by having worshipful wife, William thought he was conveying Frances true character and experience. Later, the lack of compaction and understanding tends to be clear.

Crimsworth confesses “in one sense she was become another woman” ( Bronte 295) in that “so different was she under different circumstances, [he] seemed to possess two wives”. Crimsworth asserts that while “the faculties of [Frances’s]nature, already disclosed when [he] married her, remained fresh and fair... other faculties shot up strong, and quite altered the external character of the plant” (296).

At other times, Crimsworth describes Frances as being as “docile as a well-trained child”(293), “a curious mixture of tractability and firmness”, drawing attention to her divided and unstable nature. Thus, Frances tends to have more personality traits, William could never understand.

As William is the only one who narrates the events in the novel, he came to conclude that Frances has two independent separated personalities; a loyal puppet wife and a worker as mistress in school as Flint Kate deduced. In fact, only we know Frances through the eyes of William who is the powerful gender in the story. Thus, Moglen Helene defined her as the

character who doomed to remain the other side of William's experience. Bronte declared how women are powerless and they do not have any kind of control over their identities. They even have no room in which they can speak their voice loudly and independently.

The separation in their relationship was clear by the very beginning. The way in which Frances felt in love with William was held by fear as she was "too absolutely to fear him much" (Bronte 299). It is known that fear leads later to rebellion and that was not giving a good happy impression about their life. Glen Heather adds that even William proposal of marriage was full of scarcely repressed violence.

Crimsworth describes Frances as being "as stirless in her happiness as a mouse in its terror"( Bronte 266), and he speaks of how his "arm... still detained her", and was "gentle enough, so long as no opposition tightened it", during his proposal. Glen Heather noticed that Crimsworth's proposal was not a result of the desire of unity , love , compassion and understanding , instead it was portraying the differences and the separation between genders.

William said that " she and I were silent... Frances's thoughts... I knownot, nor did I attempt to guess them: I was occupied not in searching her countenance, nor in otherwise troubling her composure" (Bronte 266) . Here, he confesses that he thought completely separated by her and he was not interested to unify their feeling in this moment. Instead he was only speaking of his "heart was measuring its own contentment".

The sense of violence was clear in the course of the novel. William portrays controlled and administered "many a punishment... for [Frances's] willfulness"(298), but that he feared "the choice of chastisement must have been injudicious"(298-299) as "it seemed to encourage its renewal". That leads William to say that Frances' resistance "thrilled him as nothing had ever done, and made [him], in a fashion ,her subject, if not her slave" (211).

Even that shows how satisfied and erotic relationship they had, Frances continue to have the description of a childlike in Crimsworth's eyes. His is further evident from how Crimsworth treats her "like a child and a novice" .Forcing her to "acknowledge [him] as her senior and director". As a result, the status of man remain always superior to women by declaring his authority in controlling the relationship.

Through her attempt to create a new modal of marriage, Bronte gave William the final traits of traditional Victorian model of manhood as Gilbert Sandra and Gubar Susan stated. Through Frances, William portrayed himself as typical heterosexual man in the society. Moreover, that does not lead to the full understanding of the nature of William as male as Frances is divided in nature too.

Furthermore, accepting her work by her husband does not seem to give her the independence. The attempts of Frances to get rid of William control over her shows the limited power she has. That poor power which cannot stand in front of owner of patriarchal authority and ideologies concerning women in the Victorian social norms.

Once, Crimsworth described Frances as "vain idea! no sooner had I grasped hand... than the elf was gone" (Bronte 299). That show to what extend William has a lack of understanding of the women nature that he goes on to speak of having "seized a mere vexing fairy, and found a submissive and supplicating little mortal woman in [his] arms" further illustrates this point.

In The Professor, Bronte introduced a severe criticism of a patriarchal society through implicit criticism to her narrator, William Crimsworth. The later perception and the reality tends to be highly different and separated. He underestimated the ideology of powerful man, that Victorian norms gives, later he subscribed to be an example of a well Victorian man.

On the process of criticizing Crimsworth all along the novel, Brontë, a bit by bit, explores the practices of dominance of masculinity and Victorian perception of the reality. Though the psychological unstable state of William, Brontë has to conclude that it is impossible to escape from patriarchal ideology's pervasive and nefarious reach.

Finally, The piecemeal depictions of anxiety and aggression that characterize The Professor's remaining chapter, according to Glen Heather, give clear articulation to the hazard and unease that characterize the novel as a whole. It is this anxiousness and aggression that Brontë suggests dominate patriarchal society. Crimsworth's unshakable insecurity, evident in his persistent watchfulness and suspicion of others, is a hallmark of Brontë's subsequent heroines and a reaction to the threatening societies they dwell on the outskirts of. Such insecurity is a hallmark of the human condition, and Brontë's brilliant talent in reflecting and exploring this theme is attested to by way of the durability and extensive admiration of her novels.

## Conclusion

This chapter is an analytical study of gender role in Charlotte Brontë novel The Professor. It shows the reflection of her female personality on her hero William. Thus he has feminine traits and represents female voice. This is obvious through his speech in the novel. Hence, the reader understands William's character as a weak and fragile one. However, through his dealing with the female characters, he still has a Victorian mentality. In other hand women characters are represented as independent and capable to challenge the Victorian norms.

# General Conclusion

During the reign of Queen Victoria, the role of women was limited in the private sphere mainly the home. They suffered from their patriarchal society which dealt with them as inferior to men. There were a harsh customs that prevented females from different rights like: education, freedom, voting, taking important jobs, even choosing their husbands. This society marginalized them and obliged them to live weak and believe that men are the superior sex and the controller. At that time, women lived only to obey men's order. This inequality between both genders made the Victorian females as slave. They were not allowed to express their ideas or think about themselves. They were described as an evil if they did so.

From their childhood, their families taught them how to be an obedient and powerless wives who were created to satisfy men's desire. Moreover, the Victorian women were obliged to endure their husbands cruelty. However, female writers did not accept this established norms. They used their pens to argue their suffrage and position in such a cruel society. As well as, they rejected the idea of stereotyped woman. They appeared to say different words about how women need to be.

The trend towards “women are free” started to appear as philosophy of characters in the novels. One these novelists is the beautiful Charlotte Bronte. In her novel The Professor, she fought for women's rights. She used a more independent, powerful, intelligent, and educated female characters, as Zoraide Reuter and Frances Henri, who were totally contrasted to the ideal woman. Bronte expressed her ideas and feelings through the tongue of her male character, William Crimsworth. She did so, in order to protect herself and speak freely.

This study concluded that all the events and character traits were known through the eye of William, the protagonist. Bronte depended principally on the point of view of the

protagonist to draw on one level his changeable thoughts about what he was living and how he wanted to be and whom he wanted to marry.

It was notable that he, in situations, tended to think and present the women voice that reflected indirectly how much they were suffering. As he became a professor he started to record and tell the readers about women he came across with, some are conventionally Victorians and others stands in revolutions with stacked status of women.

Through the course of the novel, William had two roles. One his unstable inner thoughts between the inclinations of women perspective, how unconventionally thought about the women he wants to marry, who needs to be different from the Victorian traits, and finally his ending of acting like pure Victorian man who did not accept the freedom of women.

After his marriage with Frances, who is a worker and one of those who challenged the Victorian traits to women, she fall in tow dimensions. One of them describes her total freedom in being financially independent, educated and had the choice of marry the man whom she accepted according to her desire not under the pressure of social conventions.

The second dimension is that she became like a Victorian women inside her house and the way in which William controls her job and way of life. William could not accept the total freedom of her and he fall in paradoxical thoughts. He wants a woman within his arms who is independent and be a socially accepted to in respect of how Victorian treated them.

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