



The Image of Females in Victorian Novels

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Abstract: The period of critical realism was known as Victorian age in English literature. Victorian age covered the period of XIX century of Great Britain. In Victorian era women rights were limited than men. They have no rights to vote or even for studying at universities. Despite of these condition women writers tried to describe women as a new image of women in their works. They were Victorian writers. In their works we can see middle or working class of women in different cities. Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell expressed image of females in bright colors. Majority of their novels was known in English literature as a Social and Manchester novel.

Keywords: female, image, Victorian age, novels, feature, types.

One of the realist writers of an English literature is Charles Dickens. Charles Dickens lived in XIX century in Victorian age and he was the greatest novelist of his age. He created a new type of novel – a social novel. The great contrast between rich and poor Victorian writers considered abnormal in a civilized society. They put all his hopes in good qualities of human nature. Their novels introduced us with different characters of people and the life of Victorian England. In Charles Dickens's first six novels only 85 out of a total of 280 characters, or less than one-third, are female. In the next five books – “Dombey and Son”, “David Copperfield”, “Bleak house”, “Hard Times”, “Little Dorrit” women account for 99 characters out of 214, or just under a half. In the last four novels he wrote the proportion of female characters sinks again to less than a third.

Charles Dickens novels focused on various social, economic and political issues of his time, XIX century. Moreover his books helped us to see, notice how his thinking was wide and multi-faceted. In this article we will look at other important topic that we can depict from his novels. And it is related to how well Dickens could create different woman characters of Victorian England in his books. One of his books “Oliver Twist” could show us the XIX century life of England and the life of young generation of England. While reading this novel we could come across with people of different characters and life style. Through Oliver Twist, Nancy, Rose Maylie we can see kindness, and generosity of English people. The characters like Monks, Sikes and Fagin show us the life of mannered people in England. After the publication of “Oliver Twist” in 1934, though the writer was accused in “false description of poor people life”[4.314] and in “choosing his heroes from low level of society”[5.91], the writer could respond them appropriately.

Dickens not only brings more women on to his stage in the middle five novels, however, three of the five center on a heroine rather than a hero and in the case of one of the exceptions, in “David Copperfield”, we can see a whole series of major female characters plays a dominant role in the stories development. “David Copperfield” is autobiographic novel of Charles Dickens. The main character of the novel is David Copperfield. David is a son of gentleman who was born after the father's death. His mother married only thinking of son's future. But the stepfather of David is a cruel man. Edward Murdstone's character is very dispatcher, he never liked David. According Edward's opinion he wanted that David should left the house. With David's stepfather came Edward's sister Jane Murdstone to this house. Jane's character is also like to hers brother. When we speak about woman we

imagine the portrait of kind women. But the Jane Murdstone is not a kind woman. She has a stone heart and she never liked David. This type of women was described in other novels of the writer. Mrs. Jane tried to punish David. Mr. Edward and Mrs. Jane created the new way of teaching. When David answered to Mr. and Mrs. Murdstone he was forget what he was learn. This condition Dickens describe in this way: *“He walked me up to my room slowly and gravely – I am certain he had and delights in that formal parade of executing justice and when we got there, suddenly twisted my head under his arm.*

- Mr. Murdstone! Sir! – I cried to him. – Don’t! Pray don’t beat me! I have tried to learn, Sir, but I can’t learn while you and Miss Murdstone are by. I can’t indeed!

He had my head as in a vice, but, I twined round him somehow and stooped him for a moment, entreating him not to beat me. It was only a moment that I stopped him, for he cut me heavily an instant afterwards, and in the same instant I caught the hand with which he held me in my mouth between my teeth, and bit it through. It sets my teeth on edge to think of it.

He beat me then, as if he would have beaten me to death. Above all the noise we made, I heard them running up the stairs and crying out – I heard my mother crying out and Peggotty. Then he was gone and the door was locked outside and I was lying, fevered and hot and torn, sore and raging in my puny way, upon the floor”.[1.126]

This passage shows us how the child expresses his impressions about his stepfather and his teaching of lessons. In novel we can see how the author chooses the hero’s names. If we translate the word “murdstone” the word “murd”’s is meaning “kill illegally and intentionally” and the word “stone” is “fairly large piece of rock, or piece of hard material formed in an organ of the body”. The author of this novel is chooses the names of hero’s the character and the name of hero is very close each other. David’s mother’s character by nature is very strong less. She could not protect son from the stepfather’s punishments. When we speak about the futures of our child every mother take care of hers child. But David’s mother is not this type of woman. She also agreed with hers husband’s opinion. From this condition Charles Dickens wanted to show us the low of Victorian age. But according in our opinion the mother of child should protect hers child in every condition. We can tell that both Mrs. Copperfield were child-wife character. Charles Dickens described this type of characters in image of women. It is not difficult to catch the features of child on characters of wives. In nature the duty of wives is take care of home and they have a good ability to provide family. The writers who lived In Victorian age they named wives angel of house. The author showed that child-wife character is a nuclear of women character. Character of child is made a map of destiny of women.

While reading Dickens’s novels we come across different type of women characters. It was described by a portrait of women. We can see specific features of characters. In “Great expectation” the main hero of the novel described his sister by a portrait. He draws a portrait of sister *“she was not good-looking women, she has black hair and eyes, had such a prevailing redness of skin that I sometimes used to wonder whether it was possible. She washed herself with a nutmeg-grater instead of soup. She was tall and bony and almost always wore a coarse apron that was stuck full of pins and needles”*[2.52]. According to his description his sister’s character is likes typical English housekeeper. While drawing portrait the author sighed features of housekeepers on this character. These specific features of character impress us about typical character of women in Victorian age.

It was not a secret during the period of the writers time much more real struggle going on and this is manifest in the novels too. It was a revolutionary age. After appearing the novel “Ruth” by Elizabeth Gaskell influenced to society. Her novel presented us as an industrial novel [3.38]. Because the main hero of this novel was a girl whose name was Ruth becoming a nurse and the status of nurse was raised in this century. Becoming of nurse opened a way to women for professional and business opportunities. The most important thing we can remark that Jane Eyre, Esther Summerson, and Ruth, in their roles as teacher, housekeeper, and nurse are pointing the way to the future of women’s equality and independence. We can add that to become a teacher, and nurse it was new type character of women in XIX century. In “Martin Chuzzlewit” was given a character of nurse and her name was Mrs.

Gamp. Her business was related take care of people who was ill. And she tries to be the best in nursing. Dickens showed us that women can work and be independent. The author clearly described a role of nurse with details. In “Great expectation” the role of teacher was given to Bidly who is very kind and responsible person in learning of children at school. Her character really dedicated to this girl. While reading novel every time we come across that she is busy with teaching. First of all we can see that she teaches Pip, then during the lesson at school. The author with a kind pays attention to her character. She likes a real village schoolmaster. Her kindness opened in her face in her voice and in hers work while teaching a lesson.

There are a lot of different types of women images in Dickens’s novels. In each type of character has its own sighs that we can easily catch it. Dickens brings new types of women characters in his work. The most important thing the writers who lived until the period of Dickens described a woman who is dependent person in English society. But Dickens despite of these matters in literature he was a person who comes closer to woman heart. Scholars who learned Dickens’s work pay attention to women characters in author’s life. According to the autobiography of Dickens we can say that sometimes he exaggerated character of women. Mostly he takes these characters from his own life. And it was not a secret that the character of “sisterly” in his work including Florence Dombey (Dombey and Son), Agnes Wickfield (David Copperfield), Esther Summerson (Bleak House), Bidly (Great expectations)and even Nancy (Oliver Twist) is related to his sister Fanny. Of course Charles Dickens would always want more from life. Always his works tell us the story of author from his childhood to death.

The list of used literature

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