

ATILIM UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
ENGLISH CULTURE AND LITERATURE MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMME

THE QUEST FOR HAPPINESS AND FREEDOM IN
GEORGE ELIOT'S *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*
AND EMILY BRONTË'S *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

MASTER'S THESIS

Aybike KELEŞ

Ankara-2015

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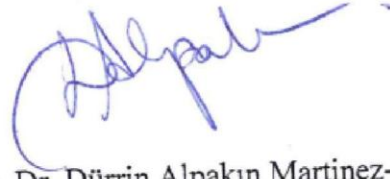
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KABUL VE ONAY

Aybike Keleş tarafından hazırlanan "The Quest For Happiness and Freedom in George Eliot's *The Mill On The Floss* and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*" başlıklı bu çalışma 24.06.2015 tarihinde yapılan savunma sonucunda oybirliği ile başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Ana Bilim Dalında yüksek lisans tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.



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Aybike KELEŞ

ÖZ

KELEŞ, Aybike. George Eliot'ın *Kıyıdağı Değirmen* ve Emily Brontë'nin *Uğultulu Tepeler* adlı Romanlarında Mutluluk ve Özgürlük Arayışı, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2015.

Bu tezin amacı, Eliot'ın *Kıyıdağı Değirmen* ve Emily Brontë'nin *Uğultulu Tepeler* adlı romanlarındaki kadın karakterlerin toplumun kısıtlamalarına rağmen kendi yöntemleriyle nasıl özgürlük ve mutluluğa ulaşmaya çabaladıklarını göstermektir. Giriş bölümünde Viktorya Döneminin kültürel ve tarihsel özellikleri, cinsiyet rollerine ilişkin bilgiler verilmiştir. Gelişme bölümünde bu bahsedilen bilgiler ışığında romanlar analiz edilmiş ve yazarların kısa özgeçmişlerine yer verilmiştir. Adı geçen yazarlar, kadın karakterlerinin toplumdaki inançlara, geleneklere ve değerlere karşı isyanlarını göstermişler ve karakterlerin intiharlarını bir çılgılık olarak yansıtarak toplumdaki susturulmuş kadınlar için yeni olanaklar ve önemli değişiklikler yaratmayı amaçlamışlardır.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Toplum, Ataerkillik, Değerler, Beklentiler, Geleneksel

ABSTRACT

KELEŞ, Aybike. *The Quest for Happiness and Freedom in George Eliot's *The Mill On The Floss* And Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights**, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2015.

The aim of this thesis is to portray the female characters in *The Mill On The Floss* and *Wuthering Heights* who try to reach freedom and happiness in their own methods in spite of the social restrictions. In the introduction part, information concerning the cultural and historical background of the Victorian period which includes sex and gender roles and brief biographies of the authors has been given. In the body part, this information has been reflected on each of these novels. The above mentioned writers show female characters's rebellion against beliefs, traditions, and values in the society and how they try to promote new opportunities and major changes for the silenced women in the society by describing the characters' death as a scream.

Key Words

Society, Patriarchy, Values, Expectations, Traditional

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INTRODUCTION

In the 19th century Victorian Period women are supposed to obey such rules of morality strictly. The aim of this thesis is to show the Victorian society's rules, expectations, and gender inequality which have a crucial role hindering women from leading a life as they wish. Additionally their desire for freedom drives female characters into death. This thesis will also show how Maggie and Catherine try to reach freedom and happiness in their own ways in spite of the restrictions.

The first part of the introductory chapter will focus on the general background of the Victorian Era. The primary aim is to show the role of men and women which is expected to be adopted by all members in the society. Social roles will be examined in terms of family life, marriage, and education. As a last point in this part, the changes in the situation of the women and some prominent writers' struggle to make their voices heard in the society will be reflected.

The second part gives short biographies of the authors. This part will show how the characters, Maggie Tulliver and Catherine Earnshaw, are exposed to the restrictions of the society from childhood to adulthood. In addition, characters' rebellious nature against the patriarchal limitations which expect women to be submissive and docile will be reflected. Characters' problems in adopting traditional roles will be discussed. In particular, the social environment and their relationship with other characters will be studied. Since both Maggie and Catherine are drawn as outcasts, even at the outset, no other ending than death could wait the protagonists of the two novels. In this respect, death is not a tragic ending but the only way to put an end to their miseries. In the concluding chapter, the characters' failures will be discussed.

1. Gender Roles and The Changes In The Victorian Period

The Victorian age which begins in 1837 and continues until 1901 was a period of gender polarisation. In this age the expectations from men and women were sharply different. Thus, men and women were instilled into their own roles through social indoctrination from an early age. For instance, many Victorian girls were prepared to the role of ideal Victorian women. This situation is explained by the French feminist Simon de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex* as follows:

Her ears are filled with the treasures of feminine wisdom, and feminine virtues are presented to her; she is taught cooking, sewing, and housework as well as how to dress, how to take care of her personal appearance, charm, and modesty; she is dressed in uncomfortable and fancy clothes that she has to take care of, her hair is done in complicated styles, posture is imposed on her: stand upstraight, don't walk like a duck; to be graceful, she has to repress spontaneous movements; she is told not to look like a tomboy; strenuous exercise is banned; she is forbidden to fight; in short, she is committed to becoming, like her elders, a servant and an idol. (343)

As stated above, these features, attributed to women, are considered important signs for chastity and purity. Those who do not fit these expected images of ideal Victorian women are labelled as “fallen women” and become “social outcasts” in the eyes of the society. On the other hand, all the images of femininity and morality developed as a result of society's expectations and they were not derieved from women herself according to Mary Wollstonecraft (103). For her, women did not internalize the fixed images ascribed to them. These are just based on “public reputation”. As she claims in her book *Vindication of The Rights of Woman*: “all the various modes of preserving a good reputation, which have been so strenuously inculcated on the female world, were specious poisons, that incrusting morality eat away the substance. Besides all these things, this measuring of shadows produced a false calculation” (103).

Similarly, French writer Simon De Beauvoir argues that it was the society that determines the role of women and forced them into a submissive position. In the following statement she clearly expresses that gender is socially constructed: “One is not born, but rather becomes, woman. No biological, psychical, or economic destiny

defines the figure that the human female takes on in society; it is civilization as a whole that elaborates this intermediary product between the male and the eunuch that is called feminine”(330). Thus women are predetermined to be docile, submissive and silent by the society.

In the Victorian Period marriage was a goal for women. From an early age they were taught to get married and to have children. As many women have little or no choice to determine their future husbands, it was only a matter of survival for them. For Teachman, “future of most women was only considered secure if they married” (30). As the society did not let them work and make their own living, they had to be financially dependent on their husbands.

Additionally, marriage was mostly based on materialistic profits and social respect rather than love. Love could not work in social norms. Parents chose partners who come from the families of high rank for their girls. Having a respectful place is an important factor to get the admiration of the society. As Rousseau states in *Emile*: “marriages by the authority of fathers are guided uniquely by the suitability of convention and by that of opinion. It is not person who gets married, it is position and wealth”(400). Thus parents should ensure a brilliant future for both themselves and their girls. Jane Austen illustrates this fact in her novel *Pride and Prejudice*. For instance, Mrs. Bennet wants her daughters to get married to wealthy men not only to preserve the daughters’ place in the society but also to ensure themselves a secure future.

In the family life, women’s primary responsibilities are to deal with household chores and to create a peaceful atmosphere for their husbands and children. Thus they should be like an ‘angel in the house’ which is a prevalent notion at that time. It means that they were expected to obey and put their feelings aside to please their husbands. “All moralities which are the duties for women, all the current sentimentalities that are in their nature, to live for others, to make complete abnegation of themselves, and to have no life in their affections are told to them” (Mill, *The Subjection of Women* 24). Moreover, women were deprived of education. It was considered that women were not intelligent enough to learn academic subjects in the school. Generally they were educated in singing, drawing, and painting. Thus, they were not given any

opportunities to develop themselves outside home. In particular, girls from middle class and upper class families were sent to boarding schools. Such schools “enabled the daughters to meet girls from other families in the same social class-girls who might have brothers at home who were in the market for an appropriate marital partner”(Teachman 28). Thus, girls struggled for finding a suitable husband rather than learning even in schools.

Once women got married, they completely yield to their husbands’ wills and they did not receive the same rights as men got in front of laws. For instance, getting divorced was an impossible choice for women. They could not divorce as long as men did not agree to get divorced. For instance, men easily divorced because of their wives’ adultery. On the other hand, women had to prove their husband’s adultery. Even in case of getting divorced, the custody of children was given to the husband. As Claudia Nelson discusses in the introduction part of her book:

The rules for getting divorced differed for men and women. A husband could get divorced from his wife simply by proving that she had been unfaithful to him. A wife, however, had to prove that her husband was not only adulterous but had also deserted her, committed incest or bigamy, or abused her in a way that went beyond his legal right to chastise her physically. This double standard reflected the widespread view that a wife’s adultery was more serious than a husband’s. A husband’s straying was regrettable but natural; a woman who forgot her marriage vows betrayed both her family and all womankind.(8-9)

As there were no equal laws between men and women in the society, women had to bear the brutality of their husbands and the laws.

Furthermore, women’s economic dependence on their husbands allowed their husbands to control the property of women. Women’s personal properties which were inherited from family passed to men and thus women could not assert a right on their own properties before the laws. As Anne Laurence comments:

In English common law, wives could hold no freehold land (real property) except through their husbands; nor could they alter or dispose of property without their husbands’ consent, even if it was their own inheritance. Women could not make wills or appoint executors without their husbands’ agreement. (228)

Just as women were expected to have feminine features, men also were expected to meet the demands of the society. They needed to conform to the norms of the society. Masculinity included physical and moral attributes which could be described as key components for men. So men were supposed to meet ‘the set code of manners advocating honour, charity and social responsibility’ (Berberich 20). Also Tosh, cited by Christina Berberich in her book *The Image of the English Gentleman in Twentieth Century Literature* discusses that:

Manliness expresses the important truth perfectly that boys do not become men just by growing up but by acquiring a variety of manly qualities and manly competencies as part of a conscious process. Berberich argues that men must live by a code which affirms their masculinity. As such a code, Victorian manliness was not only taken very seriously by pundits and preachers, it was also manifested in the lives of countless young men who saw it as an expression of their manhood in keeping with their religious convictions, their social aspirations, or both together. (21)

In particular, being able to support their family financially was an indicator of the success of a man. Thus education was considered to be important way for boys to prove themselves in the society and to enter into the business world. At an early age boys who were from wealthy families were sent to public schools to learn Latin and science which were the required elements to gain respect in the society. It was considered that the public schools not only taught these useful subjects but also they helped boys to learn “to be men, to grow muscles and to fight for their rightful places” (Berberich 20-21). In a sense, there was a growing contest between families who desire their boys to be successful in a competitive society and want them to get a step further from other boys. Mary Wollstonecraft criticizes the families and education system which force children to learn things they do not understand rather than providing independent thinking:

For it is seldom done entirely, to speak with moderation by the child itself; thus the master countenances falsehood, or winds the poor machine up to some extraordinary exertion that injure the wheels, and stops the progress of gradual improvement. The memory is loaded with unintelligible words to make a shew of, without understanding and acquiring any distinct ideas. (128)

For the sake of their parents' desires to satisfy the demands of society, boys are made victims of false education.

Hence, gender inequality started to be felt in the literary world as well. Many prominent writers had an important role in defending women's rights for social equality and changing their positions in the society. Through literature, they mirrored the position of women in the society. Many female authors, such as Elizabeth Gaskell, Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot and Emily Brontë were aware of the limitations placed on women by the society. Thus they took up their pens to reflect the situations of women in the society. Some of them used their real names in their writing, but some wrote under the pseudonym of a man as they did not want to be criticized because of their sex. They created novels which drew on their own life experiences and reflected their own inner self. Almost all of the women authors depicted the women characters' restrictions in the areas of education, marriage and economy in their works. As well as showing women's oppressed situations in the patriarchal society they also displayed their search for freedom, happiness and equality with men. In particular, Industrial Revolution led to changes in the position of women. For the first time, women started to participate in labour outside home. Thus, women started to question the traditional notions of women. They expressed their dissatisfaction about the limitations placed on them. They started to search for the changes in the society. Stephanie Forward comments on their struggles: "They were seeking enhanced opportunities for education and employment, and hoped for professional recognition. There were demands for political enfranchisement and emancipation" (11). Towards the end of the century, a variety of developments occurred about the position of women. Many reforms provided the improvements of women's rights. The Child Custody Act (1839) enabled mothers to have the custody of their children in case of a separation. But these reforms did not maintain equality between women and men. Thus critics strongly demanded for social and political rights for women. In particular, many feminist critics strongly asserted women's freedom and equality with men in their works. Mary Wollstonecraft who is the pioneer of the women rights expressed liberal thoughts for women. In her book *A Vindication of The Rights of Woman* Mary Wollstonecraft stresses that women must be allowed to vote and must be liberated from the restrictions of the conventional ideas imposed on them. She suggests that:

the only method of leading women to fulfil their peculiar duties, is to free them from all restraint by allowing them to participate in the inherent rights of mankind. Make them free, and they will quickly become wise and virtuous, as men become more so, for the improvement they must be mutual. I speak for the improvement and emancipation of the whole sex. (139)

In addition, some male writers advocated equal rights for women in marriage, education and government in their works. This is seen in John Stuart Mill's work titled *The Subjection of Women*. Mill rejects the traditional idea that women are incapable of learning. For him, if women are given opportunities, they can reach the same intellectual level with men. In the following quotation Mill argues the need for the intellectual development of society:

Women in general would be brought up equally capable of understanding business, public affairs, and the higher matters of speculation, with men in the same class of society. In this way, the widening of the sphere of action for women would operate for good by raising their education to the level of men, and making the one participate in all improvements made in the other. (120)

As the time progressed, women started to get more political and legal rights. With Matrimonial Causes Act in 1857 women were given the right to get divorced from their husbands who used violence against their wives. Also women acquired their own rights on their properties and possessions in 1882 with the law of the Married Women's Property Act. Gradually women started to access to the same opportunities with men and to take place in the public places. In 1873 Girton College which is the first residential colleges of England was opened. Women got the chance of attending universities.

As is seen, Victorian England led to the significant changes in gender roles. Women freed themselves from the traditional notions of the women and they gained political and legal roles in time.

2. HAPPINESS AND FREEDOM IN *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*

2.1 Biography of George Eliot

Mary Ann Evans known by her pen name George Eliot was one of the most prominent writers of the 19th century. She was born on November 22, 1819 in Warwickshire. Although she lived in a society where women's writings were openly rejected, she "contrive(s) herself to write into a position of social respectability and adulation (Bodenheimer 21). Several critics praise her efforts and talents. According to Jennifer Uglow, "George Eliot had created a life for herself through efforts of will, her work, and a series of conscious choices which appeared to be the opposite of that which history consigned her as the daughter of a provincial surveyor" (7). In 1853 Eliot met George Henry Lewes who was a novelist and journalist. Leading a life with a married man created chaos for Mary Evan's life. She was alienated from the society. In particular, she got the disapproval of her brother Isaac as Maggie was rejected by her brother Tom in *The Mill on The Floss*. But she believed that what she was doing was not wrong. "But she was deeply happy and sure of the rightness of her conduct and her confidence in her own moral judgement made her capable of great determination and courage" (Dolin 26). Thanks to Lewes's encouragement, she started to write her novels under the pseudonym of George Eliot. Although her illegal relationship with Lewis wasn't accepted, her works were greatly appreciated. In 1857 she published her first novel *Scenes of Clerical Life* which pictures the ordinary life of men and women. It was followed by *Adam Bede* (1858). Apart from these novels, her other novels including *The Mill on The Floss* (1860), *Silas Marner* (1861) were drawn from her real life experiences and reflected her rural upbringing. For Eliot, people who live in rural areas reflect real human nature.

She was bred in the country, close in heart and origin to the agricultural life of England, and her early books 'Adam Bede, Silas Marner, and The Mill on the Floss' reflect this life, in all its quaint and leisurely charm. George Eliot gave us a real gift in these kindly pictures of the England of her girlhood, showing the honesty and simplicity, the strong uprightness. (Brownwell 70-71)

In particular, *The Mill on the Floss* is considered to be the autobiography of the writer in many respects. Some traces of Eliot's childhood memories, and her closeness with her brother Isaac can be found in the novel.

The novel expresses the author's own emotional and spiritual struggles in childhood, and the first section is actually dominated by the brother and sister relationship between Maggie and Tom (Marian Evans and her brother Isaac), making up what may be called the finest childhood in English fiction, for the infantile experience and its period lay the foundation for the positive emotions of adult life. (Golban 201)

Eliot gives her attention to political themes in her next two works: *Romola* (1863) and *Felix Holt The Radical* (1866). Towards the end of her life she published her last two novels: *Middlemarch* (1872) and *Daniel Deronda* (1876). Her books reflect many issues of her period including female education, marriage, and oppression of women. In almost all her novels, Eliot creates unconventional female characters who struggle against the norms which restrict their freedom and happiness. "[Her] novels are rich in a marvellously observed range of portraits of both men and women, including an often neglected group of women who exercise considerable power" (Uglow 3). Virginia Woolf also says that Eliot puts herself into her characters. All her characters are George Eliot herself. She says: "[I]n *Adam Bede* there is a hint of her in Dinah. She shows herself far more openly and completely in Maggie in *The Mill on the Floss*. She is Janet in *Janet's Repentance*, and *Romola*, and *Dorothea* seeking wisdom and finding one scarcely knows what in marriage with *Ladislaw*"(86).

Eliot focuses on the psychology of her characters in her novels. She wants the reader to see their inward struggles. While reading her novels, the reader feels "a keen desire to avenge the victims, to take side of the turbulent rebels, and the dark heroines who will always lose their happiness against their mild, blonde, and goody-goody opposites" (Uglow 3).

2.2 *The Mill On The Floss*

“I will not give up the happiness for my life to ideas I don’t believe in and customs I have no respect for”(George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*).

“I believe this unhappiness to be largely due to mistaken views of the World, mistaken ethics, mistaken habits of life, leading to the destruction of that natural zest and appetite for possible things upon which all happiness, whether of men or animals, ultimately depends”(Bertrand Russell, *The Conquest of Happiness*)

At the beginning of *The Mill On The Floss* Eliot focuses on Tom and Maggie’s childhood relations and patriarchal family environment where man serves as the head of family. Eliot shows how patriarchal ideology is presented to children at an early age. During their childhood Tom follows the imposed roles constructed for his gender on the other hand Maggie refuses to live within social boundaries. Throughout her childhood, Maggie is exposed to harsh treatments of Tom even if he is fond of Maggie. At every turn, Tom always attempts to oppress Maggie and he treats her as if he were her master. He thinks that he has privileges as a boy in the society. The reader can see his concept of man and woman in the novel: “I am a boy. I always have half-sovereigns and ... I shall be a man, and you only have five shilling pieces, because you’re only a girl”(Eliot 32). Tom as a man knows his power over Maggie.

In this way, patriarchy is shown in their early childhood. According to Kristin Brady:

Eliot takes the patriarchal social world that had been depicted in her earlier fictions and examines its influence, not only on young adults in a courtship plot, but also on children in a plot of personal development that goes back to the time when gender roles are constructed for the human subject.(95)

As Brady says, from an early age, children are shaped according to the expected social roles as reflected in Tom’s and Maggie’s character. Although Maggie realizes

the gender inequality between herself and Tom, her hunger for love leads her to submit to Tom: “the need of being loved would always subdue her” (Eliot 401). By taking the advantage of it, Tom punishes and threatens her not to love, when she does wrong. Through Maggie and Tom, Eliot wants to show the reader the conflict between the individual’s desire and the society’s desire. As Moldstad says: “In childhood the differing values of Tom and Maggie are revealed in seemingly inconsequential clashes: the one desires mastery and perhaps more basically an order in which he feels secure, and the other desires love and perhaps more basically freedom and forgiveness of error”(527). This clash is shown in many ways in the novel. In one of the scenes when Maggie forgets to feed Tom’s rabbits, she begs for mercy and love: “Oh, Tom, please forgive me- I can’t bear it-I will always be good- always remember things – do love me- please dear Tom!”(Eliot 35) Although Tom loves Maggie, gender stereotypes always prevent Tom from hearing her cries and to satisfy her love. As is reflected by Mitchell: “His falsely differentiated male consciousness cannot allow him to feel any sympathy for what he sees as Maggie’s foibles as they represent transgressions of the masculine order (including the gender hierarchy) to which he has committed himself ”(111).

As Maggie could not receive the love she needs by those around her especially her brother Tom, she resorts to misbehaviour. For example, in one scene Maggie hides herself in the attic to arouse interest in the family members. The following quotation reflects Maggie’s thoughts:

Maggie soon thought she had been hours in the attic, and it must be tea time, and they were all having their tea, and not thinking of her. Well, then, she would stay up there and starve herself-hide herself behind the tub and stay there all night; and they would all be frightened, and Tom would be sorry. (Eliot 34)

Maggie’s misbehaviour implies that she is in need of something and she wants family members to realize her presence. The reason behind her behaviour shows the reader that she feels rejected and discouraged by the society. Uglow explains this very clearly: “Maggie’s craving for the love carries her, just as her imagination does, always away from the role her society expects her to play. Although her loves are “true” and authentic expressions of her needs and her response to the mystery of others, in society’s terms they remain hopelessly, insolubly wrong” (140). Maggie wants to feel

a sense of worthiness and belonging by her parents. She needs to know that she is emotionally supported by her parents. As Maggie's parents don't give importance to her feelings, thoughts, Maggie feels the need to be accepted in the family.

In the novel, Eliot differentiates Maggie's physical features from the traditional Victorian girls. Maggie does not conform to the role expected from her in the society and thus she is criticized by her mother and relatives because of her appearance and behaviour. Maggie refuses to do household chores and to put on bonnets. Her mother Mrs. Tulliver is not always satisfied about Maggie's different looking from other girls in that she has untidy hair, and ordinary clothes. Mrs. Tulliver complains: "She is too big a gell, gone nine and tall of her age, to have her hair cut short, an' there's her cousin Lucy's got a row o' curls round her head, an' not hair out o place. It seems hard as my sister Deane should have that pretty child" (Eliot 9). Mrs. Tulliver wants Maggie to look like her cousin Lucy who meets all the expectations of the society as a girl. But Maggie fails to live up the expectations of the society. By comparing Maggie and Lucy, Eliot wants to show "Maggie's inability to fit into her society" (Tush 77).

Mrs Tulliver's attitudes make it clear that she herself is grown up according to the Victorian ideas which demand feminine appearance and obedient behaviours. As Mary Wollstonecraft says in her book *A Vindication of The Rights of Woman*:

women are told from their infancy, and taught by the example of their mother, that a little knowledge of human weakness, just termed cunning, softness of temper, outward obedience, and a scrupulous attention to a puerile kind of propriety, will obtain for them the protection of man.(13)

From an early age, women are supposed to be submissive and obedient to their parents. It is clear that Mrs Tulliver wants to grow up her child by instilling her culture. For the sake of social demands, Mrs. Tulliver ignores her interests. On the other hand, Jane Brody is not in favour with the idea that parents force their children into different personality. In her article "Embracing Children for Who They Are" Brody states that: "Rather than try to remake him into someone he is not, the challenge for all of us is to appreciate and adapt to his differences, love him for who he is and not disparage him for what he is not" (Np). Under the influence of society's pressure, they try to mould

Maggie into an acceptable character. But Maggie knows who she is, and is aware of her skills at utmost level. The reason why she does not want to change her character is that she believes strictly in what she does. In this sense, John Bagnell Bury in his book titled *A History of Freedom of Thought* says:

If a man's thinking leads him to call in question ideas and customs which regulate the behaviour of those about him, to reject beliefs which they hold, to see better ways of life than those they follow, it is almost impossible for him, if he is convinced of the truth of his own reasoning, not to betray by silence, chance words, or general attitude that he is different from them and does not share their opinions. (N.P)

Maggie does not want to change what is true for herself. She wants to live her character to the full. At this point the reader can clearly understand that she needs to change her character to be admitted in the society.

On the other hand, Maggie wants her family to accept her as she is. She wishes them to see her qualities and her intelligence rather than focusing on her appearance. As she is all the time forced to play the role of a submissive girl, she acts in the opposite direction. In one scene she struggles to show her reaction to her family and society by cutting her hair impulsively: "One delicious grinding snip, and then another and another, and the hinder-locks fell heavily on the floor, and Maggie stood cropped in a jagged, uneven manner, but with a sense of clearness and freedom"(Eliot 61). In this way she thinks she will both punish and gain victory over her mother and her relatives. She wants to prove them that she does not want to change herself. In this respect she does not want to allow people control her life and does not want to be driven by the society's demands. But her feeling of joy is repressed by the society and she suffers from the humiliation of being criticized in the family. Eliot wants the reader to feel that Maggie's reactions indeed are not wrong. But the environment she lives is in conflict with her desires. As Hagan notes: "We recognize the legitimacy of her desires, and wish that she lived in an ideal world where they could be satisfied without guilt[...] But Maggie does not live an ideal world"(54).

Furthermore, Eliot likens Maggie to the Gypsies who are not accepted in the society. This gives the reader a sense that Eliot relates a woman's attitudes and character with the social class which she belongs to. From the beginning it is clear that

her dark complexion, dark hair do not fit the image of the ideal girl set by the society she lives in, thus she is called a “wild thing”, “she is more like a Gypsy nor ever” by the people around her. As Maggie is exposed to negative complaints of her features by people, and she is not praised for her intelligence, she seeks a place where she will show her great knowledge. Maggie thinks: “the Gypsies, she considered, would gladly receive her and pay her much respect on account of her superior knowledge” (Eliot 103). Maggie thinks that she will find a chance to show her skills in the Gypsies’ world, and she will feel utmost respect which she couldn’t gain in her family. Contrary to her expectations, the Gypsies don’t show any interest in her knowledge. To Maggie’s disappointment, the Gypsies are only concerned with her appearance “pretty bonnet and frock” (107) rather than her intelligence. She is treated just like in her own society and begins to understand the distance between herself and the Gypsies.

Eliot also shows Maggie’s journey into the Gypsies world as an escape from the restrictions of her life. Maggie wants to lead a life as she wishes. Simon De Beauvoir explains girls’s desire for freedom clearly in her *The Second Sex*:

the little girls seek activity, autonomy, like her brothers[...] The girl’s spontaneous zest for life, her taste for games, laughter, and adventure, make her consider the maternal circle narrow and stultifying. She wants to escape her mother’s authority, an authority that is wielded in a more routine and intimate manner than the one that boys have to accept (356).

One can conclude from this statement that girls are not content with the roles imposed on them. They wish to free from their restricted roles. They want to experience all that their brothers do. They want to live as they wish rather than dealing with domestic chores.

Moreover, Maggie’s intelligent mind and desire for education violate the traditional idea that women are incapable of learning. Compared to Tom, Maggie is intelligent and eager to learn new things. The reader can see her desire to learn when she visits Tom at Mr. Stelling’s house: “Oh, what books! she exclaimed, as she saw the bookcases in the study. ‘How I should like to have as many books as that!’”(Eliot 146). Although Mr Tulliver accepts her skills, his fixed thoughts on education predominate over Maggie’s intelligence. For him, education for girls is considered

unnecessary, because their role in the society is to become a wife and a mother. Thus her father explains the reason why he marries Mrs. Tulliver:

as I picked the mother because she wasn't o'er 'cute—bein' a good-looking woman too, an' come of a rare family for managing; but I picked her from her sisters o' purpose, 'cause she was a bit weak, like; for I wasn't a goin' to be told the rights o' things by my own fireside. But you see when a man's got brains himself there's no knowing where they'll run to; an' pleasant sort o' soft woman may go on breeding on stupid lads and 'cute wenches till it's like as if the world was turned topsy-turvy. It's an uncommon puzzlin' thing (Eliot 16).

From the above quotation it is understood that women's roles are limited. It is women's nature to be submissive to men. They must work and serve to their husbands. John Stuart Mill states the reliance of women on men in his book *The Subjection of Women* that:

All women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men; not self will, and government by self-control, but submission, and yielding to the control of others. All the moralities tell them that it is the duty of women, and all the current sentimentalities that it is their nature, to live for others; to make complete abnegation of themselves, and to have no life but in their affections.(24)

On the other hand, Lloyd Fernando rejects the idea of the control of women by man. In the following lines he says:

Women virtue of their sex can play an important role in the progress of the human race, since they are by nature endowed with a larger capacity for feeling, which has been discovered to be intellectually and morally valuable... Each women, if allowed to nurture her real potential, herself changes for the better in the process, and makes contribution which influences the development of the race (*New Women in The Victorian Novel* 31).

If women are given opportunities to reveal their potentialities, their role will not be limited in their husband's places. Men put women into the position of irrational beings and limit women to prove themselves against the opposite gender.

In the novel, Tom as a Victorian boy also follows his father's way and discerns women's ability to learn as his father did. Tom's ideas in conversation with Maggie are shown: "You silly little thing!.. Girls never learn such things. They're too silly"

(Eliot 145). In his opinion girls do not have abilities to understand something difficult. Although he is aware of Maggie's abilities, he refuses to admit them. He does not want to be in an inferior position by accepting her intelligence.

Mr. Stelling who is the tutor of Tom does not have different perspectives from Tom and Mr. Tulliver. The reader can hear his traditional ideas about women from: "They couldn't go far into anything. They are quick and shallow" (Eliot 151). This negative judgement causes Maggie to internalize this norm as "dreadful destiny". She is made to feel weak and inferior. Simon De Beauvoir criticizes it in her book titled *The Second Sex*: "It is destiny imposed on her by her teachers and by her society" (341). Women are thought to be inferior to learn. But Maggie is aware of this inequality and yearning for knowledge. It can be understood from this statement: "If she had been taught 'real learning and wisdom, such as great men knew' she thought she should have held the secret of life; if she had only books, that she might learn for herself what wise men knew!" (291).

Although Mrs. Stelling's harsh judgements on women are expected to have a negative effect on Maggie's motivation to learn, she still hopes to be thought as intelligent when she meets Philip who is the schoolmate of Tom. "He would think her rather clever too when she came to talk to him" (Eliot 178). This answer lies in the fact that she is completely aware of her mental superiority and difference from others. In contrast to Tom and her family, Maggie's crave for learning is satisfied by Philip. They both have certain things in common: learning, and affection. Philip becomes like her brother and teacher. Maggie says: "I wish you were my brother. I'm very fond of you. And you would stay at home with me when Tom went out, and you would teach me everything" (Eliot 185). Maggie's statements make it clear that Philip not only gives Maggie the love and the affection she needs but also he develops Maggie's mind through books and stories. Thus Barbara Hardy sees Philip as "the most successful mentor and rescuer" (*The Novels of George Eliot* 54).

Apart from Philip, her hunger for knowledge is not satisfied by her family. In addition, they give the chance of education to Tom who is not as smart as Maggie. From the beginning, Mr. Tulliver tries to choose the best education for Tom: "What I want is to give Tom a good eddication, an eddication as 'II be a bread to him[...] But I

should like Tom to be a bit of a scholar, so as he might be up to the tricks o' these fellows as talk fine and write with a flourish. It 'ud be a help to me wi' these lawsuits, and arbitrations. and things" (Eliot 5).

For Mr. Tulliver, education is a way to gain a respectful place in the society and to make a living. He wants his son "to know figures, and write like print, and see into things quick, and know what folk mean" (19). In particular, learning Latin is the key element in the education of a boy. As stated in the novel: "It's the part of the education of a gentleman"(164). Not paying attention to his son's skills, what he loves to do, Mr. Tulliver pushes Tom to take wrong education, though his son "is a bit slowish"(8). Through Tom, Eliot shows that education must be based on children's interests and talents. The following statement shows that Tom needs practical skills:

Tom could predict with accuracy what numbers of horses were cantering behind him, he could throw a stone right into the center of a given ripple, he could guess to a fraction how many lengths of his stick it would take to reach across the playground, and could draw almost perfect squares on his slate without any measurement.(Eliot 139)

The education Tom gets "illustrate(s) the evils of a mistaken education"(170). Mr. Tulliver's attitude shows the reader that society's demands and cultural norms shape his thoughts concerning the education of Tom. Mr. Tulliver provides Tom with wrong education and deprives Maggie of education for the sake of social expectations. In the following quotation Ashton summarizes this situation:

George Eliot shows herself sympathetic to Tom here, as the victim of the wrong sort of teaching, though there is some bitter satire directed against him too- a kind of deflection to the narrator of Maggie's anger at not enjoying the academic education for which she is intellectually suited, while incurious, unintellectual Tom receives such an education, which is sheer torture to him. In terms of the family drama at the heart of the novel Tom's education is yet another example of how unfortunate the relationship between Tom and Maggie is. Each is a victim of social circumstances, parental obtuseness, and personal tendencies. Their "education", like everything else relating to them, is the wrong way round.(99)

At the end of the book two Maggie and Tom's innocent years of childhood are over and they journey into a new life. Eliot refers to the closing of the golden Gates. "They had gone forth together into their new life of sorrow, and they would never more

see the sunshine undimmed by remembered cares. They had entered the thorny wilderness, and the golden Gates of their childhood had for ever closed behind them” (Eliot 178).

While transforming into adulthood, changes in family relationships and the financial downfall of Mr. Tulliver greatly affect Maggie and Tom’s lives. Bankruptcy of Tulliver makes the reader see the injustices of law between men and women in married life. Eliot in the book 3 “Downfall” makes the reader explore the deficiency of legal property on women. Eliot criticizes the laws which do not give women any rights on their own property when they married. In the Victorian period, women’s property such as jewellery, furniture and all belongings are under the control of their husbands and law after marriage. Thus, women could not assert any legal rights on their own belongings. They could not sell or distribute their belongings without their husband’s permission. In the novel, Mrs. Tulliver is shown as an example of such a woman. In the course of the auction of her belongings at home by her sisters Dodson, Mrs. Tulliver has to leave with her special belongings such as: “linen chests, silver tea pot”. The reader can see Mrs. Tulliver’s lament for losing her personal belongings: “I bought it wi’ my own money as I’d saved ever since I was turned fifteen; and the silver tea-pot, too- your father never paid for ‘em. And to think as he should ha’ married me and brought me to this” (206). This statement justifies the fact that Mrs. Tulliver’s personal belongings she has before marriage now are lost by the hands of a man who drives her family into destruction because of his bankruptcy.

In this sense, Eliot wants the reader to see how Mrs. Tulliver and her children are the victims of an unfair legal system placed in the society. If Mrs. Tulliver had a legal right on their own belongings, or her husband talked about his situations before, she would partly stop a great disaster. As a supporter of women rights, Eliot also shows how the unfair legal system forces Tom to take responsibility at an early age and forces Maggie to leave her school.

In addition, Eliot criticizes Dodsons’ way of life, concept of kinship and their narrow-minded attitudes towards Maggie and her family. Through Dodson family, Eliot wants the reader to see how Maggie grows up in a restrictive and hypocritical environment. As Hagan comments: “The great attention George Eliot devotes to her

largely satirical representations of the oppressive narrowness of provincial society in the persons of Mrs. Tulliver, the Gleggs, the Pullets, Mr. Stelling, and others inevitably encourages us to view with deep sympathy Maggie's longings to escape that environment" (55). In one of the scenes the hypocrisy of Dodson sisters who judge everything in terms of morality is reflected. The hypocrisy of Dodson sisters reveals when they refuse to help financially Maggie and Tom. Mrs. Glegg who is one of the members of Dodson sisters states that: "It is to go and be sunk in other folks' future and encourage 'em in luxury and extravagance as they've no means of supporting [...] my money's to go and be squandered on them as have had the same chance as me, only they've been wicked and wasteful" (Eliot 217). Mrs. Glegg thinks that there is no point of wasting Money needlessly on their naughty nephews. Such an attitude shows that Dodson sisters give importance to materialistic benefits rather than the value of individuals, Tom and Maggie. Economic interests make individuals indifferent to their surroundings and deprive individuals of emotion, affection and compassion. But Maggie feels the need to support her family. She does not hesitate to rebel against her aunts' insensitive behaviours and utters these words:

Why do you come, then,' she burst out, 'talking and interfering with us and scolding us if you don't mean to do anything to help my poor mother-your own sister- if you've no feeling for her when she's in trouble, and won't part with anything, though you would never miss it, to save her from pain? Keep away from us then and don't come to find fault with my father...(Eliot 218)

This scene expresses the freedom of thought for women. Maggie does not remain silent against these accusations and she attempts to assert herself. It seems obvious that she did what other women cannot do. But the society does not approve her freedom of speech and criticizes Maggie. Especially, Tom condemns her violent acts and warns her: "You ought not to have spoken as you did to my uncles and aunts; you should have leave it to me to take care of my mother and you and not put yourself forward" (237). Once again, Maggie is overwhelmed by the gender inequality which is imposed by the society. The society makes her incapable of taking action against the people who humiliate her. At every turn, the society represses her ability to assert herself. Erich Fromm talks about this issue in *Man for Himself*:

The reason for the phenomenon that not using one's Powers results in unhappiness is to be found in the very condition of human existence[...]If he fails to do so, he cannot achieve inner harmony and integration; he is torn and split, driven to escape from himself, from the feeling of powerlessness, boredom and impotence which are the necessary results of his failure. Man, being alive, cannot help wishing to live and the only way he can succeed in the act of living is to use his Powers, to spend that which he has. (165)

At this moment Maggie questions her presence in this world which does not offer her a desirable life as she wishes. Maggie's disappointment is conveyed as follows: "Everybody in the world seemed so hard and unkind to Maggie; there was no indulgence, no fondness, such as she imagined when she fashioned the world afresh in her own thoughts" (Eliot 238). Life she desires contrasts sharply with the life she experiences. Her unconventional character and the life she wishes to lead do not fit into the environment she lives in and she suffers greatly from it. She feels that life without love has no meaning: "And if life had no love in it, what else was there for Maggie?" (Eliot 238). These words imply the signs of something within Maggie's mind. So the reader is prepared to see her wish for death. But Maggie tries to find some hope and joy in her miserable life. She tries to find satisfactory solutions to reach happiness: "If she could have had all Scott's novels and all Byron's poems, then perhaps she might have found happiness enough to dull her sensibility to her actual life"(Eliot 291). In *The Conquest of Happiness* Russell points out that the key point of happiness is to arouse interest in life. And he suggests that individuals avoid the boredom of life by keeping themselves occupied with something they enjoy. He writes: "Most men are capable of a keen interest in something or other, and when once such an interest has been aroused their life becomes free from tedium"(164-156). Having been grown up in an environment suggesting little joy and affection, it seems impossible for Maggie to achieve happiness.

During the period of adulthood, Maggie and Tom start to understand what the society expects from them, and try to act in conformity with the gender roles.

Early adolescent males may rely increasingly on the socially valued definitions of the masculine role. Similarly, girls also become increasingly aware that society values masculine over feminine roles. At the same time, the traditional masculine role valued by society often

demands that girls adhere to the traditional feminine role. (Huston and Alvarez 163)

Tom grows up to be a proud and dutiful person by adhering himself to pay his father's bills and to take revenge of Mr Wakem who causes his father's bankruptcy. In order to take the responsibility of his family, Tom leaves school and enters into the world of business. Tom is aware of the responsibility that the society expects from him as a man. He must show the signs of being a strong and mature man by taking the responsibility of his mother and sister. At the same time he wants to be appreciated by his environment and he is very much concerned about other people's opinion of him: "It was intolerable to think of being poor and looked down upon all one's life. He would provide for his mother and sister and make everyone say that he was a man of high character. He leaped over the years in this way, and in the haste of strong purpose and strong desire..." (Eliot 228). From these statements one may think that he does not want to be humiliated in the eyes of the society. Fear of social judgement affects his behaviours. Eliot here shows us how other people's opinions are so important and how people shape their lives according to expectations of society. Bertrand Russell in his book *The Conquest of Happiness* stresses the negative effects of public opinion on individuals:

Fear of public opinion, like every other form of fear, is oppressive and stunts growth. It is difficult to achieve any kind of greatness while a fear of this kind remains strong, and it is impossible to acquire that freedom of spirit in which true happiness consists, for it is essential to happiness that our way of living should spring from our own deep impulses and not from the accidental tastes and desires of those who happen to be our neighbours, or even our relations. (56)

Similarly, Maggie starts to act in accordance with the society's expectations. She decides to take herself away from all pleasures that make her happy and tries to be an obedient woman to please community. Simone De Beauvoir describes adolescence as the end of the pleasures of life and the beginning of a new life which expects women to adopt their role. She says:

she is then prematurely integrated into the universe of the serious; feeling her importance will help her assume her femininity; but she is deprived of the happy gratuitousness, the carefree childhood; a woman before her time, she understands too soon what limits this specificity imposes on a human being; she enters adolescence as an adult, which

gives her story a unique character. The overburdened child can prematurely be a slave, condemned to a joyless existence. (347)

Mrs. Tulliver realizes the signs of changes in Maggie: “It was amazing that this once “contrairy” child was becoming so submissive, so backward to assert her own will” (299). On the other hand, Fromm in his book *The Fear of Freedom* points out that individual’s repressed desires can be a sign of danger. He states that: “the desire for freedom can be repressed, it can disappear from the awareness of the individual; but even then it does not cease to exist as a potentiality, and indicates its existence by the conscious or unconscious hatred by which such suppression is always accompanied” (242). One can conclude from this statement that Maggie struggles to be accepted in the society. By repressing her desire for freedom, she tries to be an obedient girl in the society.

When she comes across Philip in *The Red Deeps*, her internal clash between her duty for family and Philip starts to appear again. Although this encounter gives joy to Maggie, she forces herself to act with society’s norms. As Tom does not approve of her relationship with Philip, she is forced to repress her desires. Now, she thinks that it is wrong to lead a life as was in her childhood. She should be away from childhood pleasures, and desires to please the society. She implies it sadly: “I wish we could have been friends- I mean, if it would have been good and right for us. But that is the trial I have to bear in everything; I may not keep anything I used to love when I was little... I must part with everything I cared for when I was a child. And I must part with you” (Eliot 307). Here Eliot shows the reader a picture of a girl who tries to adapt herself to other people’s expectations. What she believes as right is unacceptable in the eyes of the public. Broadly speaking, concepts such as wrong and right are defined by the communal members of the society and they are either accepted or rejected by individuals. These developing ideas are accepted or rejected by individuals. Thus, individual’s rights subordinate to the society’s rights. As Freud says in his book *Civilization and Its Discontents*:

Human life in common is only made possible when a majority comes together which is stronger than any separate individual and which remains united against all separate individuals. The power of this community is then set up as “right” in opposition to the power of the individual, which is condemned as “brute force”. This replacement of

the power of the individual by the power of a community constitutes the decisive step of civilization.(49)

For Philip, the concept of rightness comes from the demands of the society. For him, it is what he believes in himself. “It is not right to sacrifice everything to other people’s unreasonable feelings. I would give up a great deal for my father, but I would not give up a friendship or- or an attachment of any sort in obedience to any wish of his that I didn’t recognize as right”(308). He will not give up maintaining his own beliefs even for abandoning his own father. Through Philip, Eliot shows the reader how stereotypical ideas take the control of people and force them into the actions that they don’t believe rightfully. John Stuart Mill in his book *On Liberty* criticizes that society hinders individuals from using their own mind. As he states:

There needs protection also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling; against the tendency of society to impose... its own ideas and practises as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development, and, if possible, prevent the formation, of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compels all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own. (9).

On the other hand, Philip insists on Maggie’s acting as she wishes and feels. He wants Maggie to reveal her feelings and emotions as she was in her childhood. However hard he struggles to convince her, Maggie tries to repress her feelings and desires because of the expectations of the society. She knows very well that happiness according to her own concept, is not possible. Her unhappiness is reflected in the stories that she couldn’t read the rest. “I made several endings, but they were all unhappy. I could never make a happy ending out of that beginning”(Eliot 312). It could be inferred from this quotation that happy ending will never come true in her life like the stories she creates in her mind. On the other hand, Maggie cannot stop herself seeing Philip, because of her desire to be loved and to love. For Maggie, Philip is the only one who understands her feelings and nurtures her craving for learning. In the novel Maggie clearly expresses: “And your mind is a sort of world to me; you can tell me all I want to know. I think I should never be tired of being with you” (Eliot 343). Philip’s presence is a little bit of pleasure for Maggie’s world which is devoid of joy. Thus, she is in conflict between the opportunities Philip offers and her duties towards her family. “[A]ll the time she is divided between attraction to the variety of things Philip can offer her and the belief that they must be renounced” (New 186). However,

her small moments of contentedness are discovered by Tom and he forces Maggie to make a choice between Philip and her family and he presents two choices for her:

either you vow solemnly to me with your hand on my father's Bible that you will never have another meeting or speak another word in private with Philip Wakem, or you refuse and I tell my father everything... you are a disobedient, deceitful daughter, who throws away her own respectability by clandestine meetings with the son of a man that has helped to ruin her father.(Eliot 350)

Tom judges Maggie as a disobedient girl who disobeys her father's warnings about Mr.Wakem and his son. And he asserts his dominance over Maggie by reminding her responsibility towards her family. In this regard, Paxton points out that: "Tom defines duty in traditional patriarchal terms and urges Maggie to submit to him in the name of the father by invoking the prevailing religious and social conventions that demand the daughter's subordination to father and brother"(84). As Tom is filled with hatred for Mr.Wakem who is the father of Philip, Tom does not hesitate to insult and humiliate Philip harshly:

Do you pretend you had any right to make professions of love to her, even if you had been a fit husband for her, when neither her father nor your father would ever consent to a marriage between you? And you try and worm yourself into the affections of a handsome girl who is not eighteen and has been shut out from the World by her father's misfortunes! That's your crooked notion of honour, is it? I call it base treachery... (Eliot 352)

With this statement, Eliot makes the reader question the value of Tom's moral values which are under the name of social rights. Even Tom proves himself as a right and honest man by making good deeds, but he is wrong to humiliate Philip's deformity and to take the model of his father to accuse Philip unjustly. It could be seen that Tom is only limited to his own rights. He loses his ability of free thinking because of the norms. As Fambrough states: "For George Eliot, the essence of moral experience lies in feelings of pity and affection, feelings without which, as we see from the example of Tom Tulliver, human beings are capable of nothing higher than a narrow, pharisaical form of justice" (81). Clearly Maggie is aware of the opposing views between herself and Tom. She is full of righteousness and indignation. She thinks: " If she had felt that she was entirely wrong and that Tom had been entirely right, she could sooner have recovered more inward harmony..."(Eliot 356). She tries to defend herself

against Tom “but she felt it was in vain to attempt anything but submission” (323), Her submission shows that she fails to fight against the society’s conventions. Thus, Maggie accepts the society’s conventions, by obeying her brother. Her freedom of speech and actions are eliminated by the social restrictions.

In this way, Eliot wants the reader to see the obstacles that Maggie and Tom face as a result of social restrictions placed on them.

I share with you this sense of oppressive narrowness, but it is necessary that we should feel it if we care to understand how it acted on the lives of Tom and Maggie, how it has acted on young natures in many generations, that in the outward tendency of human beings have risen above the mental level of the generation before them, to which they have been nevertheless tied by the strongest fibres of their hearts. (Eliot 276-277)

It is shown that how society’s expectations are dealt with throughout the generations. Maggie and Tom are grown up according to the expectations of the society. They stand out as examples of their parents. It seems that there is no escape from these teachings.

As Maggie enters into St.Ogg society through Lucy, Maggie finds herself within a different environment. She starts “illustrating the laws of attraction”as the title suggests. Eliot informs the reader about her new appearance:

Maggie was introduced for the first time to the young ladie’s life [...] Life was certainly very pleasant just now; it was becoming very pleasant to dress in the evening and to feel that she was one of the beautiful things of this springtime. And there were admiring eyes always her now; she was no longer an unheeded person, liable to be child, from whom attention was continually claimed and on whom no one felt bound to confer any.(Eliot 410)

Maggie who is blamed for her unconventional physical appearance throughout her life, now fits into the ideal woman role. In her new life she attracts the attention positively compared to her childhood especially on Stephen who is the fiance of her cousin Lucy. On their first meeting Stephen is captivated by Maggie’s weird and stunning beauty. Even Maggie is attracted to Stephen, she tries to be away from him. In their relationship, Maggie all the time struggles not to fall in love with Stephen. She even avoids looking at Stephen “when they were alone”and she “did not fulfil

Stephan's hope by looking at him..." (Eliot 391). Thus her actions are opposed to Rousseau's view on women: "She must learn to penetrate [into the minds of the men] by their words, their actions, their looks, their gestures"(387). On the other hand, Stephen could not stop himself from looking at Maggie and he tries to attract her attention. Calder explains the relationship between Maggie and Stephen as follows: "Stephen without too much difficulty maintains his role as a well-bred young man by nature polite to ladies, while Maggie in her impolite honesty, unknowingly, reinforces the powerful impression she has made on him" (148). Calder relates Maggie's and Stephen's different characters with the environment in which they grew up.

No matter how hard Maggie struggles, Stephen "lead[s] her into a situation where her moral choice stands in direct opposition to what society would expect of her" (Hesse 237). Finally, Maggie finds herself in a boat trip with Stephen. She unconsciously leaves herself to joy of life.

Maggie felt that she was being led down the garden among the roses, being helped with firm tender care into the boat[...] all by this stronger presence that seemed to bear her along without any act of her own will, likee added self which comes with the sudden exalting influence of a strong tonic and she felt nothing else. (Eliot 476)

The boat goes further and they cannot come back in time. Now she makes the biggest mistake in the eyes of the society. But she feels that she does not mean to harm Lucy and Philip intentionally. Maggie says: "I have never consented to it with my whole mind... I have never deliberately consented to it; I have never said, "They shall suffer that I may have enjoy. "It has never been my will to marry you" (489). And she starts to accuse Stephen of this disaster: "You have wanted to deprive me of any choice. You knew we were come too far, you have dared to take advantage of my thoughtlessness. It is unmanly to bring me into such a position" (478). It is understood from Maggie's statements that it is Stephen who takes Maggie for a boat and forces her into inevitable results. From the very beginning, it is known that Maggie avoids wooing Stephen despite the fact that she is attracted to him. But at the last moment she allows herself small moments of pleasure. Even Maggie and Stephen have not had a sexual relationship, to stay in a boat with a man the whole day seems to be a big mistake in the eyes of the society. Her innocent joy is described as destructive in the Victorian period. As Calder says: "Passion in women baffled Victorian society"(144).

Similarly, John Kucich also sees repression as necessary to control the emotions. As he writes: “Victorian repression serves interpersonal or social struggles for power as an instrument of the self that maintains its distance from others, and locates authority in the psychological and emotional merits of personal desire rather than in the submergence of individuals within the force of a group”(27). For Kucich, repression is a kind of power within individuals to fight against the desires.

Stephen starts to convince Maggie to marry him. He thinks that they should prove their love legally. “[D]uty must spring out of that now; in a few hours you will be legally mine, and those who had claims on us will submit; they will see that there was a force which declared against their claims”(Eliot 490). To Maggie, such a marriage will cause the others’ unhappiness. In her discussion with Stephen, she tries to explain the impossibility of love because of others’ unhappiness. “[I]t would embitter your love to me. I do care for Philip in a different way: I remember all we said to each other... And Lucy- she has been deceived- she who trusted me more than any one. I cannot marry you: I cannot take a good for myself that has been wrung out of their misery.”(Eliot 490-491)

Eliot here presents a picture of a woman who rejects her true love for the goodness of Philip and Lucy. Her refusal to marry Stephen shows her power and independence against the patriarchal society. In this sense Barrett says: “In view of the recurring battle of wills between Maggie and the men she loves, her constant struggle to maintain her uncorrupted self in the face of male coercion and insistence, it is essential that Maggie leave Stephen in order to assert her complete, equal, and independent humanity”(68).

If Maggie returns married, she will be forgiven. It seems that she has no other choice but to marry:

If Miss Tulliver, after a few months of well-chosen travel, had returned as Mrs Stephen Guest with a post-marital trousseau and all the advantages possessed even by the most unwelcome wife of an only son, public opinion, which at St Ogg’s, as elsewhere, always knew what to think, would have judged in strict consistency with those results. (Eliot 502)

On the other hand, Maggie does not want to be a woman who steals her cousin's fiancée. She does not want to cause trouble to her family by marrying Stephen. If she acts according to the society's expectations, she will lose her cousin and Philip. Thus, Maggie faces two difficult choices neither of which brings Maggie happiness.

George Eliot's conception of moral choice required that her heroine should be faced with a dilemma out of which there was no happy issue. She was to be forced to choose between two alternatives, either of which would cause suffering, and the decision she reached was to depend upon her own provision of the effect of her choice upon the other people involved in it. (Bennet 120)

For her own part, Maggie takes the risk of being viewed as a fallen woman and returns to Mill. When she returns she is rejected by her brother and St.Ogg community. Now in eyes of the society and her brother, she is a fallen woman who eloped with her cousin's lover intentionally. When she returns to St.Ogg, her brother's judgement is harder on her: "You have disgraced us all. You have disgraced my father's name. You have been a curse to your best friends. You have been base, deceitful; no motives are strong enough to restrain you. I wash my hands of you forever. You don't belong to me" (Eliot 496).

As a man Tom fulfills his responsibility by acting according to Victorian expectations which reject the fallen women. He thinks that he is right to reject her sister. Because he does not allow himself to experience the pleasure of life like Maggie. For the sake of responsibility he lives according to rules that society gives him. He says: "I have had feelings to struggle with; but I conquered them. I have had a harder life than you have had, but I have found my comfort in doing my duty" (Eliot 497). But his sense of loyalty makes him blind to see Maggie's trouble. Tom as a member of the society is responsible to drift Maggie into a failure in the society. As Malcolm says: "He has no sympathy with those who fail or are in need in any way, and it is in his treatment of his sister at the end of the novel that Maggie's failure seems at first sight a moral one, but it is more importantly a social one" (77).

People in St.Ogg are also ready to judge Maggie according to the events' results rather than to learn the reasons behind the events. As is stated: "We judge others according to results; how else, not knowing the process by which results are arrived

at?” (Eliot 502) They produce groundless rumours about Maggie. Especially rumours start to spread about Maggie’s arrival to St. Ogg without marriage. They don’t know the fact that Maggie rejects Stephen’s proposal in order not to give harm to others. They only rely on the hearings. Eliot points out the impacts of society especially the women’s impact on Maggie. “The ladies of St.Ogg’s[...] had their favourite abstraction, called society, which serve to make their consciences perfectly easy in doing what satisfied their own egoism: thinking and speaking the worst of Maggie Tulliver, and turning their backs upon her” (Eliot 518). This quotation makes it clear that women are judging Maggie and her actions harshly under the name of society and its values. Eliot criticizes people’s perception of morality. They “are guided in their moral judgement solely by general rules, thinking that these will lead them to justice by a ready made, patent method, without the trouble of exerting patience, discrimination, impartiality ...”(Eliot 510). They so blindly devote themselves to the accepted rules that they they cannot forgive those who disobey these. As is seen, society is produced from the ideas of the individuals. As Hesse states:

the importance of society in life of an individual, even though here the influence is clearly negative. As we have seen before, the individual has the ability to influence society too, and thus it is a reciprocal relationship which is under scrutiny and which George Eliot attempts to improve by providing an example of what is most frequently and inappropriately is like. (246)

With this event, the society of St. Ogg does not want Maggie to live in their community: “It was to be hoped that she would go out of the neighbourhood- to America, or anywhere- so as to purify the air of St. Ogg’s from the taint of her presence, extremely dangerous to daughters there!” (504). Social pressure on Maggie is so heavy that even Dr. Kenn, who is a priest, cannot change the society’s harsh judgements on Maggie. Although Maggie is alienated from the society, she struggles to live there. Dr. Kenn, finds it very strange and courageous: “Why did she not go out of the neighbourhood and get a situation where she was not known?... She must be very bold and hardened to wish to stay in a parish where she was so much stared at and whispered about”(519). As the priest says, she shows her self-assertiveness in the face of public pressures. Her determination to live there shows how she is brave not to submit to the people who try to dispel her in every way. She wants to show

she is not wrong, and to prove her power in the face of public judgement. Without complaints, she dedicates herself to lead a life as the consequence of her own choice. Society takes everything from her including her passion, her loved ones but one thing; the ability to direct her own way. Victor Frankl states in “*Man’s Search for Meaning*”:

everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way. And there were always choices to make. Every day, every hour, offered the opportunity to make a decision, a decision which determined whether you would or would not submit to those powers which threatened to rob you of your very self, your inner freedom; which determined whether or not you would become the play thing of circumstance, renouncing freedom and dignity to become molded into the form of the typical inmate. (75)

As Frankl says, individuals make choices based on what is important and meaningful to them even in terrible situations. They can use power of choice and follow their own heart to lead a life as they want. Thus, Maggie follows her heart and does what she believes to be right.

In such a society, Eliot does not want her character to suffer more. Maggie will never lead the life she aspires for in the place where she lives. But Eliot wants to fulfil Maggie’s desire to be hand in hand with his brother forever. But she does not have the chance of being happy with Tom on earth because of social limitations. She needs to reconcile with him. She needs to prove that she is able to choose her own way without submitting to society’s unfair rules and male hegemony. “Sometimes the situation in which a man finds himself may require him to shape his own fate by action”(Frankl 85). In this way when the flood comes suddenly, Maggie “without a moment ‘s shudder of fear, she plunged through the water, which was rising fast to her knees, and by the glimmering light of the candle she had left on the stairs, she mounted on to the window-sill and crept into the boat”(Eliot 529). She does not want to die without reconciliation. With a great struggle she starts to get her boat in the Floss. “She shows heroic efforts to save her brother and mother regardless of her own safety. She had passed the mouth of the Ripple, then; now she must use all her skill and power to manage the boat and get it if possible out of the current” (Eliot 532). Maggie succeeds in arriving there and now they are in a boat together struggling against the current. At that moment Maggie

feels “a long deep sob of that myserious wondrous happiness that is one with pain” (Eliot 533). At the end, Maggie is able to find a chance to prove her great love for Tom through flood. “The brother and sister had gone down in an embrace never to be parted, living through again in one supreme moment the days when they had clasped their little hands in love and roamed the daisied fields together” (Eliot 534). In the face of death, Tom defeats his pride and does not leave her alone in the last journey. Their death destroys the restrictions imposed on them and they become equal. In this way they managed to escape the restrictions of the society.

By describing Maggie’s death by drowning, Eliot insists that we recognize... the glorification of brother – sister love, the destruction of the highest life that St. Ogg’s had produced. And by insisting on the tragic death of her heroine, Eliot makes an appeal for the recognition of those fundamentally heroic impulses that reside in all men and women who choose, as Maggie does in this last gesture, to resist outward laws with a full understanding of the meaning and consequences of their acts. (Paxton 94)

The readers see that Tom acts in conformity with the society’s rules and he gives up his happiness for the sake of his duty throughout the novel. Then, why is he under the depths of water with Maggie? It seems that Tom is not content with the life he lives. At this point the reader can easily realize that there is something wrong with the society and its values and rules. “Men suffer as much as women from the neglect of those values so necessary to life” (King 77). By destroying the bodies of Maggie and Tom, Eliot addresses the society’s unconventional and unjust rules on individuals. Eliot also implies the necessity of a more equal society and find a free space for characters’ capacity to change the world. As Frankl states: “human existence is the capacity to rise above such conditions, to grow beyond them. Man is capable of changing the world for the better if possible... (*Man’s Search for Meaning* 85).

3. FREEDOM AND HAPPINESS IN *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

3.1. Biography of Emily Brontë

Emily Brontë who was born in Thornton Yorkshire in 1818 was the fifth of the six Brontë Sisters. As no detailed information about her life is known, her life is revealed through Charlotte Brontë's letters. Emily Brontë spent her childhood in England on the Yorkshire moors. As she had no close contact with anybody she found inspiration, and freedom on the moors, Emily's deep attachment to her home is shown in the following statement: "She was connected to her moors in all of their manifestations viscerally. They fed her fantasy world, her body, and her psyche. Only at home, surrounded by her moors, she did find release from emotional bondage."(Knapp 101)

Living in an isolated place from the people, Brontë sisters dedicated themselves to writing poems and novels. In 1846 Brontë sisters, including Emily, Anne and Charlotte Brontë published their poems under the pseudonym of men: Ellis, Acton, Currer Bell respectively. They published their poems under the title of *Poems by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell* and these selected poems received positive reviews by the critics. Many critics find Emily and her sisters' works products of vivid imagination and their life experiences. In particular, Gondal saga is the product of their imaginary world. It is a fictional world where they write poems, and express their feelings and thoughts. It presented a kind of entertainment and freedom to their monotonous life.

Although Emily Brontë wrote more poems throughout her life, she is known for her only major work *Wuthering Heights* which is one of the greatest novels of

English Literature. *Wuthering Heights* caused much controversy at the time of its publication as Bloom explains: "It was not well received and puzzled most of its readers; many of them regarded it as excessively morbid, violent, and delicate" (11).

It seems very ironical that her novel received praise and became one of the most well-known masterpieces of English novel posthumously. It is claimed that *Wuthering Heights* is full of the traces of Emily Brontë's life such as the setting in Yorkshire where she was grown up, strong winds in Heights, and her desire for freedom on the moors. In particular, her character Catherine Earnshaw's self starvation in the novel finds its way into Brontë's own anorexia. Foster shows Brontë's rejection to eating as a rebellion against society. He suggests that: "Emily Brontë demonstrated her need to control her universe not only through her writing but also through her willful denial of the pleasures of the body, particularly food and sleeping"(72-73).

3.2 *Wuthering Heights*

“It is better to die what you are than to live a stranger forever”

Saul Bellow “*The Adventures of Augie March*”

From the very beginning of the novel, the reader learns the early childhood of Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff who is an orphan brought by Mr. Earnshaw in *Wuthering Heights*. His coming creates a chaotic atmosphere among the family members, especially siblings Catherine and Hindley. As the time passes, a strong bond develops between Heathcliff and Catherine. When they are together, they run on the moors in order not to obey the rules of Hindley and Joseph. “But it was one of their chief amusements to run away to the moors in the morning and remain there all day, and the after punishment grew a mere thing to laugh at ” (Brontë 49). Their love is so strong that there are no rules and restrictions in their love. Brontë shows their relations as a defence against the society’s rules and demands placed on individuals. “This is what Cathy and Heathcliff refuse to do adamantly; insisting on their own interpretation of their own experience in defiance of every custom, and law that would keep them from doing so” (Thomas 118). As Thomas states their strong relationship overcomes the boundaries imposed on them.

On the other hand, spending time outdoors is not an acceptable behaviour for girls in the Victorian times. Instead of staying at home, and learning rules expected from girls, Catherine acts in a different way. Nelly, the servant of *Wuthering Heights*, points out that Catherine has a different nature from an early age. As Nelly observes:

Certainly, she had ways with her such as I never saw a child take up before; and she put all of us past our patience fifty times and oftener in

a day: from the hour she came down stairs, till the hour she went to bed, we had not a minute's security that she wouldn't be in mischief. Her spirits were always at highwater mark, her tongue always going-singing, laughing, and plaguing everybody who would not do the same (Brontë 43).

By presenting Catherine as disobedient, naughty, and quip, Brontë breaks out the traditional Victorian perspectives on women. Thus Brontë seems to oppose Rousseau's view on a woman: "she must be modest, attentive, and reserved" (361). As a child, Catherine also dares to rebel against her father. Her courage to discuss with her father is reflected in the following dialogue:

[Mr. Earnshaw]: Why canst thou not always be a good lass, Cathy?

[Catherine]: Why cannot you always be a good man, father? (45)

In this way, Brontë shows us her character's rebellious nature compared to traditional women who are supposed to be docile and silent. After Mr. Earnshaw's death, especially Catherine's brother Hindley's attitudes have a great effect on Catherine and Heathcliff's lives. In particular, Heathcliff is exposed to torture by Hindley and is treated like a servant. Instead of setting a good example to Cathy and Heathcliff by correcting their misbehaviours, Hindley leaves the children under the guardianship of Joseph who is a religious man and Catherine and Heathcliff are exposed to harsh treatments and rules by Joseph at home. It is told from Nelly's point of view:

The young master being entirely negligent how they behaved, and what they did, so they kept clear of him. He would not have even seen after their going to church on Sundays, only Joseph and the curate reprimanded his carelessness when they absented themselves, and that reminded him to order Heathcliff a flogging, and Catherine a fast from dinner or supper. (Brontë 48-49)

Hindley's attitudes towards children remind the reader the importance of the family on the children's life. It is clear that punishment, lack of affection cause these children to find the release outside. In this context, John Locke suggests in his book *Some Thoughts Concerning on Education* that children must not be punished because of their mischief. They should live their age as they wish. "They should be allow'd the liberties and freedoms suitable to their ages, and not be held under unnecessary restraints when in their parents' control. If it is a prison to them, no wonder they will not like it. They

must not be hindered from being children, or from playing, or doing anything as children” (32-33).

Furthermore, Brontë reflects that parents and social values can shape a child’s life and his decisions for future. In this sense, Brontë criticizes the Victorian strict values imposed on children from the beginning, and shows their results. For instance, Hindley’s constant oppressiveness on Heathcliff turns him into a revengeful man in the following years. In *Selected Letters of Charlotte Brontë*, Brontë points out that: “[Heathcliff] exemplifies the effects. A life full of continuing injustice and hard usage may produce a naturally perverse, vindictive, and inexorable disposition. Carefully trained and kindly treated, the black gypsy-cub might have been reared into a human being possibly, but tyranny and ignorance made him a mere demon” (117). As for Catherine, she does not want to be ruled and does not want to do anything by force. The pressure in the house causes Catherine to act in reverse and she could not make a sound judgement in her future life especially for her marriage decision. After the death of Mr. Earnshaw, Hindley assumes the patriarchal authority. To save herself and Heathcliff from the oppression by Hindley, Catherine is forced into a wrong decision and a wrong marriage. Thus Hindley, to some extent, will have a role in Catherine’s decision. As Gilbert and Gubar say in their book *The Madwoman in the Attic*: “By the patriarchal laws of primogeniture [Hindley] is the real heir and thus the new father who is to be introduced into the novel as the proximate causes of Catherine’s fall and subsequent decline” (88).

While Catherine and Heathcliff are escaping from the rules of Joseph and Hindley, they accidentally find themselves in Thrushcross Grange. which is pictured as a splendid house in the novel. Heathcliff describes his observations to Nelly: “A splendid place carpeted with crimson, and crimson covered chairs and tables, and a pure white ceiling bordered by gold, a shower of glass-drops hanging in silver chains from the centre, and shimmering with little soft tapers”(Brontë 50). Through Heathcliff’s observations, Brontë gives the reader a chance to compare the life in Wuthering Heights and the life in Thrushcross Grange. But these children do not know that Thrushcross Grange will be a place where their childhood scenes will end and they

will separate from each other forever. They do not know this place will change their life forever. As Lamonica foreshadows the events to the reader:

When Catherine is caught by the Lintons' bulldog, she is carried inside and recognized as "Miss Earnshaw"; Heathcliff, by contrast, is pronounced a "wicked boy... quite unfit for a decent house" (WH, 62) and dismissed, the door secured against him. Thus the Lintons of Thrushcross Grange administer the crucial moment of separation for Catherine and Heathcliff (104).

After Catherine is captured by Lintons, she finds herself in a new environment which teaches her how to behave like a lady and turns her into a new appearance. When she comes back at Heights, the changes in her appearance are observed by Nelly immediately: "[I]nstead of a wild, hatless little savage jumping into the house, and rushing to squeeze us all breathless, there lighted from a handsome black pony into a very dignified person, with brown ringlets falling from the cover of a feathered beaver, and a long cloth habit which she was obliged to hold up with both hands that she might sail in. (Brontë 55)

Stepping into a different world, Cathy now changes into a lady and there is no trace of her earlier appearance and attitudes. Although Cathy's affection did not change for Heathcliff, she could not help but to mock his appearance: "Why, how very black and cross you look! and how-how funny and grim! But that's because I'm used to Edgar and Isabella Linton. Well; Heathcliff, have you forgotten me?" (Brontë 56). One can conclude from this statement that Cathy becomes the part of the civilized world, and she is used to the atmosphere in Linton family. From that moment the reader understands that their relationships will not be the same as in their childhood. Heathcliff realizes this situation and he wants Catherine to accept him as he is. "You needn't have touched me!" he answered, following her eye and snatching away his hand. "I shall be as dirty as I please, and I like to be dirty, and I will be dirty" (Brontë 57). Implications behind his words show that Heathcliff will not change as Cathy does and he will be the same dirty child whether she likes or not. But Catherine is not aware of how her new appearance hurt Heathcliff. In this regard Beversluis says about Cathy:

She fails totally to grasp his inner anxiety, his humiliation, and the fact that she has violated him. She has become a person with a paradigm of the respectability, empty, and loveless against which they both had

formerly rebelled, and she fails to perceive it. One might be inclined to say that after this incident Heathcliff loses her little by little. It would be more accurate to say that he gradually comes to the realization that she has never been his at all. (109)

From now on, Cathy's new lifestyle, and polite manners are impossible for Heathcliff to be a good match for Cathy. Heathcliff himself is aware of this situation and moans to be like Edgar Linton. Brontë shows the ideal characteristics of a Victorian man from the mouth of Heathcliff: "I wish I had light hair and a fair skin, and was dressed and behaved as well, and had a chance of being as rich as he will be!" (Brontë 59). While Catherine is becoming an ideal Victorian woman, Heathcliff is degraded into the poor position by Hindley and his lack of wealth, rank, and wild nature do not give him a chance to reach Catherine's world. Especially Hindley at every turn hinders his chance to reach Catherine. In one of the scenes Hindley locks Heathcliff in the attic when Edgar and his sister Isabella come to Wuthering Heights for Christmas. It is also notable how Heathcliff is exposed to the torture of Hindley when he attempts to assault Edgar. Whatever Hindley does to separate Catherine and Heathcliff, he could not prevent Catherine from feeling sympathy and pity for Heathcliff. The reader can feel her sadness for Heathcliff at the dinner table: "She lifted a mouthful to her lips; then she sets it down again: her cheeks flushed, and the tears gushed over them. She slipped her fork to the floor, and hastily dived under the cloth to conceal her emotion" (Brontë 62). Even if she changes in appearance and manner, her feelings are the same. But she has no courage to show her feelings in front of the people at the table. She can only repress them under the table that is to say within her. Thus the reader may conclude from Catherine's actions that these changes in her outward appearance are socially produced. As Mary Wollstonecraft supports: "Women likewise acquire from a supposed necessity, an equally artificial mode of behaviour from a supposed necessity in the same way" (104).

Cathy's last actions remark that she is forced into the society's rules which expect her to be silent and docile. It can be observed that society's expectations start to affect Catherine's behaviours. The readers can see her struggle to adopt a different personality to be acceptable in Linton's world. When she is with Lintons, she forces herself to be a perfect Victorian girl in the eyes of them:

[A]s she had no temptation to show her rough side in their company, and had the sense to be ashamed of being rude where she experienced such invariable courtesy, she imposed unwittingly on the old lady and gentleman by her ingenuous cordiality; gained the admiration of Isabella, and the heart and soul of her brother..." (Brontë 70).

It is worth remarking that Catherine tries to develop her identity in accordance with Linton. The reader can see the role of culture and the conflict within Catherine while she is transforming into adulthood. The Victorian society expects girls to be silent and obedient. Thus Catherine hides her rebellious nature and is forced to adapt a false identity not to fail in the social world of Linton. The following quotation shows how Cathy submits to the norms of society and accepts the proposal of Edgar by destroying her feelings for Heathcliff. The following conversation about marriage proves Cathy's change:

[Nelly]: Why do you love him, Miss Cathy?

[Catherine]: Nonsense, I do-that's sufficient.

[Nelly]: By no means, you must say why?

[Catherine]: Well, because he is handsome, and pleasant to be with.

[Nelly]: Bad was my commentary.

[Catherine]: And because he is young and cheerful.

[Nelly]: Bad, still.

[Catherine]: And because he loves me.

[Nelly]: Indifferent, coming there.

[Catherine]: And he will be rich, and I shall like to be the greatest woman of the neighbourhood, and I shall be proud of having such a husband (Brontë 83).

The dialogue between Nelly and Catherine clearly explains the reason why Catherine marries Edgar. On the surface, Catherine's expressions show the reader a picture of a Victorian girl who desires wealth and status in marriage. But Catherine herself feels that "in my soul, and in my heart, I'm convinced I'm wrong!" (Brontë 84) This sentence clearly shows that social values force Catherine to repress the reality that she will not be happy to marry Edgar. İlham Dilman expresses Freud's views on happiness in his book *Freud and Human Nature*. For him, achieving happiness is to

act “in accordance with one’s conscience” (134). Within this frame, Catherine is “doing things for the sake of appearances, because one feels forced to do them, in order to avoid feared consequences” (134).

Although society forces Catherine to repress her desires and true feelings about Heathcliff, Brontë lets the reader learn about her real feelings for Heathcliff:

My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods. Time will change it, I’m well aware, as winter changes the trees- my love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath- a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, I am Heathcliff- he’s always, always in my mind- not as a pleasure, any more I am always a pleasure to myself, but ,as my own being (Brontë 87).

From this statement, the reader can detect Catherine’s intense feelings for Heathcliff. Her decision on marriage with Edgar does not reflect her real feelings and she is not completely sincere in her feelings about marriage. But she has to repress her feelings. Thus Catherine’s sense of duty which is from the pressures of the society overweighs her emotions. When it comes to choosing a partner in marriage women have no right to choose. As Rousseau explains in his book *Emile*: “This is the right of nature, which nothing can abrogate. Those who have hindered it by so many civil laws have paid more attention to the appearance than to the happiness of marriage and the morals of citizens” (400).

As she is not sure whether her decision is right or wrong, she would like to hear Nelly’s thoughts on her decision:

[Catherine]: I accepted him, Nelly; be quick, and say whether I was wrong !

[Nelly]: You accepted him? then, what good is it the discussing the matter? You have pledged your word, cannot retract. (Brontë 82)

Instead of guiding Catherine about her future marriage, Nelly leaves Catherine alone with her choice. It is clear that Nelly plays a vital role in influencing Catherine’s opinion on marriage. Even she knows how much Catherine is devoted to Heathcliff, she speaks as if she were supporting her decision: “Your brother will be pleased... The old lady and gentleman will not object, I think- you will escape from a disorderly, comfortless home into a wealthy, respectable one; and you love Edgar, and Edgar loves

you. All seems smooth and easy- where is the obstacle?" (Brontë 84). But Nelly is not able to understand Catherine's inner struggle to decide which will determine her future. "She has revealed the futility of a tolerant, common-sense attitude which is the result of a desire merely to avoid trouble to deny serious problems, and of a failure to grasp the emotions of others genuinely" (Mathison, 196). Thus Nelly does not do anything to deter Catherine from her decision. As a member of the Victorian society, she does not seem to consider Catherine's decision even if she knows that she makes a wrong choice. As Catherine's decision on marriage is in conformity with the society's expectations based on social prestige rather than love, Nelly does not find it necessary to discuss. As Mill states: "Law or public feeling do not permit the truth of an opinion to be disputed" (Mill, *On Liberty* 24). So Catherine is the victim of the society as she is forced to take decisions according to the expectations of the society.

Furthermore, Nelly sees Catherine's ongoing love for Heathcliff as dangerous. A woman has nothing but to submit to her husband's wills and desires when she steps into the married life. Nelly reminds Catherine of her responsibilities: "You are ignorant of the duties you undertake in marrying; or else, that you are a wicked, unprincipled girl" (Brontë 87). Nelly's thoughts imply that she is influenced by the traditions and social norms in which she lives. For her, if Catherine does not obey the rules, and does not repress her desires, she will go astray from virtue. At this point, Wollstonecraft criticizes the concept of virtue imposed on women: "The virtue that rests on opinion is merely worldly, and that it is the virtue of being to whom reason has been denied" (105).

The period in which Catherine lives does not give her any opportunities but to marry a man financially secure. As women are not allowed to get education and make their own living, marriage for them is an inescapable result. Gilbert and Gubar emphasize this situation in *The Madwoman in the Attic*: "As we have seen, Catherine has no meaningful choices. Driven from Wuthering Heights to Thrushcross Grange by her brother's marriage, seized by Thrushcross Grange and held fast in the jaws of reason, education, decorum, she cannot do anything better than getting married to Edgar" (277). In order to survive, she has to depend on a man. "For the sake of social and cultural survival, women accept real male domination" (Sanday 182). It seems that it

is the fate of all women. And it is the society that puts women into a submissive position and forces them to rely on man only because of their gender and social position, including wealth.

Heathcliff's return to Thrushcross after three years changes Catherine's life. When he comes back, he transforms from wild and rude boy into a man that meets society's expectations including good appearance and wealth. Nelly describes him: "[1]t looked intelligent, and retained no marks of former degradation. A half- civilized ferocity lurked yet in the depressed brows, and eyes full of black fire, but it was subdued; and his manner was even dignified, quite divested of roughness though too stern for grace" (Brontë 101-102). Through Heathcliff, Brontë shows that just as women are expected to conform to ideal Victorian definitions, men also are expected to conform to the ideas of gentleman to gain respect in the society. His new look in this way conforms to the standards of Victorian man. His respectable appearance now gives him a chance to enter into Linton's family and to attract Isabella who is Edgar's sister. On the other hand, for Edgar, Heathcliff's appearance is deceiving. For him: "though his exterior things were altered, his mind was unchangeable and unchanged. And he dreaded that mind; it revolted him; he shrank forebodingly from the idea of committing Isabella to its keeping" (Brontë 106-107).

With his return, Catherine's love for Heathcliff starts to burn again. In this way Edgar forces Catherine to make a choice in her life. Catherine is forced by her husband to choose between two men: "Will you give up Heathcliff hereafter, or will you give up me? It is impossible for you to be my friend and his at the same time, and I absolutely require to know who you choose" (Brontë 124). His remarks make it clear that a married woman cannot love two men at once even if one of them is a childhood friend. In this sense, Edgar exerts his authority to remind Catherine of her responsibilities as a wife. As stated in the following quotation:

Because Cathy does not fully understand the patriarchal system, she does not appreciate until it is too late that once she has legally aligned herself with Edgar. She is more constrained by the system than before. She no longer has any legal power over her own destiny since she is no longer considered to be an independent person in the eyes of the law. A married woman, she no longer can choose whether or not to stay connected to Heathcliff. She can petition, coax, entreat, and cajole her

husband to tolerate Heathcliff's presence in their life, but the ultimate power of decision lies in the hands of her husband. Edgar's self-interest will be more of a determining factor than his wife's affections. (Torgerson 112)

As Torgerson states; Catherine is not free as she was in her childhood. Until she is married, she finds it very natural that Edgar shows respect for Heathcliff's coming back to Wuthering Heights and she does not understand her role in the patriarchal society. After that moment, Catherine feels trapped into a place where the rules of patriarchy prevail. All the choices for Catherine are blocked now. She could neither return to Heathcliff nor divorce from Edgar. In 1847 when the novel was written a woman could not get divorced from her husband without his consent. Thus she is trapped into the limitations of patriarchy. In order to show that she is not defeated by her husband's demands, she starts to starve herself in a room for three days. Catherine's self-starvation can be illustrated by Freud's concept of "death instinct" in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*:

The hypothesises of self-preservative instincts, such as attributing to all living beings, standing in marked opposition to the idea that instinctual life as a whole serves to bring about death. Seen in this light, the theoretical importance of the instincts of self-preservation, of self-assertion, and of mastery diminishes greatly. They are component instincts whose function is to assure that the organism shall follow its own path to death, and to ward off any possible ways of returning to inorganic existence other than those which are immanent in the organism itself. We have no longer reckoning with the organism's puzzling determination (it's so hard to fit into any context) to maintain its own existence in the face of every obstacle. What we left with it is the fact that the organisms wish to die only its own fashion. (33)

According to the statement above, Catherine's death wish comes because of carrying the burden of society's expectations and repressing her own desires to adopt the social rules in which she lives. All these factors drive the self and make her closer to death. Finally it leads to suicidal thoughts and attempts. In fact her desire to die is not a way towards death itself, but it is a way to show her power and her desire to be free.

In addition, Catherine in Freudian terms is a manic personality. She feels "all the states of joy, jubilation, and triumph" (Freud, *The Mourning and Melancholy*, 213). Her death wish is a kind of accomplishment and power against patriarchal society. She is ready to destroy her body willingly. Such an individual's actions are shown by Freud:

“All such situations are marked by a lightened mood, the signs of discharge of joyful emotion, and the intensified readiness for all kinds of actions” (214).

On the other hand, Nelly hides Catherine’s health problems from Edgar. Edgar does not care about what his wife is doing in her room on her own. Disregarding what happened to his wife, Edgar traps himself into the world of books. His books and culture overweigh Catherine’s health. It is not necessary to use physical force to confine a woman. Harsh words and indifferent treatments are enough to make a woman feel trapped into a room isolated from the community. “Edgar does not need a strong, conventionally masculine body, because his mastery is contained in books such as wills, testaments, leases, titles, rent rolls, documents, languages, and all the paraphernalia by which patriarchal culture is transmitted from one generation to the next” (Gilbert 144).

He behaves as if Catherine did not live in his house. By acting like that Edgar is not aware of the damage he gives to Catherine. It seems that Edgar is blind not to realize the seriousness of Catherine’s condition. This makes Catherine angry and she cries:

Among his books! She cried, confounded. And I dying on the brink of the grave! My God! does he know how I’m altered? continued she, staring at her reflection in a mirror, hanging against the opposite wall. Is that Catherine Linton? He imagines me in a pet – in a play, perhaps. Cannot you inform him that it is frightful earnest?... Is he actually so utterly indifferent for my life? (Brontë 127)

As the reader sees, alienation between husband and wife causes problems in the family. In this regard, Edgar’s attitudes cause Catherine to lock herself into her own world and isolate her from the society. “Being exceptional, and therefore socially unacceptable, is enough to drive one mad” (Barrett 57). Catherine’s conflict with a new environment drives her into a great depression and mental deterioration. The long quotation below shows madness as a result of the cultural difference in values. In this regard Eccles and Midgley state that:

Motivation and mental health can be best understood if one looks at the fit between the characteristics individuals bring to their social environments and the characteristics of these social environments have. Specifically, the fit between the needs and motivational orientation of the individuals on the one hand, and the demands and characteristics of their social environments, on the other hand is assumed to influence

motivation and mental health. Individuals are not likely to do very well if they are in social environments that do not fit their psychological needs (135).

To be away from *Wuthering Heights* drips Catherine into a strange environment and pushes her into a deep sense of loneliness. Apart from the cultural differences, madness can be the result of the society's oppression. In this regard, Ronald Thomas points out the conflict between society and individuals:

But the conflict between the two points of views the novel dramatizes- between civilization and its discontents- may also be read as an incipient critique of the Victorian theory of repression which demanded a choice between absolute capitulation to the extreme repression of culture and mad surrounding for intense passion- a choice that discourse psychology and psychoanalysis sought to mediate. (122)

According to the above statement, Catherine's madness seems to be the result of the patriarchal oppression. Catherine does not obey the demands of the society which attempts to shape her into a traditional female role. Rather than being consumed under the rules of the patriarchy she chooses madness. "It is debilitating to be any woman in a society where women are warned that if they do not behave like angels they must be monsters" (Gilbert & Gubar). From this statement one can conclude that women are expected to be like an "angel" who devote themselves to the household chores and their husband. Those who disobey these roles suffer from madness. On the other hand, Brontë frees her heroine from the torture of patriarchy by attributing the qualities of madness and monstrosity into Catherine. Under the role of madness she starts to act freely as she was in her childhood. For example in her delirium, Catherine's feelings of emancipation come when she pulls the feathers of the pillow. Nelly shows Catherine's weird actions as follows: "Tossing about, she increased her feverish bewilderment to madness, and tore the pillow with her teeth, then raising herself up all burning, desired that I would open the window" (Brontë 128). From Cathy's remarks one can understand that she seems to destroy the rules in the house by pulling the feathers of the pillow.

Her madness also gives her the authority to judge Edgar's acts and to reveal her real feelings for him. In madness, she utters in her own voice and feelings. She daringly utters these words: "Hush! this moment! You mention that name and I end

the matter, instantly by a spring from the window! What you touch at present, you may have; but my soul will be on that hill- top before you lay hands on me again. I do not want you, Edgar” (Brontë 134).

The above quotation makes it clear that Catherine declares her freedom against the patriarchal limitations. Brontë addresses the whole patriarchal society that silences women through Cathy. Since Cathy becomes the voice of all women who are suppressed by the hegemony of men and cannot say any words in front of them, the readers can easily associate themselves with this woman. Through madness, Catherine shows her self-assertation and she escapes the traditional gender role that society imposes on her. As Laing notes in *The Politics Of Experience*: “Madness need not be all breakdown. It may also be breakthrough. It is potentially liberation and renewal”(71).

In the state of her delirium she also longs for her homeland and feels a sense of displacement. She wishes to be in Wuthering Heights and to go back to her childhood. The following statement shows how Catherine suffers from hallucination:

But, supposing at twelve years old, I had been wrenched from the Heights, and every early association, and my all in all, as Heathcliff was at that time, and been converted at a stroke into Mrs. Linton, the lady of Thrushcross Grange, the wife of a stranger; an exile, and outcast, thenceforth, what had been from my world [...] Oh, I’m burning! I wish I were out of doors- I wish I were a girl again, half savage and hardy, and free...and laughing at injuries, not maddening under them! (Brontë 131-132)

Keeping away from Wuthering Heights puts her into a position of misery. Life in the Thrushcross is a kind of prison for her. Catherine feels suffocated by the patriarchal limitations in the Thrushcross Grange. She wants Nelly to open the window though it is cold. As Nelly observes:

[Catherine]: Open the window again wide, fasten it open! Quick, Why don’t you move?

[Nelly]: Because I won’t give you your death of cold, I answered.

[Catherine]: You won’t give me a chance of life, you mean, she said sullenly. (Brontë 132)

It seems that Catherine wants freedom, an escape from the boundaries of Thrushcross Grange. She wants to feel the breeze coming from outside. She tries to do her best in order to fight. She is determined to resist the power of patriarchy. Catherine also tries to escape from the imprisonment through her memories. In this way she starts to recollect the adventurous moments in the past when she was with Heathcliff:

[T]hat's my room, with the candle in it, and the tress swaying before it... and the other candle is in Joseph's garret... Joseph sits up late, doesn't he? He is waiting till I come home that he may lock the gate. Well, he will wait a while yet. It's a rough journey, and a sad heart to travel it; and we must pass by Gimmerton Kirk to go that journey! We've often braved its ghosts often together, and dared each other to stand among the graves and ask them to come. (Brontë 132-133)

From these lines it is understood that she tries to fulfil her desires that Victorian society forces to repress. By conjuring up the events in her childhood, she feels happy. Brontë shows Catherine's memories to the reader as an important motivator to reach her own happiness and to be free in her restricted environment. Based on his Nazi camp, Viktor Frankl also tries to escape torture by conjuring up memories of his beloved. As he reflects in *Man's Search for Meaning*:

In a position of utter desolation, when man cannot express himself in positive action, when his only achievement may consist in enduring his sufferings in the right way—an honorable way—in such a position man can, through loving contemplation of the image he carries of his beloved, achieve fulfillment (49).

Frankl also explains that spiritual freedom cannot be taken from an individual. "Man can preserve a vestige of spiritual freedom, of independence of mind, even in such terrible conditions of psychic and physical stress" (74). Catherine tries to reach spiritual freedom through her memories. By removing her body slowly from the world, she approaches death day by day. As she approaches to the last moments of her life, she starts to perceive that death will make it possible for her to return to Wuthering and her childhood. Her desire to die is obvious in her words: "I'm tired, tired of being enclosed here. I'm wearying to escape into that glorious world, and to be always there; not seeing it dimly through years, and yearning for it through the walls of an aching heart; but really with it, and in it" (Brontë 172). This quotation clearly reflects her wish to die. She is happy to be free from the restrictions. As Russell shows in his book *The*

Conquest of the Happiness: “In emancipation from the fears that beset the slave of circumstance he will experience a profound joy. He will remain in the depths of his being a happy man...” (226).

Like Maggie, Cathy desires for the reunion with Heathcliff. On the other hand, Heathcliff reminds Cathy how she betrays their love and she throws herself into death during Catherine’s last moments:

Why did you betray your own heart, Cathy? I have not one word of comfort- you deserve this. You have killed yourself. Yes, you may kiss me, cry; and wring out my kisses and tears. They’ll blight you- they’ll damn you. You love me- then what right had you to leave me? What right- answer me- for the poor fancy you felt for Linton? Because misery, degradation, and death, and nothing that God or satan could inflict would have parted us, you, of your own will, did it. I have not broken your heart- you have broken it. (Brontë 173).

Heathcliff accuses Catherine of betraying their love. In a society shaped through patriarchal norms what would have been expected from Catherine? She has no choice and decision in love. “Since loving or not loving is not within our control, this duty involves necessarily” (Rousseau 400). Heathcliff sees the situation from a sentimental perspective not from a social viewpoint. Since Heathcliff does not fit the standards that make up a typical Victorian man, he fails to understand Catherine’s situation. As is said at the beginning of the novel, Heathcliff is the orphan brought by Mr. Earnshaw from the streets. Thus he does not have a social role to adopt like Catherine. As is mentioned by Terry Eagleton: “the obscurity of his origins also frees him of any exact social role” (225).

Furthermore, Heathcliff openly says that Catherine dies as a result of her faults. But all Catherine’s attempts to take action clearly show that her struggles for freedom against the patriarchy are in vain. Rather than succumbing to society, living a life without Heathcliff, she chooses her own way. As John Stuart Mill summarizes in his book *On Liberty*: “We have a right to choose the society which is the most acceptable for us” (71).

Even so, “In the end, Brontë allows Catherine’s fulfilment in death - her wish to escape from separateness and to merge totally with the other. Reunited with Heathcliff, she faints in his arms, and dies” (Wion 324). Like Maggie who reaches the most beloved

one in the flood, Catherine reunites with Heathcliff in her last moments. On the other hand, Heathcliff's desire for the reunion with Catherine haunts him for twenty years. Catherine's presence is always in Heathcliff's mind and feelings for twenty years. While he is dying, Heathcliff follows Cathy's path of death. Similarly, Heathcliff tries to destroy his body by starving himself and he also embraces death willingly and contently. The reader can see Heathcliff's desire for death to unite with Catherine: "It is not my fault, that I cannot eat or rest," he replied. I assure you it is through no settled designs. I' ll do both, as soon as I possibly can. But you might as well bid a man struggling in the water, and rest within arm's length of the shore !" (Brontë 351).

At the end, like Eliot lets Maggie and Tom unite, Brontë in the same way brings Catherine and Heathcliff together in the grave. Like Maggie and Tom, Catherine and Heathcliff could not reach a happy ending in their lives. But Eagleton mentions the role of death which frees them from earthly pains and stresses. The power of death is seen in the face of social restrictions imposed on their lives:

Indeed death, as the ultimate outer limit of consciousness and society, is the locus of Catherine and Heathcliff's love, the horizon on which it moves. The absolutism of death is prefigured and echoed back in the remorseless intensity with which their relationship is actually lived. Yet their union can be achieved only in the act of abandoning the actual world. (230).

Thus, Catherine and Heathcliff finally overcome the social limitations and norms established by the patriarchy.

4. CONCLUSION

The Mill On The Floss and *Wuthering Heights* which have been studied in this thesis show how women are trapped within the limitations of choice in the Victorian period. In the Victorian period, women were expected to act according to the rules in the society. They were expected to be docile, silent and obedient. On the other hand, Brontë and Eliot created unconventional heroines who were different from the Victorian feminine expectations. Their lives, their characters, their appearances are not suitable for the Victorian expectations. By portraying Maggie and Catherine's struggles, Eliot and Brontë want to reflect Victorian social norms.

In *The Mill On The Floss*, Maggie despises woman's roles in the society. She tries to challenge the norms of society by her actions. On the other hand, Maggie's actions are always restricted and condemned by her family. Maggie's search of knowledge, freedom and her passion are not appreciated by the society. Her desire to love and to be loved is never satisfied by her brother Tom. Maggie tries to get educational opportunities as Tom gets. However her struggles are always suppressed by the patriarchy. In *Wuthering Heights*, Brontë shows the negative consequences of a marriage based on social values rather than love. Catherine is the victim of a wrong marriage. In order to be accepted by the society, she suppresses her own nature and marries Edgar who is a socially respectable man. Adopting the role of a lady does not bring Catherine happiness. In Thrushcross Grange, she feels like an outcast. She starts to long for her home and her freedom at Wuthering Heights. Under the rule of the

patriarchal system she is destroyed psychologically and physically and she turns into a mad woman.

However, Catherine and Maggie try to reach freedom and happiness in their own ways despite the restrictions. Catherine thinks of committing suicide, at the moment she learns the power of patriarchy. She embraces death by self starvation. Her madness gives her a kind of power to behave as she wishes. Under the mask of madness, she struggles against the power of patriarchy. What is more, she tries to achieve happiness through her dreams. Though her memories of Heathcliff, she returns to her childhood and achieve happiness and freedom. On the other hand, Maggie is not as strong as Catherine. Maggie's strong bond to her brother Tom always subdues her. She always submits to Tom's demands in order not to lose him. Whenever she tries to assert herself, she is silenced by her brother. As Tom's sense of duty blinds his feelings, he never appreciates Maggie's love and her actions. Her struggles to receive Tom's love fail. In addition, adopting the role of a traditional Victorian girl makes her unhappy. No matter how strongly Maggie tries to repress her desires to love and to be loved, finally these desires appear. She allows herself small moment of pleasures with Stephen. However, the people in St. Oggs wrongly assume that Maggie and Stephen have a sexual relationship. In particular, Tom's rejection is a great sadness for Maggie. She struggles to get a place in the society in the aftermath of this unpleasant event. But Maggie knows very well that she will never lead a life as she wishes as the society's expectations are not in accordance with her desires and nature. At the end of the novel, Maggie leaves herself into the depths of water. Flood is a kind of relief and chance for Maggie to reconcile with Tom. If they had survived it was impossible for Tom to forgive Maggie as Tom's faithfulness to the society's norms would not be enough to change his mind even this hurts him so much. Death is the only way to unite them. Maggie at last reaches her desire to be hand in hand with her brother. Even if they couldn't achieve earthly happiness, they reach lasting happiness in the flood. Brontë and Eliot show that conforming to the social expectations does not bring happiness to Maggie and Catherine. Thus their deliberate choices lead them to a route where they want to go. Both of them are aware of the fact that the route they take is the only way to escape from the restrictions. In these two novels heroines sacrifice their own lives to be the voice of all women. They do what other women cannot do.

Brontë and Eliot create these heroines who overcome all those restrictions, conventions, gender inequality by embracing death.

Furthermore, Brontë and Eliot show that not only women but also men are the victims of the society. For the sake of meeting the demands of the society, individuals blind their own reasons and natures. In the *Mill On The Floss* Tom's blind obedience to the rules prevents him from using his reason. So he never reveals his real feelings. In a sense Tom subordinates his own happiness and passions to the society's expectations. No matter how he tries to act like a real man, he is drifted in the flood. In *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff fails to live up to the expectations of society. He chooses self starvation at the end. All these rules do not bring happiness into the lives of characters in the novels.

In conclusion, Brontë and Eliot question the rules and norms in the Victorian period. Both writers try to show how the values and traditional norms in the society force women into conventional gender roles. Through Maggie and Catherine, Eliot and Brontë show women's reactions against society which destroys their joy of life and hinders them from being independent women. Eliot and Brontë try to transcend the women's fate imposed by social expectations.

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