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***Feminism from Male and Female Perspectives:  
Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre and Samuel  
Richardson's Pamela  
Case Study***

*A Dissertation submitted in partial requirements for the fulfilment of the Master's Degree  
in Literature and Civilization.*

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***Academic Year: 2011/2012***

***Dedication***

*To our beloved families*

*To our colleagues*

## Acknowledgement

*A special and heartfelt note of gratitude must go to Mr. A Boulegroune who guided us with his outstanding knowledge and incredible patience and insight.*

*We wish to thank our family for their constant support and encouragement.*

*we would also like to express our gratitude to every single person who – in a way or another – backed us up.*

### Abstract

In the last 18<sup>th</sup> and the early of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, married woman legally had no civil status, was civilly considered dead in a male dominated society, but single woman had legal minors. Therefore, in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, feminism emerged as a reaction against the women's oppression. It was presented in various eras, where numerous feminine movements were blowing up all over the world. Feminism was defined as a great movement which appeared in three waves, each wave treated different aspects of the same issue; suffrage association, inequalities of rules and civil laws, all were general and broad, but they were the basics of feminism.

Absolutely, feminism, in its larger meaning, didn't touch only a political or social side, in fact, it also extended to the literary world. Actually, many artists, playwrights, and novelists, used their feminist writings as an effective means to express their view towards sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. For instance, in Britain, many feminist writers clearly defined feministic emotions which can be drawn, not only in the works of modern time, but even in earlier one. One of the early nineteenth-century finest English books was *Jane Eyre* (1847) by the feminist female novelist of Charlotte Bronte. According to her experience as a Victorian woman in men-centered and men-controlled times, Charlotte refused to stay silent; she stood up strongly and declared her protest and her advocacy women's equal rights in social, political and economic arenas against Victorian male society. Thus, most regarded the feminist book of *Jane Eyre* as one greatest novel in the history of English literature. However, under the common notion of "feminism is for everyone", any writer, who encourages the idea of women's rights, can be as a feminist writer. Not surprisingly, male can ever truly be a feminist author, but his requirements, for being a masculine feminist writer, must be the same as those for feminine writers, or to be better than them. Among many earlier feminist male writers, who were so sympatric for women's oppression, was called Samuel Richardson. Because of his feminist attitude, Richardson could be as a great Augustan male feminist novelist in the strictest sense of the word. Richardson became the preeminent Augustan novelist, his feminist view was hotly discussed, especially his first eighteenth-century book of *Pamela* or, virtue rewarded (1740), where he prepared himself to stand up, side by side with Charlotte, against social classes, sexual inequality and women's oppression.

## ملخص

لم يكن للمرأة المتزوجة أية صفة مدنية من الناحية القانونية في نهاية القرن الثامن عشر و مطلع القرن التاسع عشر، كما لم يكن لها أي حقوق مدنية في مجتمع يسطر عليه الذكور على عكس المرأة العازية التي حظيت ببعض الحقوق. هكذا ظهرت حركة النسوية كرد فعل طبيعي ضد هذا الإقصاء و القمع الذي مورس ضد النساء في مختلف الدول و ذلك في نهاية القرن التاسع عشر حيث كان هنالك الكثير من حركات تحرر المرأة في مختلف أنحاء العالم، و قد ظهرت الحركات النسوية كتيار قوي شمل ثلاث موجات، حيث عالجت كل واحدة منها قضية تحرر المرأة بشكل مستقل، و شمل هذا التيار حق التصويت، المساواة في القواعد المدنية و المساواة في القوانين المدنية حيث مثلت هذه المسائل الجانب الأساسي من الحراك النسوي المدني . لم تقتصر الحركة النسوية بدون أدنى شك في معناها الواسع على الجانب السياسي و الاجتماعي فحسب، بل امتدت أيضاً إلى الجانب الأدبي، حيث نجد العديد من الفنانين و الكتاب المسرحيين و الروائيين قد استعملوا كتاباتهم النسوية في الحقيقة كوسيلة فعالة للتعبير عن وجهة نظرهم في مسألة التمييز و الاستغلال و الاضطهاد الحاصل في المجتمع ضد المرأة بسبب الاختلاف الجنسي. في بريطانيا على سبيل المثال، ظهرت الكثير من المؤلفات ذات النزعة النسوية أظهرت بوضوح جلي العاطفة التي تتمتع بها المرأة في الأعمال المعاصرة و القديمة على حد سواء، و قد تمت كتابة احد أروع المؤلفات الإنكليزية الفكتورية في القرن التاسع عشر بيد الروائية شارلوت برونتي ذات النزعة النسوية و المسمى *جين آيبر* (1847). وفقاً لتجربتها كامرأة عاشت في العصر الفكتوري، حيث كان فيه المجتمع ذكورياً بامتياز، و قفت شارلوت بقوة و كسرت جدار الصمت و أعلنت احتجاجها و دفاعها عن حقوق المرأة، و طالبت بالمساواة مع الرجل في مختلف المجالات السياسية و الاقتصادية و الاجتماعية و كل هذه الدعوات في ظل النظام الفكتوري الذي يسيطر فيه الرجال. و لذلك يعتبر الكثيرون كتاب *جين آيبر* واحداً من أعظم الروايات ذات الطابع النسوي في تاريخ الأدب الإنكليزي. ومع ذلك، يمكن لأي كاتب أن يقف في صف قضية المرأة في إطار مفهوم (الحركة النسوية للجميع)، وأن يشجع المرأة على المطالبة بكامل حقوقها، و لا يستغرب أن يقف الرجل في كتاباته مدافعاً عن قضية تحرر المرأة، عندما ينطلق من نفس منطلقات النساء للدفاع عن قضيتها، حتى أنه قد يتفوق عليهن. و نذكر هنا أحد أشهر الكتاب المدافعين عن قضية تحرر المرأة و الذي كان متعاطفاً جداً ضد شتى أصناف القمع الممارس على المرأة، صموئيل رتشارد سون حيث تمكن بفضل موافقه الداعمة للحركة النسوية أن يكون من أقدم الروائيين الأغسطسيين المدافعين عن حقوق المرأة بكل معنى للكلمة حيث ناقشها في كتابه *الاول باميليا* (1740) و الذي يعود للقرن الثامن عشر، و بذلك أعد نفسه للوقوف جنباً إلى جنب مع الكاتبة شارلوت ضد الصراع الطبقي و عدم المساواة بين الجنسين و اضطهاد المرأة.

## Table of Content

<b>Dedication.....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>Acknowledgement .....</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>Chapter one: General introduction.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Chapter two: Theoretical Background of Feminism</b>	
2.1. Introduction.....	10
2.2. Etymology of the term Feminism.....	11
2.3. The concept of feminism.....	12
2.4. Development of feminism.....	13
2.4.1. First Wave Feminism.....	13
2.4.2. Second Wave Feminism.....	15
2.4.3. Third Wave Feminism.....	15
2.4.4. Protofeminism.....	15
2.5. Feminism in literature.....	16
2.6. Gothic Novel.....	17
2.7. Epistolary Novel.....	19
2.8. Conclusion .....	19
<b>Chapter Three: Feminine Feminism in Charlotte Bronte’s <i>Jane Eyre</i></b>	
3.1. Introduction.....	20
3.2. Feminism in the biography of the author.....	20
3.3. Feminism in the characters.....	27
3.3.1. The character of Jane .....	28
3.3.2. The character of Mr. Rochester.....	31
3.4. Feminism in the themes.....	34
3.4.1. Theme of love, family and independence.....	34

3.4.2. Theme of social class.....	36
3.4.3. Theme of gender inequality.....	40
3.5. Conclusion.....	40
<b>Chapter four: masculine feminism in Samuel Richardson's <i>Pamela</i></b>	
4.1. Introduction.....	41
4.2. Feminism in the biography of the author.....	42
4.3. Feminism in the characters.....	44
4.3.1. The character of Pamela.....	44
4.3.2. The character of Mr.B.....	50
4.4. Feminism in the themes.....	52
4.4.1. Theme of love and family.....	53
4.4.2. Theme of class division.....	54
4.4.3. Theme of sexual inequality.....	57
4.5. Conclusion.....	57
<b>Chapter five: General Conclusion.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Works cited page.....</b>	<b>68</b>

## Chapter one: General Introduction

The most common understanding of feminism is that it is about equal rights for women, but its real meaning is more complicated. Feminism looks at all aspects of life to identify the elements of oppression and it deals with female as a social category not as a biological one, because women oppression, in fact, is related to their sexuality. In addition, in different and ancient cultures, sex is the principle measure of social organization which was and still characterized by male domination.

We can not talk about feminism without taking in consideration the political, social and economic circumstances that contributed in its appearance. Feminism is based on liberation which makes it political and also reading feminist literature or engaging in feminist praxis means to participate in some activities for personal and social information.

The United States and the French Revolution brought the spirit of liberty and inspired the world for new social changes in which women were certainly included. They became aware of their oppression and started campaigning for equal political, social and economic opportunities for them and objecting the notion that a woman's worth is determined by her gender and that she is less intelligent than men.

The term 'feminism' is modern and there are debates over when and where it was first used. According to Fraise, French philosopher and feminist, "the word appeared in a French medical text in 1871 to describe a cessation in development of the sexual organs and characteristics in male patients who were perceived as thus suffering from feminization to their bodies" (Freedman 2). The term feminism was applied by the French writer and anti-feminist Alexander Dumas fils in a pamphlet entitled *L'homme-femme* to describe women acting in a masculine way which was published in 1872. As Fraisse remarks that: "although in medical terminology feminism was used to signify a feminization of men" (Freedman 2).

In 1840s, the women rights movements had started to emerge in the United States with the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 for women's rights. This was followed by Elizabeth

Cady Stanton and Susan B Anthony's founding of the national women's suffrage Association. In Britain too, feminism was considered as a socio-political movement that affects society but a little late than the other countries, i.e. during the 1960s. Although we can trace the development of women's rights' movement from the mid nineteenth century, this is not the starting point for women's concern about their social and political conditions. Even after the word is coined, it was still not adapted as a term of identification by feminist themselves. As representative figures of the beginning of the feminist ideology in literature we chose *Pamela* by Samuel Richardson which was written in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* which was written in the century that followed.

Feminists used various means to convey their point of view starting by writing literary works, conventions, and media. Feminist literature is based on the principles of feminism and refers to any literary work that concentrates on the struggle of women for equal right as men. Not all feminist literature has been written by women, but also by men who could sink into the deep thoughts and feeling to understand their needs and desires.

Accordingly, the major question that is raised is: In what way does the gender of the feminist writer have an impact on the literary work? Two subsidiary questions stem from the major one: What are the characteristics of feminism in the literary work written by both the male and female authors? And On which features do the aforementioned works diverge and converge?

As far as the research questions are concerned, we are going to put forward the following hypothesis: Since feminism is exclusively related to women, we have to expect *Jane Eyre* and *Pamela* written by Charlotte Bronte, a female feminist writer, and Samuel Richardson, a male writer, respectively to diverge and converge in many respects.

This thesis is the sequel of our license degree final research. In the latter, we compared between literary works written by two female authors; however in this study, we intend to

take the same course except that the comparison is between two writers of different gender. Our principle objective is to look for similarities and differences between the two works written by male and the female feminist authors.

The scope of our study is going to be narrowed as it will focus on the following elements: the biographical details of the authors, characterization, and themes. Those elements are applied on *Jane Eyre* written by Charlotte Bronte and *Pamela* by Samuel Richardson.

An 18<sup>th</sup> century male writer advocating the rights of women could raise a controversy over his writing. Comparing the latter with a literary work written by an audacious 19<sup>th</sup> century feminist writer could provide researchers as well as teachers of literature with a new insight the different facets of feminism. Our main data are going to be obtained from books and articles through an extensive library research and the internet (eBooks, pdf, and electronic articles). In addition to using the literary approach: case study.

Our thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 is a general introduction to the thesis. It comprises the background to the study, statement of the problem, research question (s), hypotheses, aims of the research. Chapter 2 deals with the theoretical background of the research; the concept of feminism, its origin, and development, and then we will explore feminism in literature. At the end of this chapter, we will provide a definition of epistolary and gothic novels. In chapter 3, we will attempt to find out, describe, and analyze the aspects of feminine feminism in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* in terms of biography, character, and themes. In chapter 4, however, our focus will be on masculine feminism in Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*. Chapter 5 is a general conclusion in which we will review and discuss the major findings and give general recommendations.

## Chapter two: Theoretical Background of Feminism

### 2.1 Introduction

Civilization is the creation of a world by and for both men and women. They live in arranged society and enjoy the same rights and privileges. We have no written evidence of people's life during the prehistoric era, but from archeological evidence we can imagine their behaviour and social life. Labor division and sex difference did not exist. Women were used to collect different kind of fruits and vegetables and men hunt animals. Also, men were considered less valuable and children were known according to their mother's identity. Women had power to control her family and she were the leader of the family. This society was matriarchic society according to the historian (Plain and Sellers 12-5). Those are the characteristics of that part of history.

Women had a great contribution in invention to that society. Women produced different tools to use in their daily work and agriculture. Paranormal power was associated with women. In some religions women were considered as goddess. The first God was a woman in prehistoric era. In tribal life, women were viewed as so powerful that they can create new life. This abnormal power raised their position in society and women were more superior to man. But the natural existence of sexual equality in the world did not continue in history. By time women lost their superior power and status and in the Middle Ages women became under control of men.

By the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, a dark era started. It was characterized by the great influence of the Church on society and social life. The leaders of those churches were separated from family life and their mothers which create empty relation among them and women. This fact built the first wall between men and women. Women were seen as a cause of a curse by those religious men saw as we see in the following Hebrew prayer by men: "Blessed, art thou, O Lord our God, king of the universe, that thou hast not made me women"

(Blount 45). In this period the help of the Church and king to raise women's oppression reached its high. Beating and rapping women was legal provided that no damage is caused to her limbs. Rape was forbidden but was not punishable (Plain and Sellers 21-5). So we can say that women was more than oppressed, she was neglected.

By the beginning of Renaissance and the demolition of feudalism women became free and enjoyed independent labour. Good changes were made in culture and literature but none in women's conditions in society. With the invention of steam engine, the Industrial Revolution took place in Britain and Europe. According to their skills, women could find a job in any industry. Both at work and between men and women in the family the old forms of social relationship were broken by Capitalism (Plain and Sellers 29-33). A new ideology was introduced in that era to the European society.

The latter discussion shows that women's condition was in better at the beginning of human civilization. However; with the development of civilization and becoming controlled and exploited in society, women lost their power. They started to be conscious about their right and wished to work hand by hand with men for better life. The existence of subjugation in society created an attempt to achieve their right. This effort gave birth to feminist movements all over the world.

## **2.2 Etymology of the Term "Feminism"**

The word "*Feminism*" appeared first in France in 1871 in a French medical text to describe the feminization of male bodies, in Great Britain in the 1890s, then in the United States in 1910. The movement of Woman's Rights was probably the term most used before the term "feminism" was suggested in 1894 by the Oxford Dictionary. The British press branded it as dangerous because it was imported from France. It is a challenge to define

feminism, but a large comprehension of it includes all kinds of acting, speaking and writing on women's issues and rights and distinguishing the social injustice (Freedman 2).

### **2.3 The concept of feminism**

Feminism is an attempt to change women's conditions in society. There are many different definitions of the term "feminism". Some writers link it to women's right movement in United States and Europe; others use it to refer to the existence of injustices against women (Osborne 8). Various understanding but the subject is only women.

We can say that feminism could be the mixture of various movements, theories and philosophies that are concerned with the issues of gender difference and advocate equality for women, and campaign for women's rights and interests. We can say also that it is a social movement which has gradually improved the position of women. Feminism refers to the belief in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes (Macey 122). This equality was and still the cause of the feminist movement.

We can start with the definition as a sociological theory which aims to free all women from oppression and subordination to men. "Feminism is a belief that women and men are inherently of equal worth" is the understanding of Estelle B. Freedman who wrote that in her book *No Turning Back*, because she thinks that the concession given to men by societies, social movements are an obligatory act to make equality between woman and man possible (7). And according to *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology* Feminism is a "Doctrine, originated in the eighteenth century, suggested that women are systematically disadvantaged in modern society and advocated similar chances for men and women" (131). Rosalind Delmar said that, "Feminism is usually defined as an active desire to change women's position in society" (qtd. in Emerson 17). In addition to her Anuradha wrote that "An awareness of women's oppression and exploitation in society, at work and within the family,

and conscious action by women and men to change this situation” (42). Another definition was written in *Global Gender Issues* by Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan and said that “Feminism is an orientation that views gender as a fundamental ordering principle in today’s world that values diverse ways of being and knowing, and that promotes the transformation of gender and related hierarchies” (190). From the latter definitions it’s clear to us that feminism is an idea that tells us the oppressed position of women in the world, and it is such a philosophy in which women’s works are valued and their political, economic and social rights are preserved. Feminism calls for women’s equality in world. It let the women to prove their power to work in the same rhythm of men in society (Macey 24-5). All together live in one world with equal duties and rights.

## **2.4 Development of feminism**

First wave feminism came to the United States in the late 1800s. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony worked for suffrage until it was won in 1920. From 1950s to 1980s, second wave feminism worked toward cultural integration and was led by activists such as Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem in America and Simone De Beauvoir in France.

We can divide the history of feminism into three waves. The first wave was the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the second was in the 1960s and 1970s and the third extends from the 1990s to the present (Freedman 3). But throughout history their goals were distinguished.

### **2.4.1 First wave feminism**

First wave feminism refers to a period of feminist activity during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the United Kingdom and the United States. It focused primarily on calling for the right of women’s suffrage. The term “first wave” feminism was coined

retrospectively after the term “second wave” feminism began to be used to describe another feminist movement. In Britain the women movement campaigned for the women’s vote while in the United States Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia arranged “Women Rights Convention” in 1848 in Seneca Falls town to speak about the women’s rights in society.

By the end of this convention a declaration of Sentiments was made in this convention. In the preface to the declaration, it is written that: “The history of mankind is history of repeated injuries and usurpation on the part of man toward women, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her” (Gordon 41). In this declaration eighteen complaints and prayers declared to get women’s right society. Women’s voting right is one of the important declarations among these. John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill put strong logic against women’s political and economic right in their book “*Subjection of women*” which published at 1869 ( Plain and Sellers 7). In 1865 Stuart Mill was elected as a member of British Parliament tried to establish women’s voting right. At last, in 1918 women who were above the age of 30 got the right to vote in election. Nevertheless, as men had the right to vote at the age of 21 so women claim to vote at the same age of men. Twelve years later it was established that both men and women would vote at same age. At this stage feminist movements lost their influence as many workers thought that it was enough that women got the right to vote in parliamentary elections (Plain and Sellers 9). Their win appeared as complete but it was totally partial.

In the United States, the leaders of this movement include Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony who campaigned for the abolition of slavery. American first wave feminism got to the end by the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1919 which granted women the right to vote (Osborne 18-9, Raddeker 171). This amendment is considered as a landmark in the history of the women’s right movement.

### 2.4.2 Second wave feminism

Second wave feminism refers to the feminist activity that from early 1960s and last to the 1980s. It has continued to exist since then, and continues to coexist with what some people call Third wave feminism. Second wave feminism viewed cultural and political inequalities as inextricably linked. The movement worked on the issues of equality (Osborn 6, Raddeker 173).

### 2.4.3 Third wave feminism

The Third wave feminism began in early 1990s. The movement came to finish the unfinished work of the second wave and it was a response to its failure. It looks for change or neglects the definitions of second wave of femininity, which focuses on the experience of upper-class white women. Third wave feminism main issues were politics and challenged the second wave's sample of what is or is not better and beneficial for females (Osborn 6).

### 2.4.4 Profeminism

As well these three waves of feminism there are some other feminist movements and some activities of famous feminists which we should mention in our ongoing research. Without taking a look back to history our study concerning the background of feminism will remain incomplete.

The people and activists who discussed or advanced women's issues prior to the existence of the feminist movement are called "profeminist". According to the French philosopher, writer and researcher Simone De Beauvoir, possibly Christine De Pizan –a late medieval and French writer- was the earliest feminist. They believed that she was the first woman who makes a living out by writing. In her book *The Book of the City of Ladies* published in 1405, where she claimed that "there is no doubt that women belong to the

peoples of God and the human race as well as men, and are not another species or dissimilar race, for which they should be excluded from moral teaching” (Kempton 189, Osborne 7).

This statement marked the existence of female consciousness about their place in the world and their right in life and society.

Many years were passed after Christine without any significant writing against women’s oppression. Through *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* which was published in 1772, the English feminist Mary Wollstonecraft tried to express her thoughts and ideas about the situation of women. In her book she raised her voice against traditional views and beliefs about women in society and used strong logic to advocate women’s rights and education. For her women’s rights are not only limited to theory and writing but it took place in reality by some acts and movements. In 1848, Queen’s College was established for women education, and in 1882 women got right on their own property independently without any intervention from their brothers or husbands. Yet, this movement lost its momentum as the pioneers of French and American Revolutions did not heed to women’s rights in society (Osborne 9).

## **2.5 Feminism in literature**

Feminist literature refers to the piece of literature that focuses on the campaign and struggle of a woman for gaining equality and to be accepted as a human being .The principles of feminism are the basic of any Feminist literature. Most works do not follow a one approach to achieve this goal of equality but women believed that change in the way they were perceived in society was possible. Some works may be fictional, while others may be non-fictional (Plain and Sellers 121-135). Diversity it is not always reason for being in opposite sides but it could be the way of reaching the highest goal in life.

Across almost all societies, the dominance of one gender over the other is a common reality, and the fact that it is more realistic is that it is not in favour of women (Walters

42). We can limit this fact only in Europe because it was existed all over the world. No difference between male and female authors, this data is argued by critics, and that there was no need to identify a separate class of literature termed as feminist or look for some element of feminism in literature. However, if you read any such work as Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* or *Sense and Sensibility*, Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* and *Pamela* and *Jane Eyre* of Charlotte Bronte, you would realize how such writers criticized male society, and tried to understand the beliefs and needs of the opposite sex. Take for example Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. The protagonist, Elizabeth Bennett was a woman of her mind. Despite the societal pressure which are put on her by her mother to choose a partner, and to live a life that was decided for all women, she chose her own way of life (Walters 45). And that is one clear characteristic of the principles of feminism in literature.

Women in feminist literature always appeared in the protagonist, who often does not accept the traditional role of women as designed by society. They had the power to express their choice, to make their decisions, and are ready to deal with the consequences of those choices, actions, and decisions. Feminist literature first deals with a woman as a woman through a daughter, a mother, a sister, or a wife. It is important to note that, not all works of feminist literature have happy endings for the heroine. Women have been ostracized by society for openly demanding equality, and have had to face several negative consequences of their decision to go against the waves as in the case of *Pamela* written by Samuel Richardson who, by the end proved that her virginity is still her own (Raddeker 21). It means that women tried to protect their existence in society.

Not only in feminist literature, are women also treated as important subjects even in many literary works by men. For example, the Norwegian playwright and author Henrik Ibsen, concentrates in his work on women's issues and troubles in society, and focuses on the decisions they made which are based on their personal values and beliefs. If we take a look at

his play *A Doll's House*, we would clearly notice the strength and character of the protagonist (Raddeker 20-22). The main issue was the existence of male society.

## 2.6 Gothic novel

It is a type of romance which was popular between 1760 up until the 1820s that has influenced the ghost and horror story. The stories are designed to thrill readers by providing mystery murder and the supernatural. The story built upon the existence of old buildings and; apparitions such as demons, phantoms; an atmosphere of brooding gloom; and youthful, handsome heroes and fainting heroines who face corrupt aristocrats, witches, and monsters (Kennedy 72, Cuddon 356). We can conclude the main elements of gothic novel in the following; first the location of the story which conventionally took place in an old castle. Then the atmosphere of mystery adds a lot of suspense to the events of the story. The story also should contain an ancient prophecy or visions with Supernatural or otherwise inexplicable events. Furthermore, the existence of a distress heroine who threatened by a powerful, impulsive, tyrannical male is a fundamental element (Junger 4, Cuddon 360).

## 2.7 Epistolary Novel

It is a genre of fiction which first gained popularity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the epistolary novel is a form in which most or all of the plot is advanced by the letters or journal entries of one or more of its characters, and which marked the beginning of the novel as a literary form. Epistolary fiction is at least dated back at least to ancient Roman times, but the epistolary novel as a distinct genre first gained prominence in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century. The late seventeenth and early eighteenth century's scholars regarded Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) to be the first example of the epistolary novel and indeed the first mature novel to be written in English (Kennedy 58, Cuddon 179).

## **2.8 Conclusion**

Throughout history, women have struggled to gain equality, respect, and the same rights as men. This has been difficult because of patriarchy, an ideology which postulates men are superior to women and have the right to rule women. This ideology which constructed the social structures of societies all over the world and as a result, the new millennium women are still campaigning for rights that most men take for granted. The struggle was harder for coloured women because they were not only dealing with issues of sexism, but also racism. To gain the war against patriarchy, feminism and feminist theory was born.

## **Chapter three: Feminine Feminism in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre***

### **3.1 Introduction**

Throughout the history of English literature, feminism remained one of the main themes that frequent in many wonderful works. In one word, this concept represents feminine's independence and self estimate in men domain society. One of the famous authors who take by this theory is Charlotte Bronte especially in her best novel of *Jane Eyre* (1847), which was considered as a wonderful gothic and an autobiography English fiction portraying the heroine Jane Eyre from childhood to maturity, and a finest critique work for attacking women's oppression, gender and social class that dominated England during the early Victorian period. Therefore, *Jane Eyre* was considered a great feminist book and finest example of Charlotte Bronte's effective feminism and her strong feminist disapproval on Victorian society. For that reason, in this chapter, we are deeply interested in exploring and analyzing the spirits of feminism reflected in this novel *Jane Eyre* through the biography of its author, Charlotte Bronte, characters, and themes, whose author took the lead in the campaign of feminism.

### **3.2 Feminism in the biography of the author**

During the first half of the nineteenth century, when Charlotte Bronte wrote the selection novel of *Jane Eyre*, England society was dominated by males i.e. man was considered the superior . However, Victorian era women, especially who were from middle-class, were regarded as inferior, weak, and fragile. In fact, this is the real image of patriarchal society when females had been oppressed by males for a long time; it offered to them limited choices of all life's aspects, in which woman had few - social, educational, and political - rights, such as the right to develop, own property, financial independence, and divorce. During this hard period, a Victorian era married woman was forced to stay at home and had

to obey her husband and take care of the household and her children (De Groot 03; Wilhelm 04). However poor single woman had limited work, for instance, the respectable employment of educated women outside their home family, like Charlotte Bronte, can be as a teacher or a governess but they suffered from both financial hardship and social disgrace, and were usually very deficiently paid: “The only occupation at which an unmarried middle-class woman could earn a living and maintain some claim to gentility was that of a governess, but a governess could expect no security of employment, minimal wages and an ambiguous status, somewhere between servant and family member” (Villette 21; Bertolino 04).

In addition, Terry Eagleton described a governess’s status as: “The governess is a servant, trapped within a rigid social function which demands industriousness, subservience, and self sacrifice; but she is also an ‘upper’ servant, and so furnished with an imaginative awareness and cultivated sensibility which is precisely her stock-in-trade as a teacher” (Walter 195).

However, the painful dissatisfaction appeared when Charlotte Bronte described governess’s status as forms of “bondage” in her words:

The thought came over me: am I to spend all the best part of my life in this wretched bondage, forcibly suppressing my rage at the idleness, the apathy and the hyperbolical and most asinine stupidity of those fatheaded oafs, and on compulsion assuming an air of kindness, patience and assiduity? Must I from day to day sit chained to this chair prisoned within these four bare walls (Sun 27).

Besides, she described her suffering as governess in this simple passage: “A governess’s experience is frequently indeed bitter, but its results are precious: the mind, feeling, temper are subjected to a discipline equally painful and priceless” (Bertolino 04). Also, she added: “...a private governess has no existence, is not considered as a living rational being, except as connected with the wearisome duties she has to fulfill” (Titan 456). Thus, the suffocation and

suffering, which Charlotte Bronte and all Victorian women endured as a result of their lower status in men dominated Victorian society, became the major theme of her writings.

Charlotte Bronte was a famous Victorian female poet and novelist (Skillion 35). She was born in Yorkshire, in the north of England, on 21 April 1816. Her parents were Reverend Patrick Bronte, Irish Anglican priest, and his wife Maria Branwell Bronte. She was the third child; her older sisters Maria and Elizabeth and her only brother Patrick Branwell, but her little sisters were two of the famous British writers, Emily Jane (1818-1848), and Ann (1820-1849)(Shorter ix; Harrison xi). In April 1821, when Charlotte was four years old, the happy Brontes family moves to Haworth, where her father became Perpetual Curate there. However, their happiness was replaced by deep sadness. Because of the difficult birth of the youngest Ann, Mrs. Bronte was attacked by cancer and died on 15 September 1821(Francis 4; Gaskell 37). This sad accident was considered the first of many tragedies that Charlotte lived. They were still too young; Charlotte was only five years old when her mother died, and all children grew up under the care of their father and a rigid aunt (Mrs. Maria's older sister Elizabeth Barnwell) when their lives became so difficult (Weiner and Stein 128).

When Charlotte was just eight years old, in August 1824, she was enrolled with her three sisters Maria, Elizabeth, and Emily to the Clergy Daughters School at Cowan Bridge. Due to bad healthy atmospheres students lived on, many who became sick among them were Maria and Elizabeth, Charlotte's two elder sisters, who died of tuberculosis in June of 1825 (Singh 13-14). This double tragedy and a significance loss profoundly affected on Charlotte, but in the same time helped to strong her personality.

After leaving school, in 1826, Charlotte stayed at home with the remaining children - Barnwell, Anne, and Emily- and she took a role of "the motherly friend and guardian of them"( Urban 691). She spent all her time with her sisters, playing, reading, and writing. Moreover, the little Brontes were educated by their father who tried to grow their

imaginations by giving them a box of toy soldiers, which inspired them, after years, to write lots of poems, stories, and plays. This event was considered as a profound effect on their future literary works (Langland 8).

In January of 1831, Charlotte again attended a private school in Roe Head, is so healthy and cheerful in comparison with the former one, and, in 1835, she became a teacher at the same school (Singh 17; *In the Footsteps of the Brontes* 140). Three years later, she left the Roe Head School in order to work as a private governess to many families such as the Sidgwicks and Mrs. White, but she hated like this bad position (Harrison 23).

When Charlotte was twenty six, travelled with her sister Emily, in 1842, to Brussels in order to complete their education of foreign languages at a small private school, which was run by the schoolmaster Constantin Hegin, with the aim to achieve their financial independence by opening their own school back home (Shorter 100; Wroot 26). After a short trip back to Haworth because the death of her aunt, Charlotte went back to Brussels in January 1844, as a teacher, where she emotionally formed a one-side love affairs with a married Frenchman, M. Heger, but when her passion was not reciprocated; she became sad, unhappy woman in this time ( Hartley 67). However, in the following year she returned to family home and started the establishment of her school with her sisters, but unfortunately their plan also failed. But the brave sisters didn't capitulate to their failure and started to write many literary works (Krueger and Karbiener 39).

In 1837, at the age of twenty-year old, Charlotte sent some versions of her poetry to the England's poet laureate, Robert Southey, and asked him for his advice, but his response was not encouraged: "Literature cannot be the business of a woman's life, and it ought not to be. The more she is engaged in her proper duties, the less leisure will she have for it, even as an accomplishment and a recreation" (Mermin 15). This showed the barriers facing women writers, but Charlotte did not follow his advice and replied by this feminist manner:

You do not forbid me to write; you do not say that what I write is utterly destitute of merit... I know the first letter I wrote to you was all senseless trash from beginning to end; but I am not altogether the idle, dreaming being it would seem to denote.

My father is a clergyman of limited though competent income and I am the eldest of his children. ... Following my father's advice—who from my childhood has counseled me, just in the wise and friendly tone of your letter—I have endeavored not only attentively to observe all the duties a woman ought to fulfill, but to feel deeply interested in them. I don't always succeed, for sometimes when I'm teaching or sewing I would rather be reading or writing; but I try to deny myself; and my father's approbation amply rewarded me for the privation. Once more allow me to thank you with sincere gratitude. I trust I shall never more feel ambitious to see my name in print; if the wish should rise, I'll look at Southey's letter, and suppress it. It is honor enough for me that I have written to him, and received an answer (Polhemus 155).

In May 1846, the three living sisters' collection of poetry and poems was published under the male pseudonyms of three fictional brothers, Charlotte was Currer Bell, Emily as Ellis Bell, and Anne wrote as Acton Bell (The Houghton Mifflin Dictionary of Biography 224). In this occasion, Charlotte explained the reason of using nom de plumes:

Averse to personal publicity, we veiled our own names under those of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell; the ambiguous choice being dictated by a sort of conscientious scruple at assuming Christian names positively masculine, while we did not like to declare ourselves women, because

, without at that time suspecting that our mode of writing and thinking was not what is called 'feminine', we had a vague impression that authoresses are liable to be looked on with prejudice; we had noticed how critics sometimes use for their chastisement the weapon of personality, and for their reward, a flattery, which is not true praise (The Brontes 8).

Although the poetry volume failed to attract reading public's attentions, the Brontes continued their writings but on separate books and under the same pseudonyms. In 1847, Anne's *Agnes Gray* appeared like her sister Emily's *Wuthering Heights* which became their masterpieces. Charlotte's *The Professor* was frequently refused by many houses, but it was published only after her death in 1875 (Sparknotes Literature 419).

In October of that year, Charlotte published her next novel of *Jane Eyre*, in London, under the male name of Currer bell, and met with great interest by several publishers and readers. It was considered the most wonderful work in the Victorian era, both critically and commercially. Through it Charlotte could express her rage about Victorian women's rights, oppressions, and low social class in Victorian society (Rubener 3; Stoneman 15). In this occasion, Luo Jingguo tried to express the importance of Charlotte's novel for treating the main women's problems in the society: "*Jane Eyre* is the first English novel, even the most powerful and popular novel, which presents the modern view of women's position in society" (Analysis of Jane Eyre's Personality 4).

Despite the great successes of those three female Victorian writers, the following years were very hard and full of tidal waves of calamities, which broke the home family in brief time. In July 1848, Charlotte with Ann went to London in order to reveal to her publishers – Smith, Elder, and Company- the real identity of the 'three Bells' mastery'. However, her success was soon interrupted and blemished by the sudden loss of her brother who died on

September of the same year, following this shock the both sisters Emily and Ann suffered from rapid illness, and both died from consumption in December 1848 and May 1849, respectively ( Ewen 417 ; Dinsdale 94). Charlotte found the tragic death of the three Brontes as a heavy setback exceedingly hard to bridge over, but she overlapped it by spending all her time writing which was the only way that took her out of her depression, and she clarified that in her letter to Mr. Williams: "...out of dark and desolate reality into a unreal but happier religion" (Jenkins 70; Smith XXI).

In this difficult period she published, in 1849, her third epic novel of *Shirley*. It was considered as a great work about Victorian social's problems which, through the heroine Shirley's status and the theme of gender inequality, Charlotte portrayed the Victorian women's conditions in English middle-class society and their severe financial depression (Dinsdale 94; Jones 61).

After that Charlotte made several trips, connections, and acquaintances with some famous literary figures such as William Makepeace Thackeray, Harriet Martineau, and Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, and she continued writing. Furthermore, she published her last sophisticated book, *Villette*, in 1853, in this work, Charlotte again turned to Brussels and her experience as a teacher, and her love affair with married M. Heger. Through novel of *Villette*, Charlotte more directly treated, with similar themes to *Jane Eyre* and *Shirley*, the Victorian woman's sufferings and how they struggled against Victorian statements in the nineteenth century, ultimately how their achieved their financial and emotional independence and equality with men (Krueger and Karbiener 39; William Shakespeare 47).

Unluckily, Charlotte's *Villette* was to be her last work. In 1854, under her duty to her living father's project, she married Arthur Bell Nicholls. Though Charlotte still did not love her husband, their marriage seemed a happy one and she become pregnant at age thirty-nine. However, her happiness was broken as usual when she became sick with pneumonia. Sadly,

before she gave her first child birth, died about six weeks later, on March 31, 1855 (Villette 63; Dinsdale 37; Brackett and Gaydosik 47). After Charlotte's death her best friend and great novelist of Elizabeth Gaskell wrote her biography and precisely portrayed all Charlotte's sufferings, oppressions and struggles as a Victorian woman with her successes and wonderful works as a strong female writer (Michie 14).

The time period, familial influence, and the personal life of a literary figure have always provided a source of wonderful works; by examining the social and political statements of Victorian era, the tragedies of home family, and the personal struggles, all those difficult circumstances generated Charlotte's feminism. As we have seen above, Charlotte suffered a lot from the Victorian society, for achieving her financial independence, she must depend on her effort to get what she wants; she hardly worked various jobs as a teacher, a governess and trying to start her own school business and to get her own book published. But when she feels some happiness the sadness soon catch her heart, she had seen all the dark side of person's life include rapid illness, sudden death, and fatal failure. Ultimately, all of those tragedies could build Charlotte's successes and made her the best example of great Victorian female feminist author in the history of English literature.

### **3.3 Feminism in the characters**

It is known that all English feminist authors believed in women's rights and, in their writings, they always portray a woman as a strong, independence character. One of the great example is Charlotte Bronte's effective characters, in her feminist books, she gave them the freedom of speech and expression, and without any fear or discretion they declare their feminist opinion about illegal Victorian statements during her time. Among those there were two main characters in her great feminist novel *Jane Eyre*, the title female character "Jane

Eyre” and the male hero “Mr. Rochester” through their characteristics ,actions ,and opinions we can explore Charlotte ‘s strong images of feminism.

### 3.3.1 The characterization of Jane Eyre

In the selection feminist novel of Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre herself is the heroine and the narrator of the title character (Peters. J 91).The development of Bronte’s heroine was central to the whole book. As the story begins, Jane was at age ten years old as a little compelling orphan girl, and gradually develops into a passionate with an independent spirit young woman; who proved her equality with man in a time when women were ruled by male dominated Victorian society (Jane Eyre: Study Guide 6; Chow 164; Brackett and Gaydosik 233).

Throughout the novel, Jane serves as a positive character. By the development of Jane’s thoughts and feelings, Bronte conveys her spirits of feminism and tried to portray her heroine as more aggressive and vigorous woman than before, and appeared Jane’s rebellion and the ability to struggle for her own survival and independence against the tyranny she lived in her childhood (Roberts 60). Just before leaving the place, she told the Reeds to their faces what she thought of them:

I am not deceitful: If I were, I should say I love you; but I declare I do not love you ; I dislike you the worst of anybody in the world except John Reed; and this book about the liar, you may give to your girl, Georgiana, for it is she who tells lies, and not I.

I am glad you are no relation of mine; I will never call you aunt again as long as I live; I will never come to see you when I am grown up; and if anyone asks me how I liked you, I will say the very thought of you makes me sick (Jane Eyre 38-39; Small and trudi 91; Armstrong 5; Baker 38).

This showed Jane's kind of rebellion and portray us, even she was still child, she could feel and distinguish between who love her and who just want to injure her heart, but she didn't keep silence she rebelled and advocated herself.

Another kind of Jane's rebellion as young woman, which was appeared when she rejected marriages to both Mr. Rochester and St. John, because Jane understood she will loss her independence in the unions. St. John Rivers wanted to marry Jane only when he decided to travel to India as a missionary, because he just tried to benefit from her qualities as his wife in his mission. But he would to give up her passionate part and her sexual identity when he said: "God and nature intended you for a missionary's wife. It is not personal, but mental endowments they have given you: you are formed for labor, not for love. A missionary's wife you must—shall be. You shall be mine: I claim you—not for my pleasure, but for my Sovereign's service" (Jane Eyre 463; Roberts 6-7).

However, Jane rejected John's Puritanism, the icy and the freezing life, because their union would be as a loveless marriage and as a form of imprisonment. She preferred to keep her true feelings and passions through the freedom of her heart and soul. This decision from Jane was considered her most feminist act when she responded:

Consent, then, to his demand is possible: but for one item—one dreadful item. It is—that he asks me to be his wife, and has no more of a husband's heart for me than frowning giant of a rock, down which the stream is foaming in yonder gorge. He prizes me as a soldier would a good weapon; and that is all.

Unmarried to him, this would never grieve me; but can I let him complete his calculations—coolly put into practice his plans— go through the wedding ceremony? Can I receive from him the bridal ring, endure all the forms of love (which I doubt not he would scrupulously observe) and know that the spirit was quite absent? Can I bear the consciousness that every endearment he bestows is

sacrifice made on principle? No: Such martyrdom would be monstrous. I will never undergo it. As his sister, I might accompany him-not as his wife: I will tell him so (Jane Eyre 466; Cohn 54; Shmoop 65-66).

Jane realized the importance of passion, sentiments, love, and feelings in her life because his frozen spirit made her behave against him. Even before his proposal to her, there was a kind of imprisonment. She understood that she was reserved when she dealt with him. In addition, there was an impossibility to melt with John in one spirit because she wasn't involved in love with him. She felt uncomfortable with John; she missed her freedom. Here we had a struggle between "passion and love" and "the frozen spirit". John wanted her for duty not passion, but Jane wouldn't live a life empty of love and full of duties. The conclusion was that she could never be like him or part of him. His proposal put the relationship in a humiliating context.

While Mr. Rochester offered Jane a chance to liberate her feelings and passions but under new position as Rochester's mistress, however, Jane's answer was:

You make me a liar by such language: you sully my honor. I declared I could not change: you tell me to my face I shall change soon. And what a distortion in your judgment, what a perversity in your ideas, is proved by your conduct! Is it better to drive a fellow creature to despair than to transgress a mere human law-no man being injured by the breach? For you have neither relatives nor acquaintances whom you need fear to offend by living with me? (Jane Eyre 365; The Dublin Review 220-22).

She had her own sense of morality and her feeling of self-respect that prevented her from accepting Rochester's proposal. Here there was a struggle between love and reason, and between law and feelings. However, Jane realized that living with Rochester as a mistress was mean enslavement which was very humiliating and degrading:

Meantime, let me ask myself one question-- Which is better?-- To have surrendered to temptation; listened to passion; made no painful effort-- no struggle; but to have sunk down in silken snare; fallen asleep on the flowers covering it; wakened in a southern clime, amongst the luxuries of a pleasure villa: to have been living in France, Mr. Rochester's mistress ;delirious with his love half my time-for he would-oh, yeas, he would have loved me well for a while. He did love me- no one will ever love me so again. I shall never more know sweet homage given to beauty, youth, and grace-for never to anyone else shall I seem to possess these charms. He was fond and proud of me-it is what no man besides will ever be ... whether is it better I ask, to be a slave in a fool's paradise at Marseilles-fever with delusive bliss one hour-suffocating with the bitterest tears of remorse and shame the next-or to be a village schoolmistress, free and honest, in a breezy mountain nook in the healthy heart of England (Jane Eyre 415; Singh 122; Richetii 370).

In the end of the novel Jane accented Rochester's marriage only after she became financial authority, when she gained some fortunate from her uncle John Eyre, and after the death of Rochester's wife, in this happy situation, Jane could live with Rochester because their equal marriage and great love (Wilhelm 15).

### **3.3.2 The character of Mr. Rochester:**

Mr. Rochester is the flawed hero, wealthy master of Thornfield Manor, Jane's beloved, and later, her husband. Rochester is the tragic Byronic hero; he made an unfortunate first marriage with madwoman before he meets Jane. Few facts were to be noticed about Mr.

Rochester. First, he had been in position in Thornfield for about nine years only. Second, he was the second son of the family. The third son and the father are dead. When the story came up to the stage of Thornfield, there were tangible economic, psychological and social issues stated in the novel. This stage shows us to what extent the inferiority conflict of a certain child may influence that child's behavior, reaction or the way that he thinks as an adult.

Rochester in the beginning of his life seemed to be as fragile, dependant and helpless as any poor woman living in society. This was not because he had no money or he did not have self-confidence but it was because of the legal system, which deprived him from the right to inherit any money or to get any property just because he was the second son of the family. Rochester went into a marriage of money that placed him in many stages as equal to Jane, which was a something he tried to convince Jane with. Rochester tried to convince Jane with his understanding of her and his equality to her through the different stages of their relationship, which started with a master-servant into what Jane called spirit-to-spirit relationship. Then it moved to be shown as equal:

You looked very much puzzled, Miss Jane ; and though you are not pretty any more than I am handsome, yet a puzzled air becomes you; besides, it is convenient, for it keeps those searching eyes of yours away from my physiognomy, and busies them with the worsted flowers of the rug; so puzzle on. Young Lady, I am disposed to be gregarious and communicative to-night (Jane Eyre 150; The Living Age 483; Rubik 229; Peters. C11).

From the very beginning of this relationship, Rochester was trying to frighten her into respecting him and obeying him. However, this did not work. Later on, he noticed that this action was insulting Jane. He said to her that he was twenty years older and he had a full century of experience. He believed in his authority. He believed in his superiority, but he was

a big liar. However, her reaction was similar to her reaction to John Reed and Mrs. Reed. She confronted him with a complete refusal of his superiority. She did not allow him to treat her as inferior. She tried to make things legitimate. She told him that his feelings of superiority were not legitimate. The main problem at the end of the relationship is that the experience that Rochester emphasized as a factor of superiority, his age, and his knowledge were the same reasons that made him inferior to Jane. The reasons of his superiority on which he worked so hard became at the end his fatal mistakes (Buzard 206; The Dublin University magazine 613; Fearon XIII).

He described her as an aerial figure, an elf, and an angel. All these images indicated that she was no one; she was nothing. Neither elf nor angel did exist in real world. Jane seemed to be aware of the social connotations of the word "angel". Religiously speaking, the angels were the guardians. Angels were the comforters, exactly as he described her; he wanted to take her to France in order to comfort him, to be a protector for the patriarchy's interests but Jane told him that: "I am not an angle, and I will not be one till die, I will be myself. Mr. Rochester, you must neither expect nor obtain anything heavenly from me-for you will not get it, any more than I shall get it of you: which I do not at all anticipate" (Jane Eyre 299; Blaha 10). She wanted to be herself, not an unrealistic figure that did not exist.

On the second day after the engagement, her sense of Rochester's unrealistic way of looking at women raised. She started to sense something strange in the way he looked at her and in the way he insisted on changing her. He wanted to round her neck with the diamonds which indicated imprisoning her. Rochester's idea of love is a patriarchal idea. He was totally convinced that his woman is his object but in the reality he was proposing a life of imprisonment. However, Jane refused all of them and told him:

"Oh, Sir! – Never mind jewels! I don't like to hear them spoken of. Jewels for Jane Eyre sounds unnatural and strange: I would rather not have them." "I will

myself put the diamond chain round your neck, and the circlet on your forehead, – which it will become: for nature, at least, has stamped her patent of nobility on this brow, Jane; and I will clasp the bracelets on these fine wrists, and load these fairy-like fingers with rings.”

“No, no, sir! Think of other subjects, and speak of other things, and in another strain. Don’t address me as if I were a beauty; I am your plain, Quakerish governess” (Jane Eyre 298; Shmoop 73; Rappoport 55).

This is one of Jane's actions which were the most explicit in proving her role as a feminist she was determined to stay true to herself and to face Rochester’s imposing nature.

### **3.4 Feminism in the Themes**

A novel’s themes were usually defined as the mirror of any literary book and play the main role of it, in which, they reverse the real reasons for any author to express his main ideas through his writings. Throughout the history of feminist struggle many themes were found and among them Charlotte Bronte highlighted in *Jane Eyre* include the look for autonomy, independence and gender equality in opposition to the social restrictions placed upon the womanly, including the demand for love and marriage, are the most underlying feminist meaning of this novel.

#### **3.4.1 Theme of Love, family, and Independence**

It is known that the book *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte was romance novel, therefore, love, marriage, and family are among the foremost thematic elements with a special focus on the theme of a feministic independence, together were treated immediately throughout the novel (Wohl 160).

In considering the theme of family, in this romantic work, portrayed how Jane struggled between two suitors men to gain a loving family by marriage, which should have passion. The first man was St John Rivers, who was expressed her reason, and the second, Edward Rochester, who was her passion (Roberts 08-09).

Because of Bronte's novel was fairy tale romance, Jane ultimately choose her love and, in this case, Rochester became her better choice when she told:

He is not to them what he is to me, I thought: He is not of their kind .I believe he  
 id of mine;-I am sure he is,-I feel akin to him,-I understand the language of his  
 countenance and movement: though rank and wealth sever us widely , I have  
 something in my brain and heart, in my blood and nerves, that assimilates me  
 mentally to him.(...)I must, then, repeat continually that we are forever sundered:-  
 and yet, while I breathe and think I must love him (Jane Eyre 197).

Rochester was the only man who offered her a true love with a complete happiness, a real family, and motherhood which she always searches. It was clear in his love song:

My love has place her little hand  
 With noble faith in mine,  
 And vowed that wedlock's sacred band  
 Our nature shall entwine.  
 My love has sworn, with sealing kiss,  
 With me to live-to die;  
 I have at last my nameless bliss.  
 As I live—loved me!! (Jane Eyre 315; Regis 87)

In the beginning of the novel, Jane rejected his first marriage proposal which might lose her identity and made her as his mistress 'Jane Rochester'. For this reason, she obtained the feminist characteristics of female before that she returns to Mr. Rochester (Sabiston 58; Grob

Langenhoff 4), which was clear in her declaration when she said “I told you I am independent, sir, as well as rich: I am my own mistress” (Jane Eyre 502; Carbo and Mattalia 171; Quintero 86). This passage excellently portrayed the obvious feministic aspect of Jane’s self definition. Jane finally became independent and declared her real love: “I have told you, reader, that I had learnt to love Mr. Rochester: I could not unlove him now, merely because I found that had ceased to notice me ...” (Jane Eyre 209; Heiniger 113). Also her desire to marry him and gain the happiness together which is clear in those words by Jane : “I love you better now, when I can really be useful to you, than I did in your state of proud independence, when you disdained every part but that of the giver and protector” ( Jane Eyre 516 ; Maynard 59).

### **3.4.2 Theme of Social Class**

In the beginning of 19th-century, Britain was governed by social status, in which people stayed in the class they were born. Therefore, *Jane Eyre* was appeared, and it was considered a feminist novel just because Bronte used to express her critique of this social hierarchy differences England was described during the Victorian period (Sparknotes Literature 422).

Bronte in her novel portrayed how, because her low position as a poor woman in Victorian society, Jane was oppressed in all stages of her life by many persons who are from wealthy environment. In her childhood, Jane was criticized for being poor as a servant, such as, when John Reed ordered her to call him ‘Master Reed’, which reflects his superior position in the society (Roberts 48), and he joined: “No; you are less than a servant, for you do nothing for your keep” (Jane Eyre 9). “You are a dependent, mama says; you have no money; your father left you none; you ought to beg, and not live here with gentlemen’s children like us and eat the same meals we do, and wear clothes at our mama’s expense” (11; Bertolino 12 ; McCaw 105).

Even her beloved Rochester what he tried to do at the engagement period, when he gave her jewel, is to lift Jane up to his status. He wanted to make her historically belong to his family. His attempted to do so can be interpreted from his feeling that because she just governess she is inferior to him. It is because he knew in his unconsciousness that she is inferior to him. As he tried to elevate her and make her belong to his family, she, on the other hand, resisted and refused them (Blaha 10).

Moreover, it was the same reason that why Jane refused to marry Mr. Rochester because of their difference in social class (The Love Story in Jane Eyre 1). She insisted to him that she is more than her social status, when she asked Mr. Rochester:

I tell you I must go! I retorted, roused to something like passion. "Do you think I can stay to become nothing to you? Do you think I am an automaton?—a machine without feeling? And can bear to have my morsel of bread snatched from my lips, and my drop of living water dashed from my cup? Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong!--I have as much soul as you,--and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you. I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom, conventionalities, nor even of mortal flesh; it is my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God's feet, equal, as we are! (Jane Eyre 291; Kern 10)

However, the novel ends with Jane gained an inheritance which elevated her to the class of gentry. Meanwhile, Rochester's loss of property, limb, and eyesight diminished his superior position. Thus, they do not get married while they are from different classes in society (Kern 10; Rubik 400). Bossche excellently portrayed Charlotte's technique of ending her novel:

[...] novels like *Jane Eyre* (1847) take as a given the principle that a marriage based solely on financial or class considerations cannot be happy. The basic problem in *Jane Eyre* is that, while Jane has declared that in “spirit” she and Rochester are “equal”, marriage-as a social, not merely spiritual, institution-favors Rochester, who is older, wealthier and better connected. Bronte attempts to solve this dilemma by changing the social relations between the two: Jane inherits a fortune that gives her economic autonomy; Rochester, maimed in a fire that destroys his country house, thus loses his physical and psychological advantages (qtd in. Dane13).

### **3.4.3 Theme of Gender inequality**

In the passage below, Bronte, through the character of the heroine Jane appeared her feminist view which Adrienne Rich described it as ‘Charlotte Bronte’s feminist manifesto’:

Women are supposed to be very calm generally; but women feel as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex (Shirley xii; *Jane Eyre* 123).

This view comes from Charlotte Bronte, who expressed her feeling on the lower status of women, in mid-nineteenth century England society, and the need for female equality with male and should be viewed as more important human (Plasa and Ring87).

Bronte frequently had drawn the importance of the equality between women and men. In the end of the novel, Jane and Rochester meet on more equal situation, when Rochester became blind and Jane returned to him as an independent woman. She appeared their equality in passage:

What, Jane! Are you an independent woman? A rich woman?

If you won't let me live with you, I can build a house of my own close up to your door, and you may come and sit in my parlor when you want company of an evening.

But as you are rich, Jane, you have now, no doubt, friends who will look after you, and not suffer you to devote yourself to a blind lameter like me? (Jane Eyre 501- 502; De Groot 06).

So that Jane achieved her dream and became Rochester's equal. This is One of the most obvious reasons to believe that the novel is feminist through Jane's wish to be seen equal to Rochester.

At the close of her fiction, Bronte choose the happy ending with equal marriage for her character of Jane, she took the superiority position in her marriage. The last chapter opened with Jane wrote "Reader, I married him" rather than "Reader, he married me" there is a great difference between those sentences which indicate Charlotte's rebellious feminism, that demonstrated the big change that occurred in Jane's life where she finally obtained freedom, equal marriage, and happy home (Regis 90).

### 3.5 Conclusion

Without a doubt, we can refer to Charlotte Bronte as one of the strong modern feminist feminine writers, in a Victorian time when woman was considered just as a fragile creature, as we have seen in her biography, Charlotte Bronte bravely went against the Victorian male-dominated society that didn't entirely accept her as woman which was clear in her writings, as we have found in *Jane Eyre*, where she freely express her stifled ideals about the oppressed woman in her words through her two main characters and major themes which included lots of phases of charlotte's feminism.

## Chapter four: Masculin Feminism in Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*

### 4.1 Introduction

During the Augustan age (1689 – 1750), Robert Burton said that England was “a Paradise for women and hell for horses” (Burton 1384). This saying give a wrong image about paradise where It seems like a great place to live, until you go beyond the words and realize that women and horses are both living as it was provided for them by men, their masters. Treating their women with lenity and indulgence was something to be proud by doing it, but they were even more proud of taken all their authorities, domestic and otherwise. Women did not participate in discussion with men who usually held it ladies left the scene. The terms like ‘the fair sex’, ‘the soft sex’ and ‘the gentle sex’ were the image designated of the relationship between both sexes; the fragile and week woman needs to be protected by the strong man, which create a relation of absolute subordination of most women. The superiority of men and their ownership of women is an act terribly supported by English laws and social traditions (Kinhead-Weekes 85). Women were lost between history, laws and traditions.

No woman had any rights in the old private law with its emphasis on women's role as domestic and dependent rather than self sufficient and that woman could be effective only with sentiment and feeling rather than reason and judgment. The law was clear: as the famous legal philosopher Sir William Blackstone put it: “In marriage husband and wife are one person and that person is the husband ” (443). Her position is considered always lower than the male partner. The only profession women could have, in this time, was that of a wife and mother; as Blease said: “A respectable woman was nothing but the potential mother of children” (7). Women in England spent considerable time with their children of both sexes between birth and the age of five or six. The literate women often took the responsibility for teaching the alphabet and reading books and stories to the girls and boys in

their households (Blease 1-3). There were no large difference between a lady in her home and her servant.

#### **4.2 Feminism in the biography of the author**

Samuel Richardson was born in a poor family contained nine children in the midland of Derbyshire in England. In 1700, the family moved to East London, by that time Samuel enjoyed a brief education. The young Samuel wanted to be a clergyman but being his father a mere joiner could not pay for the university education that was a requirement for ordination in the Church of England. The elder Richardson allowed Samuel to choose his future profession, and the youth decided to be a printer. In 1706, Samuel started his apprenticeship for seven years. He took his own education in hand while his master grudged him for each hour spent away from work, but he was soon to be one of the great autodidacts of English literature. He read widely in order to compensate with non-traditional learning, which appeared in his writing that tends to favor colloquial and vernacular speech, spontaneity over ingenuity, sincerity over irony. Richardson married his master's daughter, Martha Wilde, in 1721. Their marriage was characterized by the loss of all their six children who would live past the age of three. Soon after Martha died in 1731, Richardson married Elizabeth Leake, who bore six more children, with four surviving girls to adulthood. Raising four young ladies could be the key of his incredible women. He became official printer for the House of Commons and printer of the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society (essentially England's Academy of Sciences). His peers in the printing business elected him Master of the Stationers' Company (Jocelyn XI-XII). This fact is an evidence of his sincerity and good work.

As a printer, Richardson naturally had extensive contact with the book-selling world. He showed familiarity with the literary marketplace which led many booksellers to consult

him on the quality of their literary works. Richardson was a prolific writer of letters, and his reputation led two booksellers to approach him in 1739, asking him to produce a volume of model letters. Richardson addressed a number of fictional situations in letters written to and for Particular Friends, including of the idea of an attractive servant-girls subject to plots against their virtue (Barbauld XXIV-CCXII; Katan 365-373). In the later stages of his life, he suffered from a nervous ailment that may have been Parkinson's disease. He died of a stroke at age 71 (Barbauld CCXII). He lives as warrior for his ideology and stayed as a legend in the history of English literature.

Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* is differentiated from other novels of the time period by a commitment to avoid the improbable and ultimate satisfaction of wish fulfillment through a psychophysical epistolary study. A critical analysis of the epistolary form used throughout the novel will offer insight to the themes in this classic Cinderella story, the dream of exceeding one's social class while maintaining integrity and moral values (Riviro 18).

Richardson uses the style of women in fiction, which was a popular theme in eighteenth century literature. Richardson portrays Pamela Andrews as the model woman who maintains her morals despite her struggles with sexual temptations and continual advances from her Master and Squire, Mr. B. She writes home asking her mother and father for advices. Those ideas and feelings were born in Richardson mind in a personal way, they are produced from a heart of a father of four girls and a respectful husband and a good son for a good woman (Watson 60; Williams 174,187). Every human act should be born from personal experience and real event to get directly to the heart.

Richardson was sensitive to the criticism and ridicule, which influenced his many revisions of the novel. These changes were in response to a widespread critique that held that a young woman of admirable character should speak in a way that commands admiration; as one of Richardson's correspondents put it, "The Language is not altogether unexceptionable,

but in several Places sinks below the Idea we are constrained to form of the Heroine who writes it” (Keymer and Sabor 29). The result is that by the time Richardson was finished tinkering with his explosive first novel, it had become a smoother, more polished, and often less challenging text (McCarthy and Kraft 360). After all changing the style of writing does not mean the changing the idea because it could reach further with the new technique.

### **4.3 Feminism in the characters**

The epistolary novel is a form in which the plot is advanced through the use of letters or journal entries by its characters. Samuel Richardson knew how to use the epistolary novel to lead the reader to his characters mind and emotions and made a relationship between them.

#### **4.3.1 The character of Pamela**

Pamela is the title character and protagonist a lively, pretty, and courageous maid-servant, age 15, who is subject to the sexual advances of her master, Mr. B. after the death of Lady B, his mother, She is a devoted daughter to her impoverished parents, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, to whom she writes a prodigious number of letters and whom she credits with the moral formation that prompts her to defend her purity at all costs. Pamela tried hard to resist the sexual temptation of Mr. B. through the long passed weeks, without thinking of surrendering neither to his assaults nor to his later tenderness. Though it takes a while for her to admit it, Pamela is attracted to Mr. B. from the first, and gradually she comes to love him. They marry about halfway through the novel, and afterward Pamela’s sweetness and equipoise aid her in securing the goodwill of her new husband’s highborn friends. Pamela is a story concerning the rights of women. Furthermore not just middle to upper class women, although the lower class women that Pamela corresponds to. Even though Pamela is sole in her class structure she is more than the average poor working girl, she tranquilly portrays a strong individual that is all about her honesty as well as virtue the only things that she can

grasp onto. These traits are the just thing that Mr. B cannot take away from her attempt as he might. She is threatened for eternity with the outlook of rape, which hangs over her (Sparks 115; Williams 191). The cold war between Pamela and Mr. B was running to the top.

Pamela is indomitable to support her virtue and love of her parents' respect by not giving in to the enticement of Mr. B. The novel follows Pamela all the way through her trials and troubles. Pamela as a representation of the humiliating and the low seeing in the story of a servant girl "climbing the ladder" of social class a critical 'leveling' of propensity. She has had important collision on the novel as a literary genre, as a research in epistolary form, as a study of ethics, human in addition to particularly women's psychology, along with as a case of early concession between literature as education and literature as leisure. Pamela also served as a replica for countless later images of women whose power of character can be boiled down to their aptitude to bear by means of an intolerable husband as well as make themselves helpful by their good deeds (Williams 189; Sparks 58). For more understanding we tried to analyze the following quotations: "Indeed I am Pamela, her own self!"(Pamela 29). Pamela makes this declaration of her identity during the early incident in which Mr. B. pretends that he did not recognize her in her country clothes to confuse her and to get close to her. The incident and Pamela's reaction underscore the fact that the battle to determine who will sleep with her is another battle to identify who is Pamela: Pamela, in committing a personal set of principles which established her identity. The debate over Pamela's identity also surfaces in their disagreements, apparent in this scene, over what she should wear. The country wardrobe Pamela has selected manifests to the world her choice of honest, cheerful poverty over corrupt luxury; Mr. B., taking a break from his efforts to dress Pamela in a wardrobe befitting his mistress, seeks to adulterate the meaning of her chosen clothes by interpreting them as a mode of coquetry (Finn 26).

“And pray, said I, walking on, how came I to be his Property? What right has he in me, but such as a Thief may plead to stolen Goods? ---Why, was ever the like heard, says she! --- This is downright Rebellion, I protest!”(Pamela 68). This exchange between Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes takes place soon after Pamela’s arrival in Lincolnshire. It contains the heart of the novel’s massive appeal to the eighteenth-century public, namely its revolutionary message of personal autonomy. Pamela asserts her ownership of herself and questions Mr. B.’s right to detain her against her will; Mrs. Jewkes catches the radical assumptions implicit in Pamela’s reasoning and objects to them as the basis of “downright Rebellion.” In the end, of course, the novel’s plot does not pursue the implications of Pamela’s questions to their conclusions; indeed, it stops far short even of having her begrudge the ascendancy, after her marriage, of Mr. B. over his morally and intellectually superior wife. What with her insistently demotic speech and penchant for back talk, however, something of the insurrectionist always clings to Pamela, no matter how many shows of wifely deference she makes (Samuel Richardson’s *Fictions of Gender* 162-165).

Richardson has created Pamela as a virtuous character whose remains and essence move as one and that to refute the body unavoidably diminishes female authority. Pamela is caught flanked by class distinctions because she is poor. However; she is favored by her late Mistress and therefore has skills along with clothes above her station, she is as well caught among the moral boundaries of Mr. B and her parents Pamela is in the end transferred as of her parents to Mr. B, however she has exercised a great deal of power in this transfer (*Family Fiction* 180).She has maintained her virtue as well as used her so-called power to assent and refute at various times in the novel.

Later in the novel, however, Pamela willingly accepts Mr. B's proposal of marriage because she has fallen in love with him. Mrs. Jewkes is able to completely change her bad behaviour after knowing that Pamela, who was once a servant has turned into the mistress of

the household. Mrs. Jewkes shows her high respect and honour. As a woman and a servant, Mrs. Jewkes learns that she must put aside all her pride and feeling to comply with her master (a man) wants. To describe restrictions experienced by women, as daughters, the novel shows this in Polly Damford's character. She is Pamela's neighbour in Lincolnshire. Her father, Sir Simon Damford, has full control over her, which unfortunately, chains her freedom.

Everything is always absolutely dedicated for her father's needs. However, in opposition to Pamela, Polly has been used to this kind of condition. It was common that fathers had a full control on their households (wives and daughters). For Chase patriarchal structure applied in the 18<sup>th</sup> century created a right of preserving and increasing the patrimony. As a woman and servant, Pamela tries to keep her servitude towards Mr. B, her master. But, deep down her heart, she knows that she has a right to defend herself. The evidence is occurred when Pamela shows her confident rebellion and urge in refusing Mr. B's kiss. Although she realizes that she is not supposed to do it, she ignores the fact of not being accepted by her society than betraying something that she really believes in. She believes that she does not deserve Mr. B's bad treatment. "I would have given my life for a farthing... I lost all fear and all respect, and said, "Yes, I do, Sir, too well! Well may I forget that I am your servant, when you forget what belongs to a master"? "...You have taught me to forget myself, and what belongs to me ... by demeaning yourself, to be so free to a poor servant" (Pamela 12).

As stated previously, Pamela's self defense offends Mr. B's pride. He creates problems to scare her. Pamela always attempts to keep her servitude. However, Mr. B's rudeness ruins her patience. She feels that she has to defend herself. "Your honor knows you went too far for a master to a servant, or even to his equal; and I cannot bear it" (Pamela 15). Pamela has the courage to give her onions, something which is never done by ordinary women in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Her spirit to be different makes society, in this case represented by Mrs. Jewkes, thinks that Pamela must be watched over. Even though in the end she finds out that there is a

disagreement, related to her elegance, and she heard an opinion, that she is wrong, she keeps her own ways in running her life.

What sort of creatures must the women kind to be, do you think, to give way to such wickedness? ... What a world we live in! For it is grown more a wonder that the men are resisted, than that the women comply. This, I suppose, makes me such a Sauce-Box, and Bold-Face, and a Creature; and all because I won't be a Sauce-Box and Bold-Face indeed (Pamela19).

It is reflected through Pamela's statements that she knows exactly about her limitations but she chooses her liberty in pursuing her dreams and desires. Women at that time considered inferior with no power, but Pamela refuses to put herself in a prison and to be treated as men's objects. She rejects limiting her ability in an idea of lesser people. She creates her own ways of being free without abandoning men's positions. Later in the novel, however, as a wife, Pamela still holds what she believes. Although she is willing to place herself as a good and faithful wife for Mr. B, she still disagrees that a wife must sacrifice her life only to focus on her husband's better life. Pamela admits that a wife should be her husband's proponent; however, she is able to make a limitation that she does not want to be treated as a slave of the marriage. She continually demands having an equal position to run their household, although she knows that the society will never give approval of what she fights for (Finn 30). So she put her rules of life and went through her ideology.

Pamela in her position as a wife is considered different. She forms her own servitude with her loyalty and patience toward Mr. B without making herself as his property. There was once a time when Pamela hides her disagreements for herself, in front of Polly Darnford, to make Mr. B looks perfect. She even asks Mr. B to find another wife if she dies in giving birth. Yet, it must be noted that in here, Pamela shows her faithfulness without being at careless of

Mr. B's happiness (Finn 33-34). All of her actions are purely her own decisions and choices because nobody was forcing her to do them.

“When Mr. B's all tenderness and indulgence, and requires me nothing, that I can have material objection to, ought I not to oblige him? Can I have a will that is not his? Or would it be excusable if I had? All little matters I cheerfully give up” (Pamela 102). Pamela's self-respect could change Mr. B into a better person. For Lady Davers, Mr. B's sister, she thinks that her brother is a very complicated man to live with. She believed that it is an impossible thing for someone to turn him into someone better, but she finds out that Pamela is capable in doing it. Pamela has a control over her husband, something that other wives in the 18<sup>th</sup> century will never have. So in this case, lady Davers salutes Pamela because she achieved what no women could have in her time. About education, Pamela thinks that an educated wife is a perfect supporting partner for her husband. A man will have a great marriage if he allows his wife to get education. This has become one of the reasons why she maintains to be more outspoken in comparison to other women of her time. Pamela knows that men and women consider her as a strange person; however, she does not want to waste her capabilities and talents to be used only as an ordinary wife. To show her efforts, she learns more of writing and speaking foreign languages to become an equal partner of Mr. B. When she receives a gift of being a mother, Pamela shows her refusal in not only doing only the basic duties of mothers, such as giving birth and being a tool for 'milking' but also She wants to be an educator for her child because she thinks that basic education come from mothers. In this case, Mr. B, as a representation of men, thinks that Pamela's will is awkward when she said : “I think a mother ought, if she can, to be the nurse to her own children [...] Education of my own sex; ... that the mothers might teach the child this part of science, and that part of instruction..” (Pamela 187). Pamela places her loyalty and servitude to her first child, a son. She sacrifices herself to be apart of both intellectual and emotional developments of him. A

big consequence must be taken later when she realizes Mr. B has an affair. Pamela consciously accepts that she only owns two choices, and she chooses her son: “If he takes from me my Billy, who must, after all, be his heir, and gives him to the cruel Countess, he will at once burst asunder the string of my heart! ... If you tear from me my husband, he is in his own disposal, and I cannot help it: ... But this I am sure of, that my child and my life must go together!” (Pamela 487).

Compared to other women in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Pamela is special. When she reaches three stages of her life, as a woman, a wife, and also a mother, she is able to keep her servitude (to her master, husband and son) without ignoring her own desires. If she disagrees and has opinions or ideas on certain circumstances, she immediately will freely express them by abandoning her fear and hesitations. In this context, Pamela's new attitude is a concept of a 'free to express' woman. She has the character of a woman who has courage and willingness to freely express all her feelings, opinions, and disagreements in front of people. She bravely shows her logical reasons to defend herself without underestimating men.

As a gentle woman who lives in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Pamela is not a 'man hater'. She is a type of woman who happily runs her life without forgetting her dreams and desires. Pamela's abilities in showing her faithfulness and honour to men, and at the same time holding her urges, by defending herself with all her brilliant and reasonable reasons without letting herself to be men's slave. With this argumentation, therefore, it makes Pamela included as an example of a 'free to express' woman, not a radical feminist (Grosvenor 91).

#### **4.3.2 The character of Mr. B.**

He is a country squire, 25 or 26 years of age, with properties in Bedfordshire, Lincolnshire, Kent, and London. He is Pamela's employer, pursuer, and eventual husband. Richardson has censored Mr. B.'s name in order to protect the pretense of non-fiction, but

scholars have conjectured based on manuscripts that the novelist had “Brandon” in mind. Mr. B. has rakish tendencies, and he attempts to compel Pamela’s reciprocation of his sexual attentions, even to the point of imprisoning her in his Lincolnshire estate. His fundamental manners prevent him from making any of his assaults on her, however, and under her influence he reforms in the middle of the novel. Mr. B's wrestles with his gloominess tendencies as well as his coercion to possess a girl from a lower social class (Finn 28).

First, as women, they were positioned under men's authorities. This is because they were born with the obligations to serve men. In fact, Rossides and Bede wrote that the social theorists regard women as inferior. Women also cannot escape of being the creation of men's pleasure that can be used, cared for, and guided, but not to be taken seriously because women were subordinate to men (165; 73). The idea is shown clearly in the novel when Mr. B's pride, as a master, is offended after Pamela, his servant, refuses his kiss: “[...] You won't, hussy! Said he: 'Do you know whom you speak to?' Go, take a walk in the garden, and don't go in till your crying is over; and I charge you to say nothing of what is past, and all shall be well and I'll forgive you [...] Be secret, I charge you, Pamela, and don't go in yet, as I told you” (Pamela 9).

The above excerpt of Mr. B's, which views women, as submissive and servile slaves and servants, made Mr. B confident into automatically thinking that Pamela will never refuse his kiss (Sparks 58). “[T]here is such a pretty Air of Romance, as you relate them, in your Plots, and my Plots, that I shall be better directed in what manner to wind up the Catastrophe of the pretty Novel” (Pamela 125). The latter excerpt is one of Mr. B.'s flippant justifications of his desire to read Pamela’s letters in full. He often accuses her of fictionalizing events when she recounts them in her letters to her parents; whatever merit there may be in that charge (and Mr. B. never credibly disputes anything in her accounts), his trivialization of Pamela’s “Plots” to escape him reveals how poorly he understands her at this point in the

novel. Mr. B. also likes to dismiss Pamela's investment in her sexual virtue by suggesting that she is taking her cues from literary traditions that exalt female purity unrealistically; elsewhere, he imagines her "echoing to the Woods and Groves her piteous Lamentations for the Loss of her fantastical Innocence, which the romantic Idiot makes such a work about" (Pamela 88). Pamela, though, is no Don Quixote: she never glamorizes her danger or employs the hackneyed romantic language that Mr. B. puts in her mouth. Ironically, Mr. B. is the unrealistic one in this scenario, believing so faithfully in the cliché of the sexually privileged squire that he cannot recognize Pamela's very different vision of their relationship (Williams 190).

Pamela's first letter relates how Mr. B is very kind to her after her mistress's death. Initially, she finds his solicitude endearing and does not doubt his honour when he tells her, "I will take care of you all, my good maidens; and for you, Pamela...for my dear mother's sake, I will be a friend to you, and you shall take care of my linen" (Pamela 25). Both his speech and his behaviour paint him as a noble-minded master, aware of the responsibility connected to his station and well worthy of his position. Pamela would have done well in this situation to have read the *DOL*, which is aimed largely at "the fair sex, whose mistakes are the most dangerous" (Oxberry 267). She may have come more wary of Mr. B's commitment to her and she runs across the entry when he says, "I will be a friend to you" (Pamela 2), a friend: this character, from a man to a lady, is currently no more than a mask worn by a lover to hide his real desires. The women should not have any friendship with a male that may possibly become a lover. They love their danger which does not attend to this advice (Grosvener 91; Cooner 307). This point of view is of the writer through his work.

#### 4.4 Feminism in the Themes

A novel's theme is the main idea that the writer expresses. But it always depends on the reader's understanding of the work. Themes are considered as the standing point of the story. Here we find the theme of love, social class division and gender inequality which went with our heroine to achieve her identity within the darkness of the historical period of 18<sup>th</sup> century.

##### 4.4.1 Theme of Love and Family

The novel is a love story, and Pamela is the fulcrum on which the story turns. One day, the story centers on familial love, which Pamela exchanges with her parents; the next day, on false love, or lust, which the squire attempts to inflict on Pamela; another day, on brotherly love with Mrs. Jervis; and on another day, she experienced the true romantic love with the squire. It makes the squire give freedom to the Rev and Arthur Williams from jail which enables Mr. B to correct his past wrongs. And, finally, it enables Pamela to embrace the squire's illegitimate daughter (Family Fiction 16).

We rose on the idea that love, among other factors, can circumnavigate issues of class. For an interesting article on 18th Century class issues, Pamela herself is straddling the line between two classes, and for that matter, two cultures: she was raised poor, with only her honesty, and has spent her time, from her early teens, working as a maid to a Lady who saw and treated her as far more than a servant, giving her training in areas of finery and nice clothes. Pamela is outfitted for a smooth transition into life as an upper class woman by class crossing marriage (Keymer and Sabor 134). "Thus foolishly dialogued I with my Heart; and yet all the time this Heart is Pamela" (Pamela 136). Pamela pens this observation soon after her dismissal from Lincolnshire; she has triggered her long-delayed recognition of her love for Mr. B. In a crucial distinction, "Pamela" is not her head but her heart: her love for Mr. B.

has been no weaker for her ignorance of it because the truth of her emotions trumps whatever she knows or does not know intellectually. Even more generally, this identification of Pamela's heart with her deepest self is part of the novel's statement of the dignity of instinct and emotion. As one critic has put it, Richardson presents love as (in Pamela's words) an "irresistible Impulse"; though it may require control, its basic promptings are to be heeded. Mr. B. originally went about his pursuit of Pamela in the wrong way, but his instinct to secure her as a mate was the right one, and now Pamela, in returning to him, will respond to the same very elementary promptings (Family Fiction 119). "I know not how it came, or when it begun; but creep, creep it has, like a Thief upon me; and before I knew what the Matter was, it look'd like Love" (Pamela 135). Shortly after Mr. B. dismisses her angrily from Lincolnshire, Pamela marvels at the progress that her feelings for him have made, all unbeknownst to her. Up to this point, the story has followed Pamela's efforts to discern, as a matter of self-preservation, the content of the hearts of those around her, so that she might know who could be with or against her. That project has been thorny enough, but Richardson now confronts her with the even greater challenge of knowing the content of her own heart. As it turns out, Pamela practiced her own enemy toward Mr. B. Whether her acting counter to her genuine feeling makes Pamela a hypocrite, as has so often been charged, or whether it simply makes her lacking in self-knowledge (Family Fiction 149; Keymer and Sabor 137). It is a matter for individual readers to decide.

#### **4.4.2 Theme of Class division**

One of the great social facts of Richardson's day was the intermingling of the aspirant middle class with the gentry and aristocracy. The eighteenth century was a golden age of social climbing and thereby of satire (primarily in poetry), but Richardson was the first novelist to turn his serious regard on class difference and class tension. Pamela's class status

is ambiguous at the start of the novel. She is on good terms with the other Bedfordshire servants, and the pleasure she takes in their respect for her shows that she does not consider herself above them; her position as a lady's maid, however, has led to her acquiring refinements of education and manner that unfit her for the work of common servants: when she attempts to scour a plate, her soft hand develops a blister. Moreover, Richardson does some fudging with respect to her origins when he specifies that her father is an educated man who was not always a peasant but once ran a school (Williams 189).

If this hedging suggests latent class snobbery on Richardson's part, however, the novelist does not fail to insist that those who receive privileges under the system bear responsibilities also, and correspondingly those on the lower rungs of the ladder are entitled to claim rights of their superiors. Thus, in the early part of the novel, Pamela emphasizes that Mr. B., in harassing her, violates his duty to protect the social inferiors under his care; after his reformation in the middle of the novel, she repeatedly lauds the "Godlike Power" of doing good that is the special pleasure and burden of the wealthy. Whether Richardson's stress on the reciprocal obligations that characterize the harmonious social order expresses genuine concern for the working class, or whether it is simply an insidious justification of an inequitable power structure, is a matter for individual readers to decide in protecting herself from her male master. In the 1700s the European culture gave all the advantage to males of the upper-class in society. A pretty servant girl was easy prey for a wealthy master who took a fancy to her, for he could use his money and power to entice her or sexually harass her. By changing his method of treating Pamela from considering her a woman rather than a sexual object, he confesses to her by his love while his sister opposes this relationship with Pamela. Yet in two interesting passages, the reader can see the complex situation Pamela has found herself in, as a result of her lowly birth and elevated training. On page 53 of Pamela, the

Master's sister and friends fuss over Pamela's beauty (Williams 174; Kinkead-Weakes 37-39).

The Aristocratic lady was the Lady of a family like this to whom Pamela grew close, starting her dance between two classes. Pamela challenged class structure by proving a woman of lowly birth could possess or learn the traits of a gentlewoman. So beautiful, is she, that one woman comments, "she must be better descended than you have told me" (Pamela 26), an indication that beauty, and by extension all things good, follows bloodlines. Yet earlier Pamela declares that not only is her Master rude and not worthy of "Gentlemen", but also that: "if I was the Lady of Birth, and he would offer to be rude first, as he has twice done to poor me, I don't know whether I would have him" (Pamela 47). In these passages, Pamela has done two important things: displayed that beauty is not restricted to the aristocracy, and declared that gentlemen should behave far better, and gentlewomen should refuse to marry them if they don't. In these ways Pamela challenges the class structure (Keymer and Sabor 6; Family Fiction 119). "All the Good I can do, is but a poor third-hand Good; for my dearest Master himself is but the Second-hand. GOD, the All-gracious, the All-good, the All-bountiful, the All-mighty, and the All-merciful GOD, is the First: To HIM, therefore, be all the Glory!" (Pamela 277). This passage, one of her final reflections in the novel, is Pamela's effort to inoculate herself against the possibility of vanity and pride in her new position. Her propensity for crediting God with all positive developments and her own accomplishments has been a consistent feature of Pamela's letters and journal, but the present passage incorporates her customary piety with some of Richardson's views on the social order. The theme of what the powerful owe to the powerless emerges, as what Pamela claims to value in her new life is not the material advantages accruing to her exalted condition but rather "the Good that [she] can do" for others. Also apparent is a distinctly hierarchical conception of authority: Pamela's husband, by virtue of being her husband, merits her deference as a

steward of the authority descending from God; conservative sentiments such as this one serve to qualify the novel's revolutionary advocacy of self-determination by declining to translate it into political action (Kinkead-weakes 119)

#### **4.4.3 Theme of Sexual inequality**

Sexual inequality was a common theme of eighteenth-century social commentators and political philosophers: certain religious groups were agitating for universal suffrage, and as John Locke who argued for universal education. Though Richardson's decision to have Pamela fall in love with her would-be rapist has rankled many advocates of women's rights in recent years, he remains in some senses a feminist writer due to his sympathetic interest in the hopes and concerns of women. He allows Pamela to comment acerbically on the hoary theme of the sexual double standard: "those Things don't disgrace Men that ruin poor Women, as the World goes" (Ballantyne 80; Keymer and Sabor 78).

The eighteenth-century society was not right world for women: a wife had no legal existence without her husband, and as Jocelyn Harris notes, Pamela in marrying Mr. B. commits herself irrevocably to a man whom she hardly knows and who has not been notable for either his placid temper or his steadfast monogamy; Pamela's private sarcasms after her marriage, then, register subtly Richardson's appropriate misgivings about matrimony as a reward for virtue. Perhaps above all, however, Richardson's sympathy for the feminine view of things emerges in his presentation of certain contrasts between the feminine and masculine psyches. Pamela's psychological subtlety counters Mr. B.'s simplicity, her emotional refinement counters his crudity, and her perceptiveness defeats his callousness, with the result that Mr. B. must give up his masculine, aggressive persona and embrace instead the civilizing feminine values of his new wife (The board of trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University 280).

“O Sir! My Soul is of equal Importance with the Soul of a Princess; though my Quality is inferior to that of the meanest Slave” (Pamela 85). This exclamation, which Pamela makes in the course of a letter to Mr. Williams, expresses the radical statement at the heart of Richardson’s novel, namely that the moral life of the individual possesses an absolute value that transcends social distinctions. Mr. Williams, being a clergyman and thereby a moralist, is more receptive to this argument than are any of the other characters in the book, at least until Mr. B. undergoes his conversion. The aesthetic corollary of this axiom, of course, is the literary value of a story that dramatizes the fate of a soul on the bottom of the social scale; behind Pamela, then, one may detect Richardson justifying his choice of a country servant-girl as the focus of his serious moral and artistic regard (Keymer and Sabor 6).

#### 4.5 Conclusion

Written in the voice of its low-born heroine, Pamela is not only a work of pioneering psychological complexity, but also a compelling and provocative study of power and its abuse. Richardson proved that he is a feminist at that time by his defending and understanding of women. He built the ideology of feminism from the simple element he got at the time where it was not allowed even to think about. Richardson was a pioneer feminist and he could transcribe this meaning by exploiting throughout his work *Pamela*.

## Chapter Five: General Conclusion

In fact, this substantial paper derived from comparing and contrasting the main images of feminism in *Pamela* and *Jane Eyre*. In many ways, this latter, is frequently so comparable to Richardson's *Pamela*, and there are many sayings claiming that *Jane Eyre* might have modeled its feminist facets on the feminist story *Pamela*. Its female heroine, effective actions, feminist themes, strong deeds, womanhood hardships, and the pleased ending, these things all add up for old romantic *Pamela* fiction. Thus, in this last chapter, we have drawn Bronte's *Jane Eyre* into the world of 18<sup>th</sup> century books, with an eye to their temporal and sexual difference from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century: representatives from the Augustan (male novelist as Samuel Richardson) to Victorian (female novelist as Charlotte Bronte) era. Then we have chosen the most important feminist elements which are related to these aspects: the both authors' biographies, their characterizations, and then their themes, for analyzing where the aforementioned fictions, under our study, do converge and diverge. How much the Victorian woman of Bronte was nearly influenced by Richardson's *Pamela*? How do both female protagonists possess similar and opposite feminist manners towards the actions of their masters? What are Richardson' and Bronte's feminist attitudes towards their feminist women of Pamela' and Jane' point of views? And ultimately, how far in feminism's soul is the previous female Victorian author from the late male Augustan writer?

According to our study of feminism in the biographies of both writers, Samuel Richardson and Charlotte Bronte, we have found many areas of interest. It is well known that our authors apparently are from different gender – Richardson is masculine novelist and Bronte is feminine – yet, the both artists can, without doubt, be called some of the greatest feminist writers of all times. It is also remarkable that, both are English-born writers and from middle-class, they spent all their times in Great Britain. However, they lived in two greatest different periods in English history, the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Although the Augustan

and the Victorian ages were different, this latter was considered as an extension of the previous one of 18<sup>th</sup> century, because they nearly shared the same society's characteristics, which were related to the low status of a woman in the male-dominated society, the different social classes, as well as sexual inequality, as we have seen in the previous chapters (3-4).

Absolutely, all these harsh circumstances women lived, substantially, affected our authors, especially their feminist views and works, because both novelists rose within families the majority of whose members were females. In Brontë's case, as we have observed, she had four sisters and she subsisted all her life with them. However, Richardson lived with his four daughters and lovely wife, all the rest of his time. From our current study, we found both writers themselves, certainly, viewed or might live this woman's rough life in those periods. Because Charlotte Brontë was sexually feminine, she herself experienced like this hard life.

More importantly, before continuing our talk, we would like to indicate directly, in this research, something so amazing and the biggest one is that how could a masculine author like Richardson, in that period, penetrate the inner of woman and had the ability to be deeply sympathetic with women and to understand their feelings and sufferings. In talking about Richardson's influence as a male, many argue that a man, according to his sex, can never be a feminist writer because he didn't experience what it was like to be a woman and suffer in a men-dominated society. But Richardson could be as a brave male feminist and a good listener and observer in women's society. In a way, as a man inside a woman's body, he could experience a woman's environment, through his family including his daughters and wife, and then extend to a larger level of his community. With this, he could be sensitive to women's feelings and sufferings.

The main question to ask is, what about the literary type of their works? Simple as they are, both became two of the most lovable feminist novelists. Throughout their lives, both

writers greatly contributed to the English feminist literature and have written lots of dateless feminist works that reflect women's difficulties. All the same, Richardson and Bronte would not be silent; they wanted to choose a searching style of writing and the more effective feminist elements that can serve their major goal for advocating woman's rights which is a great example of their feminism. Alongside, their allegorical writings became some of the best novels in the long history of the English literature, even in this modern time; readers have taken those selection fictions to their hearts as a wonderful feminist works. As we have previously viewed, Bronte had created many finest feminist novels, her most celebrated being *Jane Eyre*, *Shirley*, and *Villette*. In the other side, Richardson, as a cultured man had positive values, who couldn't do violence against women; on the contrary, he had tried strongly to support his daughters, couples or all the women around him by his best feminist writings like *Pamela* and *Clarissa*.

Concerning our preceding study of masculine and feminine feminism in the characters of Richardson's *Pamela* and Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, we would first like to portray, how Jane, as a female character, is a total similar to the figure of Pamela by Richardson. It is significant that both Pamela and Jane Eyre were feminine names, they were chosen as titles of Richardson' and Bronte' novels respectively. Also both Pamela Andrews and Jane Eyre stood out as the title characters and the central heroines in those selection novels. Besides, both are narrators, in *Jane Eyre*, like this feminist technique allowed Bronte to generate a women world. Even male writer such as Richardson had employed female narrators of Pamela to empower his feminist attitude.

Beyond this, however, we have recognized many similarities either in the minds, behaviors, or fates of the two heroines. Their thoughts and actions were diametrically similar in the purpose of bringing out great feminist effects. When looking at Jane and Pamela, we find the personalities of those female protagonists are almost parallel; especially the idea of a

poor and self-confident girl which both they shared. In addition, the two heroines portrayed a character of a young girl's progress, a dislocated, oppressed and active child maturing into a powerful woman, who became educated and worked as a servant- Jane as a governess but Pamela as a maid-servant- in rich families.

Unfortunately, there, both women exposed to a masculine vigor which pervades the books. Rochester, Bronte's hero, who tricked Jane by hiding his unsuccessful first marriage, is similar to Richardson's Mr. B. Both men attempted to seduce their servants in order to achieve their sexual goals. Moreover, both male protagonists, Pamela's Mr. B and Jane's Rochester, were rich, rogue, sturdy, and dangerous. A serious action, we found in both innocent heroines, as a melodrama raising sympathy and suspense through their men's unwarranted persecution on them and both women began to embody the victim's role that male and female authors like Richardson and Bronte had created from Pamela and Jane. However, we have noted that both heroines, who, by the force of their characters and the strength of their principles, resist their masters' immoral attempts to seduce them. One of the strongest feminist lines in Jane is a spiritual Pamela, when she won a great victory over the man she loved who became converted and ultimately married her. With this deferred cheerful conclusion that crowns good female attitude and good feminist deed, the practice of strong feminist aspects as autonomy and self-esteem become a wish-fulfilling principle.

Furthermore, we have looked that Pamela Andrews and Jane Eyre both struggle against several of factors to become active women acting for their own happiness above all. Each heroine opposed her own hardships with personal property. In Richardson's novel, Pamela was a poor girl before she gained a modest accumulation of money and dresses confiscated. Even in *Jane Eyre*, the heroine was a busy orphan before she inherited some fortune. Plus, for making a companionate marriage one based on love, each faced severe decisions. Pamela

refused a union and preferred her safe from unwelcome assault, in the other hand; Jane also rejected a tie and chose her independence from unequal marriage.

However, even Jane really repeated Pamela's story, so invited just such a contrast. At first glance, Jane seemed a more persevering heroine than her 18<sup>th</sup> century counterpart Pamela, she was like Pamela figure with all the sympathy she could draw through being ill-treated but without her fairness. Unlike Pamela, who depended on her beauty and sweetness manner for attracting her hero, Jane relied on her intellect more than her appearance. Although the hypersensitivity of Jane as a servant to her master, she was completely conscious that she was born to adore him and refused Pamela's fleeing from her master whatever time he move toward her, this indicates that Bronte's heroine is not feeble as Pamela.

Acknowledging, along with many other studies, the significant parallels between *Pamela*' and *Jane Eyre*'s themes assert that there are a lots enlightening parallel. Both male and female writers are reworking themes popularized in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, which had fantastic feminist features that allowed them to develop their opinions about their society by heightening the sense of romantic feminism in their themes of love, marriage, independence, gender, and class struggle.

In spite the two aforementioned fictions are different in many ways; both transformed some facts of society. They clearly portrayed the issues of love and marriage in male-dominated society and how rich can raise certain people's positions. Both great English male and female novelists agreed to idealize marriage as a pleased conclusion of all couples. In *Pamela*, marriage means a working class woman's promotion to a great wealthy family, but in *Jane Eyre* it means a woman's complement to herself. Richardson's heroine, played great role as a sentimental woman through her courtship, and got economic standing. Unlike Pamela, out of her courtship, Jane achieved her financial independence which made her a more active

and independent woman than Pamela, but both heroines through courtship, obtained pleased marriages.

True, Richardson and Bronte both agreed to express their protest, through *Pamela* and *Jane Eyre*, about the social hierarchy differences in England during the Augustan and Victorian periods. In large measure, the variation of the social ranks between the female protagonist and her master was treated in both novels. Frequently in their works as servants, Pamela and Jane feel inferior and both angrily hated their master's obligations and the fair women's looks of contempt they meet. There is surely something of both authors' own scorn against the gentry's traditions, which clearly appeared in their works, when they drawn their heroines just as a fine toy for their employers who, too, seduce them and both servants were as victims of the working class syndrome. In addition, in both novels, we found as a battle of lower class against upper one, which created a true meaning of paranoia of the leading class for the authority. But despite all of these difficult situations, Pamela and Jane stood strongly side by side and made similar promotion in their life by marrying their heroes. Both novelists portrayed a marriage as a real means that bridged social ranks, in which a scion slave can climb into the status of the gentry. For example; as we previously saw both heroes of Mr. B and Mr. Rochester were from the gentry but Pamela and Jane were from the working class and through their aristocratic marriage the space between them was narrow.

As we intend to argue, both feminist novels of *Pamela* and *Jane Eyre* were as images of feminist anger about a society of sexual inequality. In a word, both our male and female novelists paid attention to the issue of female's position in the men-dominated society. In 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as we have seen, women were humble. So, as poor women, Pamela and Jane couldn't authentically have equality with their heroes. Additionally, in those novels, Richardson and Bronte search for equal and honest marriage. The imagery is telling, in the time when woman have no social status, Pamela and Jane as courageous females could gain

equality with males. Despite they were poor women, they weren't compliant at all, and they had high moral principles, especially in their virtues. Domesticity in feminist works such as *Pamela* and *Jane Eyre* empowers women's gender, Pamela's puritan bourgeois mores overcome Mr. B's patrician immoral slackness, and before she marries Mr. B., she proved herself his equal by showing her moral standing that balances if not exceeds his financial and physical supremacy. Similarly, in Bronte's case, Jane didn't accept Mr. Rochester's marriage proposal only after equalizing their positions, when he became feeble and she could prove her financial and morality superiority over him.

In between the biographies of the male author of Samuel Richardson and the female novelist of Charlotte Bronte, as we have demonstrated, they converged in using the same main weapon to advocate woman's rights and articulate their own feminist philosophies and assert their own feelings, thoughts, viewpoints, and attitudes which were deeply embodied on both *Jane Eyre* and *Pamela* through the depth of their effective characterizations and feminist themes. However, we have noted, between lines, a few traits or characteristics that they diverged.

Although Bronte's usage of the Richardson's old version of *Pamela* within the story of *Jane Eyre*, as we have seen that the two stories are more parallel, she skillfully kept some unique feminist symbolism for her own best feminist work. Certainly, that why *Jane Eyre* was strength feminist tract than *Pamela*, may be because of the different of our writers' gender. Though Richardson was deeply sympathizing with oppressed woman and played a valuable role in expressing the feminine voice in a very strong feminist manner through his work, but still the female voice of the Victorian Bronte remained more powerful than him, because she is a woman and she herself experienced what does it mean woman's sufferings, oppressions, and her low status this is confirmed in many of her letters and literary works. As mentioned previously, *Jane Eyre* was obviously considered more resemble to the

autobiography of Bronte's life, she write of what she have seen, heard, felt, suffered as woman, this may be the strong reason that made Bronte's *Jane Eyre* strong feminist novel than the former of *Pamela*. Understandable, Richardson just saw or felt the sufferings of woman around him, he didn't experience himself the feminine oppression, and *Pamela*, in fact, was just one of the true stories he profoundly affected.

Undeniably, such a difference in sex is not definitely the real reason because, Indeed, in our life we may find many women who experienced themselves what does it mean woman's sufferings as Bronte ,but they couldn't express their feelings. However, masculine author more sensitive and tolerant as Richardson, had the valor to balance the society, he could do that, he was trying to participate in every women's thoughts and actions and to enter inside them, and by doing so, he sees as they see, feels as they feel or more, and expresses most woman's inner feelings against inequality in gender and status. In essence, this is why he was and still is one of the greatest feminist novelists in our days. Actually, Richardson's novels were considered one of the wonderful primary feminist books throughout the history of English literature. In most cases, we have observed that, despite Richardson is a male writer, he was able to be not just a feminist but more than that, he could reach the top of the magnificent literary feminist works which a good many female novelists couldn't. But unfortunately for him, he was compared, in this thesis, with the greatest female feminist writer of Charlotte Bronte, may be this is the true reason that reduced his feminist strength and created a small distance in the feminist expressions' power between them. Of course, as we have found, our female writer was the rarest of all powers. In other words, Bronte was not as any woman or any feminine authors. As we have awaked that she is unique more sensitive, fervent, imaginative, maternal, and stranger to the emotion with an independent spirit woman before novelist, surely, that what made her more strong in her expressions, she is strong than any male writer and even female writer who lived either in her time or before and even after

that time. From this notion, no feminist writer can stand beside her even if he is the strong feminist male writer of Samuel Richardson himself.

In the last analysis, far from all of those few differences, we conclude that not all feminist literary works were written by feminine authors. In other words, being feminist author was neither related to the gender of the writer nor limited only in the woman's sphere; even a male can be a feminist writer beside females or more; that is the focus of this thesis.

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