

## INEQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN VICTORIAN PERIOD

*Çağla Ünlü\**

19th century also known as the Victorian period. In this era, many writers were graced their names to the Britain's history.

Novels of this period represents Britain's both good and bad sides. In the novels, subjects of social status differences, marriage, and pressure to women of the patriarchal society are discussed. In this period, Jane Austen, Thomas Hardy and Charlotte Bronte are one of the important writers. Their important works are respectively; Emma, Tess and Jane Eyre. Jane Austen wrote "Emma" in 1815. Thomas Hardy wrote "Tess" in 1891. Charlotte Bronte wrote "Jane Eyre" in 1847. They discuss and criticise including the Victorian period subjects in these novels. Thomas Hardy had realist attitude and understated manner of telling. Lastly, Charlotte Bronte had a gothic and complex writing style. She created characters who reflect of herself. Actually, Austen and Hardy reflect themselves and the society like Bronte. This situation is inevitable for every writer.

So, how can examine in point of feminism this situation? For doing this, one has to know the characteristics of that age which plays a big role.

Victoria, who kept leading her monarchy the longest, had brought revolution to Britain. Especially, with the Industrial Revolution, social class discrimination showed up. Rich people became richer, and the poor people became poorer. Most people became furious because of this and tried to gain the "gentlemen title" which was the most important term in that era. Moreover, many children became thieves and worker because of the poverty. These things affected the writers pretty much. Charles Dickens is the biggest example of that. He mentions about these events in his works such as Oliver Twist and Great Expectations. Just as Hardy mentions about middle and upper classes in Tess. Another example is Bronte associates the strict distinction between the classes with her experiences and she reflects to the readers. Moreover, Austen mentions about money and society's forces on the marriage. She was affected by influence of Realism and Romanticism in this period. She reflects this situation in her book Emma.

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\* Giresun Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü Öğrencisi

In Victorian period, women had to get married and to do the housework for wealth. Emma also live in her own house with her father so she didn't think to get married even if she decided to get married she offered to the man to live with her family Austen with character she created showed that woman didn't needs to man and reflected they live together equally.

Tess is an unexperienced woman so she experience relationship being address as a wrong. She has a baby who died after he was born. Mr. Alec stood with her and wanted her to stay at home but she chooses to stand on her on legs later she falls in love she gets married with the man she loved. When her husband tells his past mistake, Tess forgives him easily. However, when Tess tells her past mistake, her husband does not forgive her. Hardy emphasizes inequality of men and women.

When Jane was going to get married with her lover, she learns that he was already married. She sees it as a disrespect towards her and she leaves him. This shows that she is acting with free will. At the same time, Jane is a character who can stand on her legs and does not need anybody's help. Bronte reflects feminism with this character's manner. Jane's not to stay silent act towards her is rebellion to the Victorian Age. Emma, Tess and Jane are very strong characters. They fight against to absolute rules. In some way, in that age, they were the contempt she sees this situation as disrespect.