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**The Traditional Gothic Elements and
"Gothic Feminism" in W. Collins' *The
Woman in White* (1859) and S. Hill's *The
Woman in Black* (1983)**

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of the requirements for a **Master degree in English Language,
Literature, and Civilization**

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Abstract

The theme of our dissertation is The Traditional Gothic Elements and "Gothic Feminism" in W. Collins' *The Woman in White* (1859) and S. Hill's *The Woman in Black* (1983). Our aim in this dissertation is to compare the two novels through the use of "Gothic Feminism" as the major theory. Furthermore, this theory aims at acknowledging the situation of women during the 19th and 20th century, in which different social aspects were held in both novels Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* and Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black*. Both of authors lived in different periods of time. Thus, the content of the two works leads us to discover the differences between the nineteenth century gothic elements and those of the twentieth century in these two literary works. In our study, we will concentrate on the portrayal of femininity in Collins's *The Woman in White* and Hill's *The Woman in Black* by examining characteristics of female gothic in both works.

In order to do this, "Gothic Feminism" is the most suitable theory which will help us to discover the existence of feminist ideas in a novel written by a male figure in the Victorian era, and in a novella written by a woman in the 20th century. In addition, both these works helped us to draw our attention to the way women faced their awkward conditions of their times.

Our real aim is to prove that there are changes in the representation of the woman in gothic literature, which is in constant evolution.

Our research paper is divided into three chapters. The first chapter will be devoted to the introduction of the major concepts in the theoretical part by providing definitions to terms such as: Gothic, Feminism and "Gothic Feminism" for understanding our works. The second and third chapter will be a contextual and textual analysis of both works, and this will be achieved through the introduction of both authors' biographies, the summary of both novels.

In the analysis, we apply the traditional gothic elements and Gothic feminism as a theory on both works in order to find similarities and differences between them.

Key Words: gothic, sublime, supernatural, villain, mystery, distressed heroine, gothic feminism, feminism, victim feminism, professionalization of the gender

Dedications

I dedicate this modest work to:

My dear parents who,
Were always behind me,
In each step,
To help me.

My brothers and sisters,
And all my friends,
Whom I'm always relying on,
For help and guidance.

Above all my teachers,
The models of vividness,
Those who taught me,
The best of the best.

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General Introduction

In this dissertation, we will examine two stories written in two different periods of time: *The Woman in White* and *The Woman in Black*, respectively. The first is written during the Victorian period by a male author and the second was written in the 20th century by female author.

As we know, the nineteenth century was considered as the period of changes in the British society. This was the age of the Industrial Revolution which had big impacts on British politics. It was not only a period of technological revolution, but also a revolution in ideas and thoughts, where people transferred from the Romantic Age in which poetry was more important than form, to another important genre which is the novel that became popular in Britain. Nearly all of these novels hold social problems as their main theme while England was witnessing many problems in society, religion, and politics.

The most important literary genre which appeared during the Victorian period was the Sensational Novel as a literary genre. Many writers influenced by this literary genre such as Ellen Wood, Arthur Conan Doyle, and Mary Elizabeth Braddon. This genre gained its popularity in the age of Enlightenment period, and developed in the Victorian Age where it solved specific crime and mystery. It is also imitated by many writers, believing its importance. Other writers were influenced by the poems of William Blacke (1757-1827) whose works dealt with emotions and feelings and expressed them in a terrifying manner like in *The marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1793).

The Woman in White was published in 1860s. It is an example of this genre, where it has been influenced by this literary genre of sensation fiction by including its elements and characteristics.

Gothic novels were also considered to be the most inspiring genre of literature for many writers. Particularly for female writers, as a reaction to the male dominance of the "higher arts" through the natural desire, and nearly all these novels included female voices and proved that Gothic novels continue to be alive throughout the time by enhancing domestic sphere, and horrific conditions in which most women were living. The setting in these Gothic novels takes place within the house between husbands and wives and its major concern is shown through the oppression and criminality, and so on. In his article "What's Sensation about the 'Sensation Novel'?", Patrick Brantlinger categorizes the sensation novel as a form of domestic realism with elements of mystery, but he also considers it as psychological in nature. Thus, *The Woman in White* is the best example of this genre, written by Willkie Collins during the Victorian period.

The Woman in White is regarded in general as the first sensational novel and inspired numerous imitations. It is based on eighteenth century case of abduction and wrongful imprisonment, especially Wilkie Collins inspired by Mejan's *Recueil des causes célèbres*. It is considered as an accepted source for *The Woman in White*, where Collins brought a copy of it from France in 1856. Particularly, he has been influenced by the elements of *The Story of Adélaïde-Marie-Rogres- Lusignan de Champignelles*, including in it elements of insanity and madness (Hyder 298-299).

Its first issue was published in a serial form in *All the Year Round* in 1859. It is one of the detective fictions with the hero Walter Hartright. Its mystery begins when Walter Hartright encounters a solitary and beautiful woman dressed in white and wants to solve the mystery. The plot ends finally with his marriage with his lovely and wealthy woman, Laura, after she gets rid of her husband Mr. Percival Glyde who is considered as a rogue character in the story.

In the twentieth century there have been plays, theatre, film, television, musical adaptations and even a comic strip version of the novel. They made of this literary genre not only a kind of horror, but also as an entertainment to the audience. Among these works, we can cite Julian Barnes in *A History of the World*, Graham Swift in *Waterland* (1983), the short stories of Susan Hill which took the traditional form, containing an arrangement from sympathetic observations of an old age to the First World War, and after the Second World War, Hill's novella *The Woman in Black* is her best work which is a ghost horror story.

The Woman in Black is written by Susan Hill in 1983. It is a classic of Victorian ghost storytelling. It is about a chilling tale of a menacing specter that haunts a small English town and the solicitor Arthur Kipps who is sent to clear up affairs of a recently deceased woman who lived in a remount house. When he arrives, he finds the house more frightening than he imagines, especially after the appearance of the *Woman in Black*.

Female narratives began to appear, starting from 1960 with female leading characters like Margaret Durable and others like Edna O'Brien, whose early stories were about poor girls, *The Country Girls Trilogy* (1960-1963), where she contrasted between sexual desires and a Catholicism background. Many novels seem to hold the woman as a subject of debate. Thus, both of these works, *The Woman in White* and *The Woman Black*, reveal these debates as they were written respectively by Wilkie Collins and Susan Hill, dealing with a woman as a subject of concern. They also made of their works as belonging to a gothic horror fiction in which they managed to bring into light women's suffering where they were trapped by men of their societies.

Even if many years elapsed between the publications of the two novels by the authors of the same nationality, we find many grounds in their content which are worth studying.

Personal Motivation

The first thing which attracted my attention to these two works is their titles, which are similar in structure and in another standing in contrast: *The Woman in White* and *The Woman in Black*. The second reason for choosing these two literary masterpieces is the presence in each page; we find features of gothic literature in relation to feminism. They are beautifully described and reveal themselves through a large display of the characters, especially through the laps of time. This choice goes hand in hand with our core objective revealing the perception of woman in both works throughout two historical periods.

Research Methodology

Both novels are based on a large array of theories; however, I choose to refer to "Gothic Feminism" as explained by the American literary critic Diane Long Hoeveler. This theory studies feminist and gothic characteristics which can be seen on both individual and collective levels, and showed the dehumanization and oppression of women. This theory helped us not only in showing the women's subjects in each historical period but, also affirmed these writers' right into writing their works. Particularly, they helped us in the demonstration of gothic characteristics not only throughout the display of the characters, but also through the setting and the themes as well. We will use Punter's *The Literature of Terror* and Hoeveler's *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* as the major references in our study because they contain ideas and references that can be applied to our works.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

Through the application of Gothic Feminist theory, we will try to answer the following research questions: How did the two authors portray woman in both their historical periods? Do the female characters manifest themselves in the light of the application of Gothic Feminism? Are there similarities and differences between the woman of the nineteenth century and the woman in the twentieth century according to the theory of Gothic Feminism? Are there similarities and differences between the traditional gothic of the eighteenth century and the gothic of the Victorian and the twentieth century?

Review of Literature

The Woman in White has received large critical responses from many writers after its publication. David Stuart Davies in his work *The Woman in White* argues that: "*The Woman in White* was sensational, not only in terms of its style and subject matter, but also in term of its immense popularity" (vii).

Winifred Hughes also states that sensation fiction has to deal not only with suspense and coincidence, but also realism and romance as well by including the domestication settings (16 qtd. In Davies x).

If we turn to the gothic of the late eighteenth-century, which was characterized by the works of these gothic writers such as Horace Walpole, Ann Radcliffe, Matthew Lewis, we will find that there are many similarities between them "In terms of setting, plots, tone and motifs" (Davies xi-xii). As a result, "*The Woman in White* in particular: gloomy, decaying castors or stately homes, aristocratic villains, vulnerable heroines, interlopers, supernatural trappings including twilit graveyards and ghostly presences, and a panoply of exorbitant passions, monstrous crimes and madness" (Davies xi-xii).

David Stuart Davies also in his introduction to his work argues that Lyn Pykett has made distinction between the sensational novel and the new woman's writings of 1880s and 90s, asserting that despite their differences in tone, style and perspectives on femininity, both genres contain the novel of the modern woman in which they include domesticity and marital situations. For her the female characters in the woman in white possess knowledge which can be unrepentant as "fallen" women like Mrs. Catherick as we can find them hopeful in discovering secrets, except Anne who is "shut up". This suggests that Anne is incapable of speaking or expressing herself, but she makes the characters of the novel aware about the existence of the secret. However, Marian seems to be powerful enough to discover Mr. Percival's secret in contrast to Laura who could not express herself and remained most of the time silenced(77 qtd. In Davies xiv-xv).

Hyder states in his article Wilkie Collins that the story of *The Woman in White* has relation with Wilkie Collins' private life as it is retold in Millais's biography to his father who was Wilkie Collins' friend. There, his father Millais went to Collins home to visit the family, and suddenly they heard a scream of a distressed woman named Caroline Grave dressed all in white shining in the moonlight and this when he was walking with Collins and his brother Charles (297-298).

Miller in his work: *Cage aux Folles: Sensation and Gender in Wilkie Collins's The Woman in White* refers to both Laura and Anne as the "nervous and sensitive characters

which is the result of the mystery and fear that surrounds both of them, and both characters seems to be in distress, especially they were in a great oppression" (109).

David Stuart Davies also argues that Henry James regarded by Collins as "the credit of having introduced into fiction those most mysterious of mysteries, the mysteries which are at our own doors" (122 qtd. In Davies xii). This means that the family hides all the secrets of the world.

The Woman in Black also received critical responses because of its influence. It was not only adapted as a novel but also adapted the stage for the first time in December 1987 where the actor was Stephen Mallatratt.

Kate Kellaway in her report in an article Touched by evil: Susan Hill and Jane Goldman on what Inspired *The Woman in Black*, argues that Hill claims in an interview that that *The Woman in Black* has disturbed its readers and even its audience because of its horror and terrifying events. It is also argued that *The Woman in Black* is not only an atmospheric ghost story of the gothic persuasion, it can be seen also as a spine chilling traditional horror and added that *The Woman in Black* is best narrated by Arthur Kipps.

Earnest Hofer describes the novel as "a personal outpouring that 'discloses the subconscious torment' that Hill experienced after a miscarriage and, as such, reads it as a typical and weaker than her earlier fiction" (293 qtd. In Scullion 145).

Stephen Bann considers the story as an exceptional in its suspense, and considers it as a 'true ghost story' which is noticeably different from "the 'true ghost story' from its 'gross and overblown...bastard brother', the horror story". He also adds that the story can have its attributes to earlier writers such as Edgar Allan Poe, M. R. James, R. L. Stevenson, Sheridan Le Fanu, and others like (12 qtd. In Scullion 294). This story also can have its connections to Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* (1860) in its intersexual references (Scullion 294). Especially, "there is clear evidence for Hill's use of autobiographical material in the novel" (Hill 114 qtd. in Scullion 293). Especially, *The Woman in Black* seems to be an account of personal life.

Clive Bloom also considers it as "a Gothic horror revival" (ibid 293 qtd . In 7). It is also the same thing with Allan Lloyd Smith who argues that it employs a "stylized flat repetition of Gothic structure"(13 qtd. In Scullion 293).

Both Stephen Bann and Gina argue asserted the relevance of the gothic tropes on *The Woman in Black* (Bann 12-Wisker 8 qtd. In Scullion 294). Particularly, Wisker considers refers

to the story of *The Woman in Black* as the "traditional format of the ghost story" (Scullion 294).

Hill's story presents the conventional familiar Gothic trope. Thus,

Jennet Humphrey, during her lifetime, refuses to be ostracized from 'respectable' society, often returning to her sister's house in an attempt to reclaim her son. Later, in the form of a ghost, she has complete freedom of space and time in which to wreak vengeance against other parents by causing the death of their children. In *The Woman in Black*, Jennet Humphrey plays the role more often attributed to the wandering male Gothic protagonist. She is neither locked out nor locked in, but has the haunting power to 'lock' and open her son's nursery at will in order to torment Kipps. She might, therefore, be considered an excessively transgressive Gothic 'heroic'. (Scullion 196)

After reviewing the existing literature, no one can deny that both novels have received a great deal of criticism, and they have been largely studied from their publication due to their originality. However, some aspects had not been studied.

So, as far as our research has been done, we have never met a work already done about these two works and by the application of the theory of "Gothic Feminism".

Outline of the Work

To answer the questions above mentioned, we will divide our research paper into three chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction of the major literary theories which are worthy of being defined. These are Gothic in literature, Feminism and Gothic Feminism by defining their principals, and characteristics.

The second chapter will deal with a contextual and textual study of *The Woman in White*, the author's biography, and the summary of the novel. In the second step, we will explore the major traditional gothic elements on *The Woman in White*. Then, we apply the principle of "Gothic Feminism" on the characters of the novel throughout the themes, the setting, and the plot to show its relevance.

The same can be dealt with the third chapter, where we first introduce the historical background of Hill's *The Woman in Black*' novella, the author's biography, and the summary of *The Woman in Black*. Then, we will study the traditional gothic elements throughout the story. As a final step, we will use the principles of "Gothic Feminism" on the plot, setting, characters, and themes.

Thus, we will answer the questions we have already asked. We will also show the similarities between the two works in terms of their use or the presence of the traditional Gothic elements and how do they both contain feminist claims through the application of the theory of "Gothic Feminism".

In addition to this, we will show the differences between the two work; that is to say, we will explain how we view the Gothic work of the Victorian period with that of the twentieth era, and the feminist ideas, and those of the twentieth century with the Victorian period.

**Chapter I: The Traditional Gothic and Gothic
Feminism**

Introduction

The first chapter of this dissertation will be exclusively devoted to the study of the Traditional Gothic, in which we will introduce the term Gothic genre, its origins, its characteristics and its major elements.

The second section is a brief summary of the gothic evolution from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century. Then, to the twentieth century. We will also show the differences between these three important periods.

The third section is a brief introduction to the feminist theory through the definition of the three major feminist movements. In this section, we will list some of the important feminist reformers who contributed to the development of these movements.

Finally, the last section will be an introduction to the theory of "Gothic Feminism" by citing its major characteristics and the most important literary figures with their works. In this part we will show the origins of the Gothic Feminism as a literary theory, its characteristics and the major critical works.

I.1.The Traditional Gothic

I.1.1. Gothic Genre in Literature

The word Gothic can be defined in many ways. David Punter states in his work *The Literature of Terror* arguing that the word gothic" has, even now, a wide variety of meaning, and which has had in the past even more. It's used in a number of different fields: as a literary term, as a historical term, as an artistic term, as an architectural term. And a literary term in contemporary usage, it has a range of different applications" (1).

It can refer to architecture styles like building cathedral with features of gothic churches as it refers to the strange and mysterious, fulfilled with adventures. It is turned nearly around the dark and odd places such as ruins of castles, dark spaces, and haunted castles. In addition to this, it can be also considered as a style of writing as well as tone which is used by some writers in their description of the dark and gloomy atmosphere in a castle or a graveyard.

However, all these definitions differentiate from Gothic literature. This latter refers to the supernatural and terrifying events that we find in literature. In a special manner, many critics refer to the literary works which were written from 1760s to 1820s, starting from Horace Walpole who influenced other writers such as Ann Radcliffe, Mathew Lewis, C. R.

Maturin, and Mary Shelly.

I.1.2.The Origins of Gothic Fiction

Gothic fiction originated in the United Kingdom with Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) which has introduced to the reader a new scope of literary pleasure that was an indispensable quality for the romantics. Thus, it is a movement that focused on ruin, death, chaos, decay and privileged irrationality as well as passion over rationality and reason. The history of the Gothic tradition in literature can be traced back to the latest quarter of the seventeenth century, with the author Horace Walpole being the first to coin the term in his preface to the second edition of *The Castle of Otranto* (Hogle I).

The Gothic novel is considered as a romantic novel. Furthermore, it is dominated by the atmosphere of mystery and terror and turns around imaginative impulse which ruled over the medieval building and ruins.

The term Gothic can be related to the ancient Goths; the Germanic tribes who fought against the Roman Empire. These Goths separated later on into two groups: the Visigoths (the West Goths) and Ostrogoth (the East Goths). David Punter in his work *The Literature of Terror* argues that:

The original meaning, not unnaturally, was literally 'to do with the Goths' or the barbarian northern Tribes who played so somewhat unfair a part in the collapse of the Roman empire, although this apparently literal meaning was less simple than it appears, because the 17th -and 18th century writers who used the term in this sense had very little ideas of who the Goths were or what they were like. One thing that was known was that they came from northern Europe, and thus the term had a tendency to broaden out, to become virtually synonym for 'Teutonic', while retaining its connotations of barbarity. (4-5)

The relation of the Goths to the Gothic novel goes back to the Greco-Roman revival in culture and the influence of the buildings of the middle ages were considered as barbaric. Thus, the gothic novels were named like that because of their setting; actions took place in mansions and castles of the gothic architectural style.

According to Punter: "'Gothic' is most usually applied to a group of novels written between the 1760s and 1820s"(1). It means that the novels which were written between these periods related to these works; starting from Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* in 1764. Then, *The Castle of Wolfenbach* (1793) which was written by Eliza Parsons and followed later by other works like Anne Radcliff's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), and other novels by Mary Shelly like *Frankenstein* (1818). David Punter also stated in his introductory chapter to *The Literature of Terror* entitled "The Origins of Gothic Fiction" that: "The origin of Gothic

fiction cannot be separated from the origin of the novel from itself"(20) because they are related and embody the same characteristics. Hence, David Punter states in his work *The Literature of Terror* that:

A particularity attitude towards the recapture of history; a particular kind of literary style; a version of self-consciousness; un-realism; a mode of revealing the unconscious; connections with the primitive, the barbaric, the tabooed—all of these meanings have attached themselves in one way or another to the idea of Gothic fiction, and our present apprehension of the term is usually an uneasy concatenation of them, in which there is a complicated interplay of direct historical connections and even variable metaphor. (4)

It means that in order to understand the term gothic, we have to relate it to its origin with which it shares the same characteristics including: terror, fear, savageness. Besides, considering that it took its origin from the terrorizing writing which goes back to the Middle Ages, it is prevailed by fear that we face in life. All these reflected in the supernatural phenomena and the gothic mood of the novel.

I.1.3.Characteristics of Gothic Fiction

Terror is the most prominent feature in gothic Fiction. It can be psychological or physical mystery. We find also in Gothic Fiction the supernatural ghosts, darkness, decay, Gothic architecture, castles, madness, persecuted maiden.....etc. Furthermore, David Punter argues also that

When thinking of the gothic novel, a set of characteristics springs readily to our mind: an emphasis on portraying the terrifying, a common insistence on archaic settings, a prominent use of the supernatural, the presence of highly stereotyped characters and the attempt to deploy and perfect techniques of literary suspense are the most significant. Used in this sense, 'Gothic' fiction is the fiction of the haunted castle, of heroines preyed on by unspeakable terrors, of the blackly lowering villain, of ghosts, vampires, monsters and werewolves. (1)

There are also other characteristics of the gothic novel which can be seen in its reaction against rigidity and conformity of other forms of Romantic literature. Additionally, the protagonists in the gothic novel can be isolated willingly or unwillingly and this is what we see in the analysis of both *The Woman in White* and *The Woman in Black*.

Gothic elements are well illustrated in David Punter's work *The Literature of Terror*. For him:

The elements which seem most universal in the genre are the apparent presence of a ghost, often finally explained away by non-supernatural means; the very real presence of one or more members of the aristocracy, with castles and other props to match; and a dominant love-plot, generally set in the past but with very little attempt at real historical distancing beyond, perhaps, occasional vocabulary and sometimes the interpolation of references to

actual historical vocabulary and sometimes the interpolation of references to actual historical events. The novels show the marks of being written for a largely captive audience: the same themes are repeated with only the slightest of variations, and assumptions are frequently made which point to a readership already thoroughly familiar with a certain set of narrative and stylistic conventions. (2)

Most of these elements are found in *The Woman in White* and *The Woman in Black*. These elements of gothic novels can be summarized as follow:

Setting in a castle, in which the actions take place as they can be abandoned or occupied. They contain secret passages, trap doors, secret rooms, dark or hidden staircases. The castle may be near or connected to caves, claustrophobia, and mystery. In the original gothic novel, the setting is in a faraway country; for example, Horace Walpole in *The Castle of Otranto* is set in medieval Italy in contrast to the works of the 19th and 20th century, in which actions take place in the same country by an aristocratic mansion or big house but with some mysteries as we can see in Collins' *The Woman in White* and Hill's *The Woman in Black*.

An atmosphere of mystery and suspense, where the threatening feeling which provoke fear exerts an overwhelming guiding influence over the novel. The plot is centered on mystery, unknown parental, and disappearance. It is characterized by its complexity in suspense and its inexplicable events as David Punter argues in his work *The Literature of Terror* that:

J. M. Tompkins's work *The Popular Novel in England (1770-1800)* is the most significant work in gothic literature in which she points that "we owe the entire apparatus of novelistic suspense; [...] only for the Gothic writers that complexity of plotting was necessary, because it was only for them that the process of suspense and release was an essential fictional mechanism"(14).

The plot in gothic literature deals with various subjects such as powerless heroine, the dominant father or husband specifically, identity, and the villain as the most important character which adds suspense and complexity of the novel. Thus, David Punter also states in his work *The Literature of Terror* that "The world in which it did deal was peopled with stock characters, which discoursed in predictable ways: the shy, nervous, retiring heroine, who was nevertheless usually possessed of a remarkable ability to survive hideously dangerous situations; the heavy-handed, tyrannical father" (9).

The fantastic which is understood through the existence of these conditions such as the supernatural and the natural, reactionary sentiment such as the feeling of terror, hesitations. All these feeling must be found even in dream which is another important element in the

gothic novel. The fantastic also can be understood either Fantasy or Fantastic according to the writer or the theorist. Some theorists see the difference between Fantasy and Fantastic as two kinds of stories different from each other whereas other theorists see fantastic as an element which is included within gothic literature. The most important feature which characterized the fantastic is the presence of horror and fear which dominate nearly most characters. In most cases, it is their reaction which can be the result of what is against their desire and feelings. There is a violation in the narrative voice; there the unexpected reactions came specifically toward what is real and not real. This is shown in both novels: *The Woman in White* and *The Woman in Black* when they first appeared to the protagonists of both works. Their reactions differ, and this will be shown in the second and third chapter. These reactions also differ from the modern readers who react without astonishment to the existence of ghosts as we will see in *The Woman in Black*.

Omens, Portents, and Visions are among the phenomena, in which the disturbing vision may have an effect on the characters and plays a great role in the coming events. We can consider this among the atmosphere of mystery and suspense, and the best example of this is the Witches and Witchcraft which used by Shakespeare in his play *Macbeth*. Witches perform a divine role by telling people about their future and communicate with spirits.

The metonymy of gloom and horror which used as a metaphor to express something else. As an instance, rain is used to express sadness, especially in funeral scenes. Another example such as doom, gloom which can be classified among the elements of mystery, danger, or the supernatural.

The vocabulary of the gothic which is so important in the gothic literature as an appropriate diction; for instance, words used to express mystery in which the characters respond to it through their emotions such as anger, sorrow, surprise, and terror. In addition to this, crying, emotional speeches, breathlessness, panic; and even screaming are common too.

Supranational is another element which goes beyond nature and has to do with physical power or otherwise inexplicable events. Both ghosts and giants were kings or inanimate objects. Particularly, this ancient prophecy has to do with the castle or its inhabitants, either former or present. This prophecy can be obscure, partial, or confusing. In addition to other elements such as ghost, miracle, spirits and secrets.

The Castle is also another symbol in gothic literature, and this key word can be enhanced throughout the title. Especially, the writing style of the gothic literature is dominated by the use of some words such as dark, gloom, and terror.

Elements of romance which included such as powerful love which creates sometimes a

feeling of sadness even though characters have an overwhelming power to express it. This love can be either returned or unreturned. The sad love in general came as a result of the father's control, where the woman is trapped between her choice and her father's choice in love. In addition to this, lovers can face some obstacles. They can disappear without explanation as the solution may be offered at the end if one of them returned.

The Sublime as concept which is developed in Edmund Burke's most influential work *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1756) since it is taken from the Greek philosopher Longinus. Throughout his theory, he influenced other philosophers such as Immanuel Kant and the Romantic poets including especially William Wordsworth. Walpole's idea of sublime as an emotion, ultimately achieved via the feeling of terror. It was a concept promoted by philosopher Edmund Burke some eight years before the publication of Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). Continually; Burke's theory has been linked to the gothic exploration of terror, where authors would create the desired atmosphere in a space far removed from the reader himself.

The weather which is used to describe the gothic atmosphere for example: mist, storms, cloud and even rain to enforce the sad atmosphere or even to describe an obscure objects as a characteristic of the sublime, or for the sake of indicating how the person or the thing is terrifying. All these events can be accompanied by the appearance of a character or the beginning of the terrifying event; for example: sunlight represents pleasure and happy life; it also has the power to bestow these upon characters. Weather used as a convention of the gothic in order to enhance the sublime.

Unreliable narrator who tells a story from his point of view. He does not understand the importance of a particular situation or make an incorrect conclusion or assumption about an event that he or she witnesses. This is what we are going to see in Hill's *The Woman in Black* through the protagonist of the novel Arthur Kipps.

Marriage and resolution are so important to the female gothic because they are a kind of resolution for her since they help her to get rid of the tyrannical father, but only if marriage is based on love. In this case the heroine is going to forget the miseries of the past, and this is what we will see in *The Woman in White* after the marriage of Laura with her beloved Walter, and giving birth to her first child and lived a happy life.

Description of the journey where the characters experience all kinds of fear and anxiety which change the course of their life, and affects them psychologically and emotionally since they are going to tell all the darker side of their life in their stories. They deal with love or family, where many types of insanity were portrayed.

The female gothic is of a great importance in gothic literature. Therefore, the female characters are always portrayed as repressed; we find them completely distressed. The major reason is the patriarchal dominance which caused their suffering and prevents them from achieving a happy life. However, there were many perspective views about women and this depend if the writer is male or female. In the male works, women were seen as snobbish, powerful, and exaggerated in contrast to the female works which were seen as intelligent, fainting and oppressive or powerless. They were always controlled by their tyrannical and repressive husbands who are often the cause of their madness.

Thus, the representation of the female characters in gothic literature depends on the writer's sex, whether he is a male or female. On this account, the concept of woman changes from one writer to another regarding their views.

I.2. The Evolution of Gothic Literature

I.2.1. Gothic Fiction in Eighteenth Century and Romantic Period

Historical context of the late eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century is so important to the gothic form. It was a time of changes and the most important factors which contributed to all these changes are:

The French revolution and the Industrial Revolution, which England had witnessed, engendered its effects on the social class division. In addition, colonialism led made of Britain a wealthy empire.

The development of Gothic literature form of fiction goes back to the 1790. Many of the novels included castles, ruins, convents, as settings, and many of themes portrayed the barbaric which resembles the taste of the day. But others have less acceptable features of the gothic fiction because they are sensationalist in nature, and tender to portray some situation in relation to terror (Punter 7-8). Thus, in 1800, Wordsworth published his second edition of *Lyrical Ballade* (1798 and 1800) as a lengthy preface.

Traditional gothic is distanced from the public world, and set in a far setting such as Italy or Spain for the sake of making stories specifically pleasing and suspicious to appeal on the reader an irrational belief such as fear. This is why Horace Walpole tried to explore the fantastic through the supernatural events.

David Punter in his work *A New Companion to Gothic* argues that the major features of the gothic novel are found in the works of Horace Walpole *The Castle of Otranto* such as supernatural events, dark setting, wilderness, and the ruined castles (19).

However; Gothic first developed in the form of sublime. Thus, Roland Carter and John

McRae in their work *The Routledge History of Literature in English: Britain and Ireland* argue in their essay *The Gothic and the Sublime* that

The eighteenth century marked a shift from sensibility towards what came to be called "the sublime" the concept, from classical Greek, came to England through the French of Boileau, and reached its definitive explication in Edmund Burke's philosophical Enquiry into the *Originative of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757-59). Burke's idea of the sublime goes beyond naturalist beauty. The sublime for Burke is a productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. (208-209)

The eighteenth century, in fact, was based on reason and religion. Thus, the romantic period appeared as a response to these concepts and celebrated all that has to do with nature, wilderness, and emotions.

In the romantic period (1800-1850), the traditional order was challenged by writers like Mary Shelly in her work *Frankenstein* where she managed to explore the internal emotions of human and his macabre nature. She has succeeded in creating the scientific fiction throughout the combination of reality and fiction. Her work influenced many writers later on like H.G. Well in his work *The War of the World* (1897). Thus, Shelly's novel can be considered as a depiction of the rational thought of a society. Kilgour in her work *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* argues in an essay entitled *The Nature of Gothic* that the gothic's "escape from the real world has a deeper moral purpose "(9). This suggests that the gothic is an imaginative mode. This is why that it caused reactions against the predominant ideas of the 18th century which were based on reason. She even points in the same work in an essay entitled "Past and Present" that: "like Romanticism, the gothic is considered, particularly a revolt against a mechanistic or atomistic view of the world and relations, in favor of recovering an earlier organic model. The gothic is symptomatic of nostalgia for the past which idealizes the medieval world as one of organic wholeness" (11).

This is what it means romantic revival, in which many writers revived the gothic of the Middle Ages and especially, the tales of the Chivalric Romance such as *King Arthur and His knights around the Table*. Gothic fiction, which dominated in the late eighteenth century, was considered as the source of fantastic as we can find in the work of Horace Walpole and Anne Radcliffe who experienced the readers with all kinds of emotions. The genre further continued to flourish throughout the romantic period and even in the Victorian Age where its characteristics were adopted into various works of literature, including the Victorian novel (Hogle I).

The influence of romanticism still felt and found even in the English novel of the Victorian Age because of its dealing with emotions and terror as its darkest side. Thus, the

gothic can be seen as the most remote form of romanticism because of its concern with the power of imagination and the dwimmer representation of emotions and wilderness.

The relation between gothic and women can only be explored in the works of the eighteenth century where women were denied the right of voting, and the right to their properties. They were expected to be men's servants where they could not express themselves in their presence since they are pure and innocent.

I.2.2. Gothic Fiction in the Victorian Period

In the Victorian period, most writers such as Willkie Collins and Sheridan Le Fanu were seen as the best- sellers of novels of supernatural and gothic. They tried to make the fantastic modern through setting without distancing it from the reader's world. In addition to this, science was another factor that led to modernization. Thus, the modern setting was the city, and this is what led to the emergence of the urban gothic.

The romance revival came as a reaction to the high realism of the 1870s, even though they did not withdraw from the past. Among the major figures of this movement were Arthur Conan Doyle, Andrew Lang, and Robert Lewis Stevenson.

The most important literary genre which emerged during that period is Sensational Novel (1850). However, the origins of the sensation novels goes back to the mid-to-late 1800. This term was first used and noticed by W. M. Thackeray in his own corn hill magazine as a reference to "a particular literary or dramatic phenomenon and reviewed later on by reviewers and critics such as Margaret Oliphant, E.S.Dallas, and Henry Mansel in their reviews.

It reached its highest peak in 1860 as it was influenced by the subject of murder, criminality which appeared within the English society where the majority of writers combined their writing with the elements of the 18th century gothic literature. The sensation novels became popular during the Industrial Revolution in which many books were made for the reading public.

Sensational novels can be dealt with romanticism and realism as well as Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* (1854). We find also the loss of identity as a common anxiety, and other subjects as a crime, sexual excitement, and fear, bigamy, madness. This mystery in which sensational novels deals with functions as a revelation of the real life as Braddon says: "peace masks violence; innocent appearances cloak evil intentions; reality itself functions as a mystery until the Wadden revelation of guilt, which is always lurking in the shadows" (Brantlinger 14). In addition, the gothic conventions were also included in this genre such as

madness, mystery, remount setting, and supernatural for the aim of provoking physical and psychological horror.

The most popular writers during the Victorian period who wrote about sensationalism were, Wilkie Collins, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, and Charles Reade. These writers are among the first writers who introduced the public to the new and thrilling sensation. They established this type of novels from the beginning of the 1860.

The Victorian period was characterized by its strict social codes of morals and values such as the division between social classes where there was no equality not only between man and woman, but also between the upper class women and the lower class women in which this inferior class was mistreated and lived in their utmost poverty. Thus, Louis James in his work *The Victoria Novel* argues that "Britain's social classes were becoming more integrated in the new cities"(19).

Women at that time were considered as a servant. Particularly, under the control of a male. Extremely, the Darwinian theory of "*Survival of the fittest*" gave the man the complete power and considered him as the source of production. Thus, the subject of women was the major concern of many writers.

In the Victorian period, man used to work in factories as the only support to his family while woman had the right into only a small amount of education in order to serve only their home and children. However, most female writers reacted about this and the best example is Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), in which she expressed that woman should be skilful in everything: music, her manner of walking and talking at the same time, and this throughout the character of Caroline Bingley. Accordingly, the woman should be intellectual. Especially, most of the sensation fiction portrayed the inequalities between man and woman. Thus, Richardson and Fantina argue in their work *Victorian Sensations* that Elaine Showalter among the feminist writers who argues in her well-known *A Literature of Their Own* (1977) "that women's sensation fiction was a response to women's dissatisfaction with their limited gender roles"(x). Furthermore, gender in the Victorian period characterized by the male's power and the female's challenge to get their right, where they were subjected to their brothers, fathers and husband.

Lynn Abrams in his article *Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain* claims that woman's place was at home and this during the reign of Victoria. However, in this period missions were spread to extend the importance of woman, and they wanted to suppress the notion of *the separate sphere*.

The divorce in the Victorian period was so difficult because the woman has no right into

custody. Thus, the act of Custody was passed in 1839, and the women were not even allowed to attend the school from 1840 to 1873. As time passes, the London School of Medicine was the first step for woman for getting their education in 1874. There were also Laws which were passed such as the Law of voting which was acted in 1928.

These roles started to be changed where feminists' critics criticized their own status in their society through their works. Particularly, the notion of The Angel in the House which is challenged, and many women argued of the necessity of the reform after marriage, and wanted even their properties and inheritance. Thus, the passage of the Married Woman's Property Bill of 1857 was passed, which gave the woman her distinct right as a citizen. Even though John Stuart Mill, who argued against such logic in *The Subjugation of Women* (1969), tried to get the woman her right of voting.

Little by little, the New Woman emerged into the scene due to the feminist movement. Her demands focused on education and even working outside of their home in order to get money. The most important of this, is that they wanted their freedom of sexual expression as men. The new woman was not only from the middle class, she was even from the lower classes, and though the exaggerated conceptions which were given to this New Woman, most Victorian writers contradicted society through their writings and addressing them for the oppressed woman in order to establish her as a modern woman.

This protest was essential for women. Because of it, women started to get their education in some schools which has been provided by the Church. In addition to this, They started to seek for an employment which could help her, and all the feminist movements ended positively, where many acts passed by the government such as the Married Women's Property Act of 1870 which gave the women the right into her property and it was acted in 1882, and the first colleges were created for woman at Oxford in 1878.

I.2.3. Gothic in the Twentieth Century

The gothic in the twentieth century expressed itself through horror genre and the major works which were published gave birth to short stories. Among the published works are: H.P. Lovecraft's *Weird Tales* (1923), Herbert Van Thal's *The Pan Book of Horror stories* (1959) and Christin Campbell Thomson's *Not at Night* (1925).

These short works followed the trail of the development of Gothic literature as a genre and introduced us to the belief of events, instances, and social moment of the gothic works. The literary movement was influenced not only by the gothic mode of the Victorian period, but also by the eighteenth century gothic. Many writers revived its features such as the use of

the supernatural elements like ghosts. Particularly, the produced works from 1920s to the late 1950s saw many changes, and became a kind of terror especially in the two world wars.

The end of the Victorian period marked the end of the patriarchal system, in which the English society shifted from the male supremacy and female from the state of being subjugated to the New Woman of the modern era.

The role of women began to be seen throughout the First World War and the Second World War by many writers. Particularly, in the Second World War where, women became as an essential figure in society throughout their role which has been changed. In addition, women in the twentieth century have been recognized with the same right like men. Women's quest for voting has been supported even by men. Thus, the woman entered into the political affairs of the nation and Margaret Thatcher was the first woman to be the prime minister in England.

In addition to the feminist movement, the appearance of the communist movement during the Cold War later on, changed their faith. Particularly, the Labour Party was so important for them, because they were given the right to vote. In addition to this, they have the opportunities to control themselves and their capacities, and women thus, become more autonomous.

The activism movement gave the women their right into economy and this through their workplace. Thus, women become more active and many of them contributed to the worldwide.

The twentieth century had witnessed not only the woman's movements, but also a great movement in literature such as the reappearance of Gothic on a larger scale, especially in the form of a ghost. This movements led by a wide range of female writers and several women contributed to the development of the English literature among them Katherine Mansfield with her short stories such as *Bliss and Other Stories* (1922), *German Pension* (1911), Dorothy Richardson with Virginia Woolf created their best work concerned with the study of female's issues, and the best work of Richardson *valley Pilgrimage* (1915-1938) and May Sinclair with her novel *The Three Sisters* (1914).

Women get their independence, and introduced to the world of literature. Especially, after the Second World War, many writers centered their aim on the woman's subject which was the debate of many writers of the twentieth century. Among these writers Muriel Spark in her work *Memento Mori* (1959) which is about an old people, and *The prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1961)(Carter and Morai 201). Barbara Pym is another writer of a traditionalist style because her works seems to be similar to that of Jane Austen. Her most important novels

were: *Excellent Women* (1952), *Quartet in Autumn* (1977). However, her works are not only fictions; they have even what to do with realism. (ibid 202).

The works of the female writers become so important because of the increase in their number, among them Margaret Drabble through her works such as *A Summer Bird-Cage* (1963) and *The Garrick Year* (1964) (ibid 204). In addition, "the best known is Agatha Christie, with her detectives Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple" (ibid 205). These writers also contributed to the development of the detective stories of the twentieth century which showed its similarity to the Victorian period. (1984) (ibid 208). John Fowles's work *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969) also seems to be a Victorian novel, which seems to offer different possibilities to the ending (ibid 209).

The most important work of all them is Susan Hill's short stories as *The Woman in Black* which is a good example of an excellent ghost story where the influence of the gothic writers of the nineteenth century is evident.

In the twentieth century, Feminist critics also claimed that while women in earlier novels had been portrayed as victims waiting to be rescued. In gothic novels, the roles were often reversed and the male characters were often victimized. Among the best works Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959), Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* (1963). They were observed from a feminist, Gothic theoretical outlook for their modernized adjustment of the traditional Gothic that portrays the unparalleled and often publicly unspoken, or even socially inhibition, psychological and social realities of the twentieth century women. Modern Women authors employed horror and the Gothic to convey the horror of being perceived as strange by society for engaging in and espousing artistic and vocational pursuits.

The gothic genre of the 20th Century centered on Fear, forbidden love, and the Evolution of female characters where we find them always suffering and oppressed throughout the story.

The female characters showed themselves as in as a ghost as well as villains in the twentieth century gothic works on account of their power. Thus, the roles in the modern female gothic have been changed where the male character become the victim of the female character. It has also dealt with human emotion of terror, horror, curiosity, and mystery as it showed the same characteristics with the previous gothic of the eighteenth and nineteenth century as we can see in the novella of Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black*. Particularly, most of the female writers adopted gothic tropes to create a new woman with its perception to life for example William Faulkner's *A Rose for Emily*.

The subject of women become so important in the twentieth century, and this confirmed the importance of woman and the new possibility to become more powerful as she is

portrayed in the gothic literature of some writers of the twentieth century.

I.3. Feminism

Feminism as a movement began as a reaction to the degrading view of women focusing on the right of woman for possessing the same privileges and rights as man. It sheds light on the despotism of the patriarchal society that permits women to be established as equals. The movement has its origins in the struggle for women's rights which began in the late 18th century shifted with Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). However, the 20th century movement has great influence of feminist thought.

Feminism as a theory which aims at establishing equality between woman and man either politically or economically. It focuses on analyzing gender inequality and the position of women's rights, interests and issues as we can see in literary works. Especially, it aims at understanding the nature of gender inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relation and sexuality. The well-known theorists are Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir and Ellen Showalter.

We can distinguish between three waves of feminism which all have a number of common goals, and the study of gender inequality and the effect of other systems of oppression such as race and class. However, there is no fixed definition for feminism; it depends according to the writer

I. 3.1. Historical development of Feminist Movement

History divided Feminism into three waves: The First Wave feminism began in the United Kingdom and United States of America as a period of activity from the nineteenth to the early twentieth century. It insisted upon the promotion of equal contraction, and other themes particularly, it focused on gaining female citizenship their rights, and by the end of the 19th century.

Second Wave Feminism began in the early 1960s to the present day, it exist together at the same time with third-wave feminism. It rose out of civil -right movement and anti-wars. Its major focus was largely on the issues of suffrage and equality aiming at ending discrimination.¹

Third Wave Feminism came as a reaction to the failure of the second wave and to the Backlash theory created throughout the Second Wave Feminism. It began in the 1990s, in the United States of America. It disturbed itself from the issues of sexual diversity through its celebration as a means of power among women of different races and color. This movement

1. For further reading, see Margaret. Feminism, 97.

also emphasized upon the upper middle-class white women. Another concern for this wave is "micro-politics" as a challenge to the second wave's paradigm by exposing what's good and not good for the woman especially, they used most structuralism as a means of interpretation gender and sexuality.

However, a new notion of feminism appeared with the publication of Diane Long Hoeveler of her book "Gothic Feminism".

I.4. Gothic Feminism

It's a critical approach that attempt to analyze and study feminism in early English gothic texts from the late 18th throughout mid-19th century until Nowadays, where women played an important role in the production of gothic texts.

Gothic Feminism is best illustrated in Hoeveler's gothic Feminism: *The professionalization of gender From charlotte Smith to the Brontës (1998)*. Especially, when Hoeveler read the gothic novel of the eighteenth century such as Ann Radcliffe and Clara Reeve, she applied the modern feminist notions of women. She recognized that the female gothic novelists were writing a sort of feminist novel where she calls it Gothic Feminism.

So, our ultimate goal in this section is to expand on the concept of "Gothic Feminism" in Diane Long Hoeveler's book. The principles and strategies Hoeveler gives in this book are in our view.

I.4.1. Characteristics of Gothic Feminism

The term Female Gothic was coined first by Ellen Moers in her work *Literary Women* from 1966. She defined Female Gothic as the work that women writers have done in the literary mode that, since the eighteenth, we have called the gothic (Moer 90).

In her book *Gothic Feminism*, Hoevler considers professional femininity as a new code for the understanding of the Gothic Feminism by relating it to the texts written in the 18th and 19th century's gothic works. Additional to this, Hoeveler's text provides a helpful discussion of a professional feminine in classic gothic texts, According to her "professional femininity" is "a cultivated pose, a masquerade of docility, passivity, wise passiveness, and tightly controlled emotions" (xv). It means that even though women were portrayed as victim through their passive actions such as their silence, Hoeveler considers it as a feminist attitude in order to condemn the system of patriarchy.

Especially, Hoeveler argues that the female gothic novel is not as mere understood it and deems it through the light of Victim feminism. This led Hoeveler to criticize her assertion

about Victim feminism as maintaining a double standard against men. In addition to this, she adds in her preface, "a masquerade of obedience to gain power for one self is the point of professional femininity and the rhetoric of victim feminism on evolved out of the discourse system we now recognized as the female gothic" (xiv). In this respect Hoeveler also declares in her preface that Naomi Wolf's view about Victim Feminism "fails to account for the historical evolution of the ideology as to understand the attitude rooted in gothic and melodrama tropes of female victimization (xiv).

For Hoeveler, the female gothic novel is not as Ellen Moers claims. It is mere a story of "a persecuted heroine ...An absent mother and a threatening father where staples of the genre, which begged to be read as fantasy, wish fulfillment "(xiv).Thus, in her work *The Literary Woman*, Moers points that ""The Gothic" is not so easily stated except that it has to do with fear. In Gothic writings fantasy predominates over reality, the strange over the Commonplace, and the supernatural over the natural"(Moer 90). Accordingly, in the early works of eighteenth century writers, fantasy is the most prevailing feature and gothic goes beyond this as critics of social political system of the time. Hoeveler in her preface argues that the gothic itself "is a form of feminism where all of those tactics such as femininity, docility, and victimization emerged at one time or another in the majority of female gothic novels. In addition to this women seen in this type of fiction as helpless and "can not bare their teeth in anything other than a smile"(xi).

It shows that women have no right to ask for their rights since they were under the men's control. Hoeveler also states that" this one particular type of feminine, labeled as" victim feminism", by antifeminists and then critiqued by Wolf"(xi-xii).This is present in the literary traditions of the female gothic novel, and since that the gothic is itself a form of feminism, Hoeveler defines it as a gothic feminism (xi-xii).It means that the victimization of the women is a weapon to fight patriarchy.

On the other hand, there are critics who believe that even in The Gothic Feminism, the female gothic rather serves a "counter-feminist "purpose which suggest that the female gothic always dependent and passive at the same time. There are some critics also who did not understand Hoeveler and consider her arguments as having no essence since they aim at pushing the Female Gothic to masquerade as the victim of the patriarchy in order to survive. This discussion aims at representing the gothic heroines as victim of male persecution in addition to the portrayal of women as innocent, Virtuous and good-hearted. The best example of this type of femininity is Bartha Masson in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847).

In fact, any discussion of professionalization of gender is related to early gothic

literature with a specific focus on classical works as Hoeveler argues in her book "Gothic Feminism". Thus, she asserts the originals of Victim Feminism in reference to the early gothic novel throughout the major authors, and declaring it as "a literary ideology and can't be understood apart from reading it's rhetoric within the originating source the gothic novels of charlotte smith, Ann Radcliff, Jane Austen, charlotte D'Acre Byrn ("Rosa Matilda") Marry Shelly and the Brontës" (ibid xv). She refers to these writers as the early novelists who in their understanding of the professionalization of gender, which is known as "femininity"(xv). These authors professionalize gender in order to make women aware of their right whose efforts show a new (conduct) for women. This is what we will see in our analysis of our works *The Woman in White* and *The Woman in Black* where both of these female characters appear to be the victims of the harshness society.

Clara Reeve and Sophia also considered among the greatest Female Gothic. They wrote their works respectively *The old English Baron* from 1778, *The Recess or A Tale of other Times* (1983-1985) in which the influence of Horace Walpole can be seen since nearly all those works which appeared in the contemporary period contain all Gothic elements such as romance as an exaggerated and extravagant with the presence of the supernatural elements with the inclusion of the domestic and social realism.

Hoeveler also suggests in her work that" Victim Feminism "or" professional femininity "as ideologies can not be understood apart from their origins in the female gothic novel tradition(Preface x), and this can be seen in Mary Wollstonecraft who wrote two incipient gothic novels both before and after she wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of women* (1792).

In fact, women in the gothic tradition are shown assure violent and aggressive which Ann Radcliffe considers them not only violent but she goes beyond this where she refers to them as being docile attractive and passive at the same time. This mixture of docility and violence in woman or female characters are tools to fight patriarchy as Hoeveler claims in her novel.

Gothic Feminism shows that women are not equal with men, but there are exceptions to a rule. Women were even marginalized in society, and they female were also portrayed as mad, monstrous such as Mathew Lewis's sensational novel *The Monk* (1796), which showed all these ideas. In contrast to the novel of Ann Radcliff's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), where the female gothic was portrayed as being innocent, virtuous, and silenced.

Because of all these images, Hoeveler wanted to show that female writers were conscious and were not writing just for the sake of entertainment, but to teach women readers of their time, the violence and injustices done to them.

The women were really optimistic about the fact that women can make safe haven for themselves. The taming of male system of patriarchy, where the women were unhappy with their treatment. According to Hoeveler, women " were instead constructing a series of ideologies- a set of literary masquerades and poses-that would allow their female characters and by extension their female readers a fictitious mastery over what they considered an oppressive social and political system through the pose of what in calling professional femininity(xiii).

Hoeveler relies on many theories, primarily feminism. Though she argues that her ideas can be seen in many female-authored gothic text of the era, she has limited her focus to those considered canonical to the academic community. She claims that the female gothic tradition can be analyzed separately from the male tradition. Thus, in her preface she argues that the female gothic novel can not be separated from the male gothic novel (xv). In addition, women's depiction existed even in the works of male gothic writers such as the gothic heroines of Horace Walpole in *The Caste of Otranto* (1764).

Hoeveler also points that any discussion of gothic, necessitate the use of the word "fantasy". Throughout this, she claims the dissatisfaction and anger of the female novelist of the women of their period. As a result, they write because they want to teach female readers how to react to their social conditions.

Three essential elements also have been taken into consideration in Hoeveler's work such as "feminism", "gender "and "patriarchy "(xvii). They were equally problematic and open to critique from a variety of positions.

Hoeveler, in the preface to her book included certain techniques inside gothic novel that "the ideology that seems to ground the female gothic novel tradition, the belief that women are victimized and oppressed not simply by gender politics but by the social, economic, political, religions, and hierarchical spaces [...] and by extension the patriarchal family-has constructed to contain them (xiii). This attitude can be found in the two novels under scrutiny. She also adds that "I read the female gothic novel as one gendered response to the creation of "women as subject" by the juridical systems that dominate the period-the prison, the school, the asylum, the confessional (xii). All these conventions engendered women and deprived them from their rights, and this ideology can be found in both novels *The Woman in White* and *The Woman in Black*.

However, women found ways to partly get rid of the social constraints and the obstructions that male set up against them in order to control and dominate them. Despite the fact that female writers were excluded from literature and were prevented from expressing their art

considering them as sensitive and weak, they have overcome all these obstacles later on. Thus, women managed to express themselves secretly throughout their works. The best example is Charlotte Brontë whose works published under the male. Therefore, women suffered, because they were prevented even from achieving their pleasure in both art and culture. However, their interest moved toward "Female Gothic".

Conclusion

This chapter is considered as a brief introduction to the whole dissertation, in which I provided a theoretical concept which are worthy of studying. This chapter is very important because it's the angel stone of my thesis.

In this chapter, I have also provided the meaning of the key words: Gothic and Feminism in addition to Gothic Feminism, which gave us an insight into a better understanding of both works. Because, it is a synopsis which recount the development of the gothic as a genre from its significance in the eighteenth to the twentieth century.

Finally, the theory Gothic Feminism will be an essential theory since it will be applied on both works, and through introducing Gothic Feminism I showed the complexion of the female Gothic as the main reason which led some authors of the 18th century such as Ann Radcliffe to react against the male gothic fiction. However; this was also the main concerns of the female writers in the Victoria period such as Charlotte Brontë and nearly the same concern of women writers of the twentieth century such as Susan Hill. Thus, the historical context of the late eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth is so significant to the gothic form.

**Chapter II: Contextual and Textual Analysis of *The
Woman in White***

Introduction:

Literature has seen its revolution of a purely feminist and gothic literature. These two terms have many possible definitions. Both can be used in one approach as "Gothic Feminism". The main aim of this second chapter is to examine the relevance of Gothic and "Gothic Feminism" as a theory on Collins's *The Woman in White*.

Our chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, I will deal with the contextual and textual study of *The Woman in White*. In order to do this, we will first provide Wilkie Collis's biography with a summary of the novel.

In the second section, I will examine first gothic elements in *The Woman in White* by providing examples from the novel, and the use of David Punter's *The Literature of Terror* to show these similarities and disparities between traditional gothic and the nineteenth century gothic which illustrate our work.

In the last section, we use Hoeveler's "Gothic Feminism" as a theory to show the similarities and differences between the female gothic of the eighteenth century and nineteenth century, and this will be achieved through the study of the characters, themes, plot and setting.

II. Contextual and Textual Analysis of *The Woman in White*

II.1. Analysis of Wilkie Collins 's *The Woman in White*

II. 1.1. Willkie Collins's Biography

Wilkie Collins was born in 1824 at 11 New Cavendish Street, St Marylebone in England and died in 1889. He lived most of his life in London where he was a well known English author and master of the detective and sensation novel. He wrote numerous essays, short stories, more than a dozen plays, and published twenty-three novels including *The Woman in White* (1860). Collins' father William John Thomas Collins (1788–1847) was a well-known landscape artist who produced over 200 major works. At first William worked as a member of the Royal Academy in 1820.

His mother Harriet (1790–1868) was the daughter of Captain Alexander Geddes of Alderbury. In 1826, Collins's family left London to live in Pond Street, Hampstead Green, where they rent a house. In January 1828, Collins' brother Charles was born. The family settled near Hyde Park at 30 Porchester Terrace, Bayswater, in Boulogne.

At the age of twenty-nine, Wilkie Collins had a problem of health especially in his eyes. This continued to disturb him throughout his life. He has developed his new style of life and his way of writing. Both Collins and his brother Charles had been taught by their mother and father's evangelical Christianity. In his youth, Collins has been adopted a special attitudes and dress; he kept a long beard and rejected with disdain Bourgeois society.

Collins's family moved to Italy in September, 1836. There exactly in Porchester Terrace, Collins learned Italian, and probably found an inspire idea for his novel *Antonina* (1850). He also started to write his travel book *Rambles beyond Railways* (1851). Collins published his short story *The Last Stage Coachman* (1843). His father probably died after he was twenty-three. Thus, Collins published his first book *Memoirs of the Life of William Collins* (1848).

On 12 March 1851, Collins made his start on his lifelong love of the theatre. He has a friendship relation with Dickens. Thus, his articles were published in Dickens's periodical *Household Words* and other journals. Dickens declared Collins's new perception towards Victorian life's conventions. He was a great supporter of his writing and even his admirer.

He lived previously with his mother. Then, he went to live in 1856 with the widow Caroline Elizabeth Graves for many years. They had a daughter named Harriet even though they were not married. When Caroline died, she was buried near him.²

He had published several works among them *The Queen of Hearts*, *The Woman in White* which was serialized in *All the Year Round* in Dickens's magazine which made of Collins a great writer of the sensation fiction, and brought for him a big fortune. *The Woman in White* is the fifth novel of Wilkie Collins written in 1859. It has inspired many writers and paved the way to the development of the sensation and detective fiction as a genre in the Victorian period. It contains all of what sensation novel contains such as mystery where the family's secrets and bigamy. It has appeared as a great novel since 1860s.

There was a debate over Caroline Graves's role in his writing and publication of *The Woman in White*. Collins' brother Charles, who died of cancer later in 1873 and married with Dickens' daughter Kate, which was the reason of a strong tie between Dickens and Collins.

Collins did not make any distinction between his two women. He had two families even though he has never got married legally; he was against the institution of marriage. He lived with both of them. He maintained separate households with Caroline and Martha while continuing his writing to support them financially with such titles as *Man and Wife* (1870), *Poor Miss Finch* (1872), and *The New Magdalen* (1873). The same year he travelled to both United States and Canada where he read from his works and met Mark Twain. Titles to follow

2. See Maurice. *The Woman in White*, vi-vii.

were *The Law and the Lady* (1875), *The Two Destinies* (1876), *The Haunted Hotel* (1879), *The Fallen Leaves* (1879), *A Rogue's Life* (1879), and *Jezebel's Daughter* (1880).

Collins's health deteriorated later on. He was suffering from heart and chest pain and his contracted bronchitis led him to death. He continued to suffer from gout which affected his eyes and his addiction to opium became a serious problem (Richardson vi-vii).

He died in September 23, 1889 in his home on Wicket. Later on, when Caroline Graves died, she was buried beside him in Kensal Green cemetery, London.

Collins' final play *Rank and Riches* which was produced in 1881, and was a failure though he published many works in the 1880s, including *The Black Robe* (1881), *The Evil Genius* (1886), *The Guilty River* (1886), *The Legacy of Cain* (1889), and his last novel *Blind Love* (1890).³

II.1.2. Summary of *The Woman in White*.

The story begins with Walter Hartright, a young drawing master, and a teacher. He tells us the story throughout the testimonies and letters that he had gathered from people to construct this dramatic true story.

Walter as an art teacher goes to London because he gets a job there, where he is introduced to the Fairly Family to teach two sisters how to draw (Laura and Marian). Before heading out to the sisters' house, he meets a mysterious woman dressed entirely in white. She seems to be in fear and deep distress. He helps her and promises her not to reveal her after she begs him. He sympathizes her and helps her to reach her way. On her way, she mentions the family to whom he goes. But, when they arrive to London, he finds that she suddenly disappears when he decides to question her. Later on, he learns that she has escaped from an asylum.

When he sees Laura, he finds that she resembles *The Woman in White* who has first appeared to Walter. Then, he tells his entire story with *The Woman in White* to Marian, the older sister of Laura. Marian and Walter are filled with suspicion about this. As time passes, Walter falls in love with the younger sister, Laura, a beautiful woman who resembles *The Woman in White*. Marian and Walter investigate later that there is a relationship between Laura and woman in white, who is named Anne Catherick and who bears a weird resemblance to Laura. This is when *The Woman in White* sends a letter to Laura.

In spite of Walter's greatest love for Laura, he has to leave as persuaded by Marian. Laura is already engaged to Sir Percival Glyde after she promises her father to marry Percival even

3. For further reading, see Alingham. Wilkie Collins (1824-89): A Brief Biography.

though she does not love him. After the marriage, Laura is subject to Sir Percival's cruelty.

Sir Percival is harsher than the other characters. His real aim behind this marriage is Laura's inheritance, which the family's lawyer Mr. Gilmore does not like. Laura is in a difficult situation and disgusted about her marriage but finally decides to marry Sir Percival since she promised her father. Marian is less pleased and sad about this marriage because she knows that Laura loves Walter Hartright.

After the marriage, Laura and Sir Percival returns from their honeymoon, Marian comes to live with them since it was Laura's demand to Mr. Gilmore to let Marian live with her and makes it a law at Sir Percival's mansion, Blackwater Park. Both Count and Countess Fosco who is Laura's aunt Eleanor, come to stay at the house too.

Things become worse day after day because of the misery in which Marian and Laura are. Marian recognizes that there is a secret during her residence in Percival's house. She falls ill just after she discovers both Fosco and Percival's secret while she is spying on them in the rain. Both of them are plotting to take off Laura's inheritance. The two men plan to remove Laura from the house. Laura is declared dead at Count Fosco's house while Marian is abandoned at Blackwater.

Fosco deceives both Anne and Laura. In reality, it is Anne who dies, and Laura is put in an asylum. But, Marian does not believe this; she goes until Mrs. Catherick where she is informed about the asylum's place. When she goes there, she discovers that her sister Laura is not dead.

Walter discovers later Sir Percival's big secrets after a lot of investigations, Walter learns about Sir Percival's big secret: he is an illegitimate child and not the rightful heir to his estate or title. Before Walter can let the world know about this, Sir Percival dies in a fire while trying to stop Walter from investigating his secret.

Fosco seems indestructible, but when Walter learns some shady things about his past from his Italian casual acquaintance, he forces him to reveal all the wrong things he did to Laura and Marian. Fosco runs off, but his former friend who works for the political society finally catches up with him and kills him in Paris.

Meanwhile, Walter and Laura have married and eventually they have a son. Laura's identity is restored, but her money is long gone. Anne Catherick gets a proper burial under her own name. Walter, Laura, baby Walter, and Marian move into Limmeridge house after Laura's uncle dies, and they all live happily for ever after.⁴

4. The summary of *The Woman in White*, accessed from <[http://en.wikipedia.org/The_Woman_in_White_\(novel\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/The_Woman_in_White_(novel))>.

II.2. Traditional Gothic Elements in *The Woman in White*

The Importance of Nature as Element of Romance

Nature is so important in this novel even though we rarely find characters that enjoy it. However, Walter is the only one who takes his release from it. He argues that: "We go to Nature for comfort in trouble and sympathy in joy, only in books"(41). On the other hand, he finds it also horrifying because "The moon was full and broad in the dark blue starless sky; and the broken ground of the heath looked wild enough in the mysterious light, to be hundreds of miles away from the great city that lay beneath it. The idea of descending any sooner than I could help into the heat and gloom of London repelled me" (15). It means that nature provokes a sense of horror, especially in the night where it is calm and filled with gloom and mystery. Also, we find that the nature scenes in Blackwater Park are disgusting and threatening at the same time as it is showed in the novel, where "On the farther bank from me, the trees rose thickly again, and shut out the view, and cast their black shadows on the sluggish, shallow water" (159). This natural world is fulfilled with shadow as it is deemed into its decay. This natural world can be compared to that of the story of *The Fall of the House of Usher* which is written by Edgar Allan Poe. Thus, even though we find Arthur enjoys nature, it provokes also a sense of terror on him.

The Sublime

It is an essential element in gothic literature that aims at provoking a sense of terror. The sublime is showed in the story through the description of the atmosphere which leaves Walter in terror and fear, and leads him to say: "I was on the dark side of the road, in the thick shadow of some garden trees,"(21). This is related to Burke's sublime through which David Punter claims in his book *The Literature of Terror* that Burke attempts to make connection between the sublimity and terror since the sublime for Burke is a kind of terror, pain, danger and other subjects which are related to terror (39) In this respect, Maurice Richardson in his introductory work to Wilkie Collins states that "This atmosphere is nicely accentuated by Collins's powerful scenic descriptions [...], especially at Blackwater Park"(vii).

The weather is also another characteristic of the sublime. Especially, this is showed when Walter starts his story by describing the weather at the end of the summer, saying: "It was the last day of July. The long hot summer was drawing to a close"(5). It means that Walter is in the autumn. The summer has a great effects and feeling on him, particularly it left him "out of health, out of spirits, and, if the truth must be told, out of money as well"(5).

Supernatural Elements

In *The Woman in White*, the supernatural elements are present such as ghost as there are some hints to it. In this respect David Punter points in his work *The Literature of Terror* that "The elements which seem most universal in the genre are the apparent presence of a ghost, often finally explained away by non-supernatural means" (2). For example: in the novel Fosco is considered by Marian as a monster: "The eyes of that monster" (535). This happens after she discovered all the wrongs that he had done to her sister Laura.

The appearance of *The Woman in White* can be considered as a ghost by any reader throughout his first reading of the novel as Walter expected that:

There, in the middle of the broad bright high-road--there, as if it had that moment sprung out of the earth or dropped from the heaven--stood the figure of a solitary Woman, dressed from head to foot in white garments, her face bent in grave inquiry on mine, her hand pointing to the dark cloud over London, as I faced her. I was far too seriously startled by the suddenness with which this extraordinary apparition stood before me, in the dead of night and in that lonely place, to ask what she wanted. The strange woman spoke first.(16)

However, *The Woman in White* turns to be real not a ghost as both Mark M. and Hennelly, Jr in their article Reading Detection in *The Woman in White* note that: "The "ghost," it turns out, is Anne Catherick and consequent-ly is real"(459).

The supernatural elements can be felt also in the setting through the description of the church, the grave and even the Blackwater Park.

The Villain

The villain showed his existence in gothic literature in different ways: The best examples are Sir Percival and Fosco as the most villains in the story. Even though of their good acts, they are not good characters. They are filled with evil and the best example of this is when they plan to steal Laura's property from her. Even though Mr. Percival seems to be brilliant through the property that he does not own in reality and even his status as a Baronet but in reality, he is just an illegitimate and hides a big secret that he does not want to reveal to anyone. He uses his force for achieving his aim in a negative way and this can be seen through his actions and the way he treats Laura in order to sign a document.

The notion of the outsider in the gothic literature plays its greatest role, especially in this novel. Fosco is an outsider and comes from Italy with his Countess Fosco, and in fact, the outsiders in the gothic literature are considered the true gothic villains. This is what we see in this novel, where Count Fosco is the most important villain. Not only this, Wilkie Collins also used Fosco's physical as a kind of his treacherous act and villainy. Thus, "To Count Fosco,

justly regarded as Collins's greatest achievement in n, Collins gave a Falstaffian physique, because, he said, of the popular notion that a fat man could hardly be villainous" (Hyder 302). And his Countess also is another villain. She dislikes Laura and Merriam from the beginning.

According to David Punter in the same work, we face in gothic literature "the very real presence of one or more members of the aristocracy"(2). This is showed in *The Woman in White* When Walter asks Laura about the man whom Laura is engaged, she tells him:"A gentleman of large property in Hampshire"(58). She has also added that Laura "was engaged to be married, and her future husband was Sir Percival Glyde. A man of the rank of Baronet, and the owner of property in Hampshire."(58).

It means that aristocracy in this novel is so important, especially in what concerns the marriage.

Mystery and Horror

The Horror in Gothic fiction is shown through characters who are confronted psychologically to all what is buried and hidden from the past. This can be seen in *The Woman in White*, where Ann Catherick was shocked by what happened to her when she was put in the asylum by Mr. Percival. All these affected her psychologically, where she could not express herself or afraid of revealing Mr. Percival's secret. It is the same that happened with Laura after she has escaped the asylum. She was also affected by all these. In addition to Walter who has been affected in his turn especially, when starting to tell the story in his preamble.

The real aim of this mystery is to pique the reader's curiosity and courage to explore a lot of things that is hidden concerning the subject. Our story, *The Woman in White* deals with mystery and this is shown through the beginning of the novel, when Walter met a solitary woman dressed all in white in the moonlight. Later, Walter discovers that there is a secret that is hidden behind her. In addition to this when Walter tells the story to Marian, he argues that: "Her face expressed vivid interest and astonishment, but nothing more. She evidently as far from knew of any clue to the mystery as I was "(28). All these pique her curiosity in order to understand and investigate the relationship between The Woman in White and Mrs. Fairlie. Particularly, after she sends a letter to Laura. The same thing can be seen when Marian discovers that there is a secret. This pushed her to spy on both Percival and Fosco when they were talking in which they are seen "dropping their voices a little lower than usual" (321).This leaves Marian in fear about her sister Laura.

Sara Lenox in her article Bachmann Reading/Reading Bachmann Wilkie Collins's *The*

Woman in White in the Todesarten points to an

account for Fosco's mysteries: he is a spy for a reactionary Italian regime and finally, towards the novel's end, is assassinated by members of an Italian Brotherhood dedicated to Italian liberation. In his memory, his wife penned these words about her murdered husband: "His life was one long assertion of the rights of the aristocracy, and the sacred principles of Order- and he died a martyr to his cause. (189)

According to David Punter in the same work:"the crucial tone is one of desensitised acquiescence in the horror of obsession and prevalent insanity."(3). This is found in *The Woman in White*, where both characters Laura and Anne Catherine became insane after they have been trapped and put in the asylum by both emotionless characters Mr. Percival and Fosco.

The Distressed Heroine

In *The Woman in White*, there are number of heroines that can be distinguished from each other. The first one is The Woman in White that Walter meets in his street, and seems to be distressed for the unknown reason. In addition, he discovers that she fled from the asylum where she was put. Then, he meets her again in the Church after she has sent a letter to Laura. She seems again distressed just when Walter asked her about the man who is suffering her. The second Woman that Walter meets is Laura. The woman whom he falls in love during the first time he sees her. The third Woman who is in distress is Marian. Even her masculine qualities and her courage in which she contradicts her sister. However, she seems to be distressed especially about her sister's marriage with Mr. Percival. Her most distress is shown after her discovery of the secret that lies behind both Mr. Percival and Fosco about what concerns Laura's property. Since the woman in distress is so important in gothic literature, in his work *The Literature of Terror*, David Punter argues that in gothic literature, "there was always a central heroine, abandoned by her parents and cast adrift on the mercies of a savage"(9). It means that both The Woman in White and Laura are not lost only their parents. They are also subjected to the domesticity of Sir Percival. Thus, we find them as they do not have any desire to live or enjoy her life. This confirms what David Punter says in the same work about the gothic literature, where "The world in which it did deal was peopled with stock characters, who discoursed in predictable ways: the shy, nervous, retiring heroine, who was nevertheless usually possessed of a remarkable ability to survive hideously dangerous situations"(9).

Jerold Hogle in his work *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic* asserts that most of the

characters in gothic literature look "back to a past existence which can never be recovered and so can be reconceived "(16). Thus, in our novel, Walter starts telling the story from his point of view, and even the characters where they referring to the past in which they are still unrecovered from it.

Sara Lenox in the same article states that: "The mysterious meaning of the mad woman in white within the logic of Collins's novel is clarified by a second confinement and escape midway in the novel upon which Bachmann also appears to draw for her account of Franz's fate"(186).

The Setting

Stephen Bernstein also points in his article Reading Blackwater Park: Gothicism, Narrative, And Ideology In ""*The Woman in White*" that Blackwater Park has been noted as "the most famous of Collins's sinister house "(292).

The setting in *The Woman in White* is replaced by the House and the Asylum, in contrast to the setting in the eighteenth century which was applied to the remount places such as castles. However, we find sometimes the setting is the same as an example: public building or the graveyard which become in *The Woman in White* used as in church where the grave stone are built.

The Women in White is set in England in the Midth 19th century. This setting is contrasted between the city and the country. Extremely, the major events of the novel takes place in the big city of England which is London, beginning first after Walter helped The Woman in White to reach London. This big city seems to be the worst place for the characters, because it did not protect anyone of them, above all Laura because of the harsh social realities, where people have been exposed to danger and the lost of their identities.

If we talk about mansion in *The Woman in White*, we find that Sir Percieval's house Blackwater Park holds some characteristics of the gothic fiction, where both of the heroines Laura and Marian were confines by both Fosco and Percival. This setting holds characteristics of gothic as Marian argues: "I discovered that good judges could only exercise their abilities and sir Percival's piece of antiquity by previously dismissing from their minds all for of damp, darkness, and rats"(157). This setting as it is described by Marian seems to be dark for Marian contrasted to the Limmeridge house. It is also dangerous for her and even for Laura, because during their residence there, they had been subjected to a many kind of violence caused them illness and suffering. This house can be appeared as a parallel to Sir Percival and Fosco, who seems to be charming and dangerous at the same time. Stephen Bernstein in his article Cage aux Folles states that the setting of Blackwater Park is a kind of threat to Marian

and Laura's lives since this house embodies the characteristics of the classical gothic fiction. In addition to this Marian's description to it is referred to Ann Radcliffe through the noises she heard (294). Blackwater Park is not only the even the church where the graves and marbles thus Walter argues that "The other hand grasped the marble cross at the head of the grave"(75). This description contrasted the description of Fairlie's house. It was described as a peaceful, safe, beautiful, charm...and so on. Thus, Walter says:

How vividly that peaceful home-picture of the drawing-room comes back to me while [...]the fair profile of the player at the piano was just delicately defined against the faintly-deepening background of the inner wall of the room. Outside, on the terrace, the clustering flowers and long grasses and creepers waved so gently in the light evening air, that the sound of their rustling never reached us. The sky was without a cloud, and the dawning mystery of moonlight began to tremble already in the region of the eastern heaven. (43)

This is another setting in the book which is beautiful and nice. Walter is among the characters that enjoyed the beauty of the house, which was filled with romance imagery such as nature and art. Thus, the setting is in fact positive for the characters as Walter says: "The view was such a surprise, and such a change to me, after my weary London experience of brick and[...] Landscape that I seemed to bust into a new life and a new set of thoughts the moment I looked at it"(24).

The Bright Lights is a big city in London, and it was considered as a good place to hide. Walter, Anne, and Fosco, all of them take advantage of London's ability to deceive people and even suppress their identities, especially it is the place where the fog and the noise. This setting never protects anyone. It is also dangerous for the characters Laura and The Woman in White.

The Plot

In gothic literature, David Punter argues that: "it is only for the gothic writers that complexity of plotting was necessary, because it was only for them that the process of suspense and release was an essential fictional mechanism"(14).

Thus, the plot in *The Woman in White* is so complicated and it is not fixed, because it is built around the technique of flashbacks and memories in which time has a great importance. In addition, the reader is taken into a long trip through time where he finds himself is not alone, but among different characters, and each character had its own story.

The first character that is worth mentioning is Walter as the protagonist of the novel. However, when he starts narrating the story in his preamble, he claims that the story will be told from more than one pen.

Anyway, the novel opens with Walter Hartright through flashbacks, constructed melodies and the use of various testimonials. Particularly, Walter starts narrating his story in summer. As the story continues, he heads toward another place which is London. Just when he arrives there, he meets another protagonist who is Marian Halcombe, who is participating in the narration of the rest of the story.

The plot is so complicated due to the fact that the reader finds himself in different places. It is the same for the setting in this novel, in which we cannot deny the importance and the close relationship to the different themes and characters of the novel, where the Fairlie's house described as beautiful and peaceful by both Marian and Walter, in contrast to the Blackwater Park which is described as horrific and dark. In addition, this setting is related to both Fosco and Percival as it had been mentioned before, every character at a certain time is related to one or many settings, and it depends on the plot.

I.I.3. Gothic Feminism

I.3.1. Analysis of Themes and Characters Through the Light of Gothic Feminism

The female gothic is the most important element in "Gothic Feminism" and even in *The Woman in White* as well, and it shows itself throughout the theme of family which includes marriage, gender and patriarchy.

In *The Woman in White*, Mr. Gilmore is another character who likes Laura after Walter and Marian, and he does not admit Laura's marriage from the beginning. He considers her as his real daughter. He says to Laura that he is "the faithful friend and servant [...] that no daughter of mine should be married to any man alive under such a settlement as you are forcing me to make for Miss Fairlie"(124).

Leila Sylvia argues in her article Sensational Sisters: Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* that:

sacrifice. For this Victorian enthusiasm masked a fear about the nature of a key component of the familial recipe: namely, female agency as it manifested itself in its purest, most untainted and "natural" form-sisterly love. Viewed from the perspective of this concern, we see that *The Woman in White*, like so many texts contemporary with it, is in many respects a treatise on sisterhood.(82)

However, the familial status is criticized by Wilkie Collins by describing Laura as beautiful and passive, and this through the "noblest of her sex"(132). On the other hand Marian is described as a masculine figure, especially" who most strikingly refuses to conform

to gender type" (Davies xiv).

The gender role also had its effects in keeping women in a childish state of ignorance. As we can see in *The Woman in White*, Laura seems to be childish: "If you are married," I added, helping her out. "Don't let him part me from Marian," she cried, with a sudden outbreak of energy. "Oh, Mr. Gilmore, pray make it law that Marian is to live with me!" (110). It means that her naiveté and childlike nature are really apparent here, particularly when she begs Mr. Gilmore to make it a "law" for Marian to live with her. But Laura's fear gives us some insight into just how helpless women were as wives in the Victorian era. They were pretty much subject to all their husband's whims. In this respect, Marian considers the man as the only one who could rule in his house when she mentions that: "Most men show something of their dispositions in their own houses, which they have concealed elsewhere; and Sir Percival had already displayed a mania for order and regularity"(166). This can be related to Hoeveler when she argues: "Gothic feminism teaches its readers that women will be able to affect change only through the gradual reform of education, both for women and for men. In writing new visions of the world "(189). So, Marian here wanted to be taught as a weapon she will use to defend herself.

In *The Woman in White*, The Woman's subjugation which can be expressed through the sense of patriarchy as we can see in Percival's assumption of his own superior wisdom and maturing, leads him to patronize and dominate his wife Laura. Thus, she is considered as a childish. Percival considers himself as the rightful owner of his wife's inheritance. The only way which allows her to retain her thought and exercise the power of her mind, is the companionship of her sister. As a female gothic, Laura is trapped in her choice and her change of the space affects her, and she can be considered as a prototype example of Anne Radcliffe's heroine, for example, she couldn't even say "No" in her marriage with Percival. This is showed in the novel when "The lady not being at hand to speak for herself, her guardian had decided, in her absence, on the earliest day mentioned—the twenty-second of December—and had written to recall us to Limmeridge in consequence" (139). Here, Laura's weakness is described through her actions and behavior, where she does not even have the voice to express herself and even decide whether to marry Mr. Percival or no.

In Gothic Feminism, Laura is among the oppressed Woman who reacts silently to the male dominance. Laura who admits that one day, she could marry Walter who was kind and loving. Her reaction does not suggest any harm. She is always silent. Thus, thoughts reveal the inherent oppressions of all marriages, which by their nature rob women of their independence. This oppression and impression is seen even in Ann Catherick which go hand

in hand with the story of "imprisonment and escape"(Miller 120). It means that the confinement of Laura Fairlie and Ann Catherick in the asylum, led both of them to escape, seeking for their freedom.

The Woman in White aims at suppressing the father's power, which did not brought to them except misery, and this is showed in Laura's marriage after she promised her father.

The Woman in White is the embodiment of the struggles faced by women in seeking of freedom. It suggests the state of women in the late 1800's, or perhaps the writer's own struggle against the male dominance in spite that he is a male writer. For Collins, in *The Woman in White*, the conventional nineteenth-century middle-class marriage with its rigid distinction between the domestic functions of the female, and the active work of the male, ensured that women remained second-class citizens. Percival's assumption of his own superior wisdom and maturity, leads him to misjudges, patronize, and dominate his wife in the sense of having right into her own property. Thus, male's aim in this story can be seen in repressing the female in society, assuming their masculinity over the femininity of their wives. All these result sickness and health's deterioration among the female characters as the case with Laura and her sister Marian. Thus, the male character in the novel dominated medical profession and causes illnesses to both women (*The Woman in White* and *Laura*), where both these female characters become insane.

In the theme of marriage, Collins uses the gothic and psychological horror tale to criticize the notion of woman within the institution of marriage. For Wilkie Collins, the conventional 19th century middle-class marriage with its rigid distinction between the domestic functions of the female and the active work of the male ensured that women considered the second class citizens. This is shown through Marian when she states that "It is an engagement of honor, not of love"(55). Thus, the marriage changes Laura's fate completely because it is not based on love. It is based on deceit and this book in fact transmuted us a message about marriage which means that you can be safe in your marriage only if it is based on love.

However, in the end of the story, Laura finds marriage as the only solution for her in order to get rid of her misery, and forget all the bad memories that they have went from. This is what we can see in the character of Laura. Thus, everything gets resolved after her marriage with Walter, the man that she loved. Before her marriage with Walter, Laura is not happy with her husband. This can be related to Hoeveler when she claims that "women are never happier... than when they are living in small groups together and apart from men"(53). The reason is that for Hoeveler: "The first characteristic by woman gothic novel is that it is based on the premise that men are intrinsically and inherently violent and aggressive, and as such, to

be feared by woman"(53). Her father's desire thus, leads Laura into unpleasant Marriage with the man that she fears, and who wants only to take profits on her by takings off her inheritance. This marriage resembles the one described in her novel about the gothic heroines, in which she refers to it "as a business proposition [...] Woman does not marry for love; they marry because they are forced to do so by the men who "own" them" (Hoeveler 93).

As a consequence, her marriage with Percival can be described as a nightmarish, and this can be referred to the gothic heroine whom she describes in her book *Gothic Feminism* as "so painfully detailed, is little more than a beating fantasy with the other woman as the victim"(195). Especially, after the marriage, Sir. Percival turns into a devil character as a male character whose "bitterness and frustration turn him into the "devil" and "ghoul"(Hoeveler 197).

The Distressed woman is another theme in *The Woman in White* that exemplifies much these female characters, Laura and Anne Catherick who become insane after they have been trapped, and put in the asylum by both emotionless characters Mr. Percival and Fosco. This act of immorality is evolved between Mr. Percival and Fosco. Ann Catherick appears to Walter in the white dress known first as The Woman in White. She seems to be alone without any assistance. Thus, he says that "The loneliness and helplessness of the woman touched me"(16).

Another female character in *The Woman in White*, where the female characters, especially Laura could not express herself, because she has no right to make the choices of her alone since she is a woman. All these, lead into her suffering as we can see later, when she was trapped by Fosco and Mr. Percival and when she is put in the asylum. The best way therefore, is to escape from that asylum in order to lead a new life with her beloved Mr. Hartright. As a reference to Hoeveler in her book *Gothic Feminism* who claims that for the female characters in the eighteenth and nineteenth century gothic novels.

The paternal home as the site of patriarchally based, rather than emotionally based relationships seems to deny woman the chance to exercise their subjectivity, and thus only means of rebelling is to escape, to run away from the paternal domicile. The nightmare in the female gothic novel is that women frequently cannot run toward what they claim to desire, the man they want to marry. They run instead in a large circle that leads them precisely to the paternal home, but this time the estate has been magically transformed into a maternally marked abode through the efforts of the heroine's circuitous journey. (Hoeveler 9-10)

It means that, Laura can be referred to the woman of the eighteenth century, where she could not express her ideas within the patriarchal system.

Laura in *The Woman in White* can be also a reference to Hoeveler's female gothic that shows

herself as an innocent and suffering victim, by masquerading as the beleaguered heroine, the gothic feminist actually positions herself for the assault, shielded, of course, from the charge or even the impression that she is the aggressor. Playing the victim often simply conceals the fact that one is a much more effective victimizer: we are once again within the territory of miming the mime. The women who populate female gothic novels clearly and unequivocally triumph in the end, morally and financially. (Howeveler 14)

Throughout this, Laura can be considered as a passive in "Gothic Feminism", because of her silence. She could never do anything to save herself from her husband's domination, and she could never triumph over him until Marian helps her. Thus, Laura among the depicted characters whom "Radcliffe would have us believe that they managed these feats by doing nothing much at all. Passivity, it seems, or lying in wait for the oppressor to self-destruct, is its own reward"(Hoeveler14).

In fact, in *The Woman in White*, we notice that most of the female characters are depressed, especially Ann Catherick and Laura. They also went into passive aggression and repression enable to express herself or act. Laura's reaction for this, expressed this through hiding in her room, especially after her return from Italy after her marriage with Mr. Percival. Both of the characters are almost silent and passive.

Hoeveler also added that

The second characteristic of the gothic heroine concerns her strangely convoluted relationship with her parents. Either she is an orphan or thinks she is (but is not), or she finds out her father has been murdered by one of her odious suitors or her mother has been imprisoned by her father. (53)

Both *The Woman in White* and Laura resemble the gothic heroine that is depicted in David Punter's novel *The Literature of Terror*. In addition to this, the

Gothic heroines are always already separated from their parents or inheritances fairly early in each book so that most of the texts concern their various threshold or luminal experiences, or strange encounters under "arched" doorways that dominate virtually all of the texts. (Hoeveler 61)

Thus, in *The Woman in White*, Laura is separated from her mother because she is dead. Catherine is not only separated from her mother when she was a child, she is also separated from her father.

In addition, Darcy Irvin points in her article Image-Texts in "The Woman in White" that "*The Woman in White* is a novel replete with copies and doubles, as many critics have noticed, the most famous of these being Laura Fairlie and her look-alike, Anne Catherick. The very structure of the novel parallels this interest in copies, since the entire text consists of supposed copies and transcripts of documents"(227).

In the theme of power, there is one female character in *The Woman in White* which was described as powerful such as Marian who says: "My courage was only a woman's courage, after all; and it was very near to failing me, when I thought of trusting myself, on the ground floor, at the dead of night, within reach of Sir Percival and the Count." (319). Marian in fact owns a power. However, she has a suspicion about using it against both Fosco and Sir Percival because she is at the end a woman. However, she managed to detect both Fosco and Sir Percival's secret. This defiance caused a trouble to Marian, especially after she learned that that Count Fosco is aware of the secret that she has discovered. As a reference to Hoeveler's theory, Marian's spying can be "tolerated remarkably well by Lucky"(226). Through her spying on Mr. Percival and Fosco, she discovers the secret that was hidden behind Laura's marriage.

Marian can be referred to the female gothic, where Hoeveler claims that some women in Gothic Feminism may create "a new family with herself in a matriarchal and unchallenged position of power"(203). Furthermore, in *The Woman in White*, Laura and Marian could not have their triumph on both Percival and Fosco like this, however, they were helped by Mr. Hartright.

As it is said by Hoeveler: "The goal for a heroine can only be to remain a young woman, free from the ravages of time and the decay of the body. Each one ends where she begins. The circle is as complete as it's fictitious and self-deceptive"(84). Here, Laura can be considered in *The Woman in White* as an anti-heroine because of her passivity in which she contrasts her sister. She could not do anything and her feeling of repression leads her into madness after she discovers that her freedom is just a dream. It means that, Laura plays no role in finding her freedom or getting her right and she only tastes it, and she does not even possess the power to do this. In this respect Diane Hoeveler claims that

Gothic feminist authors are angry while their heroines are pointedly controlled and strategically not angry. These heroines are characterized, unlike their creators, by repression and silence, acceptance or at least the pose of complaisance. Furthermore, these heroines are professionally feminine, while the projected anger of the female author can only be detected in the violence that just happens to plague anyone foolish enough to stand in her heroine's way. (15)

The Woman in White can be considered as a reference to

the voices that dominate the discourse of the British female gothic from the late 1780s to 1853. Those voices-and the discourse systems that emerge from them-have been recognized as adhering to the tradition of sensibility and sentimentality, melodrama and the hyperbolic staging of female suffering and victimization, and finally what's known female gothic and vindication fiction.(Hoeveler 3-4)

Throughout this quotation, we notice that, though the novel is written by the male figure in 1860, it contains all the feminist principles which are the case in the female gothic writers.

In addition to this, *The Woman in White* is not written for the sake of entertainment, however, it aims at portraying women's suffering during the late 1780s to 1853. Especially, to confirm these female voices who wanted to obtain women their rights. However, both Laura and *The Woman in White* contrast Marian who in the female gothic "deserves her heroic status because she learns to control her emotions"(Hoeveler 96). Thus, she merits to be a gothic heroine even though she embodied traditional masculine qualities.

Walter Hartright also can be referred as "'man", with no feminine qualities at all tempering his innate fierceness. He thrives on risk and challenge"(Hoeveler 99). Thus, we can refer to Marian as a "Manly men" in "Gothic Feminism".

Wilkie Collins in his novel, described two types of Female Gothic: Female acting willingly like Marian, who tries to override all limits to assert her position in the patriarchal society, and this one can be shown in one way in her refusal of her sister's marriage with Percival. Another type of female acting unwillingly like *The Woman in White* whose name is Catherick, and who sends letters to Laura forbidding her not to marry Percival. However, this can be seen unwillingly, since she is afraid of revealing his secret. She is also forced to stay in the asylum unwillingly, describing her as mad. In addition, Laura agrees on Mr. Percival's proposal for marriage unwillingly, but she never shows this throughout the beginning of the novel, and this is only shown after her return from her journey in Italy.

There is also another theme of good and bad mother, which is found in the realm of "Gothic Feminism" as Hoeveler states: "Bad mothers/good mothers fluctuate"(Hoeveler7). In *The Woman in White*, we can consider Anne Catherine's mother as a bad mother, since she left her daughter without caring about her in contrast to Mrs. Clements, who adopted Ann Catherick, considering her as her daughter. Thus she can be considered as an ideal mother.

This theme of identity is important in *The Woman in White*, where the mistaken identity was the major concerns of Victorian fiction. In our novel, there is a struggle between the characters of the novel for defining oneself and thus, recognized by the other. Thus, Walter claims that: "If ever sorrow and suffering set their profaning marks on the youth and beauty of Miss Fairlie's face, then, and then only, Anne Catherick and she would be the twin-sisters of chance resemblance, the living reflexions of one another"(74). Thus, the resemblance between the two sisters, Laura and Ann give us an idea of identity where both of them trapped in their identities. In this respect Dallas Liddle in her article Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White* (1859–60) claims that: *The Woman in White* "has often been shown that questions of identity

furnish not only the plot of Collins's novel, but much of its thematic content"(38).

Additionally, Kellen William also added in her article *Traced and Captured by the Men in the Chaise: Pursuing Sexual Difference in Wilkie Collins's "The Woman in White"* points that: "That Rank and Power belong, of course, to Sir Percival Glyde, who having forged a record of his unwed parents' marriage in the Old Welm-ingham register is not at all the man he claims to be. Percival, as Walter Kendrick aptly puts it, owes his identity "(99).Both Fosco and Percival are villains, because they have succeeded in forgery of the death of Ann.

But there is a more serious side to the villain's crime, a threat which, it seems to me, is finally responsible for the terrible thoroughness and urgency of his expulsion. Percival's forgery, together with the spurious documents through which he and Count Fosco effectively write out the difference between Lady Glyde and Anne Catherick, raises what for this novel are a pair of equally intolerable possibilities: first, the possibility that sexual identity and the difference upon which it is found are not, after all, "recognizable realities" and second, the possibility of a writing which, far from reflecting, in fact produces its referent.(Kellen 100)

The other character in the novel that embodies the theme of identity is Sir Percival, where his properties do not belong to him, especially his status as a baronet. In this respect, Walter claims that: "The idea that he was not Sir Percival Glyde at all, that he had no more claim to the baronetcy and to Blackwater Park than the poorest laborer who worked on the estate, had never occurred to my mind" (403).

Thus, the theme of justice is also important in *The Woman in White*, because the Law is of a great importance, but it had nothing to do with the victimized characters of the book like Laura. Because, if Law existed she could not have suffered under both Fosco and Percival as Walter mentions in his preamble: "If the machinery of Law could be depended on to fathom every case of suspicion, and to conduct every process of inquiry, with moderate assistance only from the lubricating influences of oil of gold, the events which fill these pages might have claimed their share of the public attention at the Court of Justice"(4).In addition, Gwendollen MacDonagh and Jonathan Smith in their article "Fill up All the Gaps": Narrative and Illegitimacy in "*The Woman in White*" argue that : "legal system is not extensive enough to protect Laura Fairlie from exploitation by her husband" (281).

They also argue that the law of legitimacy does not exist, and this showed through "the failure of Percival's parents to marry is also the result of the shortcomings of the law. According to Mrs. Catherick, not only was it not Percival's fault that his parents were not married"(284).

According to Hoeveler: "A hidden door always exists that will allow the reader to deny

the reality of the present, and put them instead in an unreal nostalgic past-the "gothic" world where good always triumphs over evil and where right always best might"(65). In *The Woman in White*, we notice that good has its triumph over the evil as we can see in these characters Walter Hartright, Marian Holcombe and Laura Fairlie.

Concerning Justice in *The Woman in White*, the divine intervention is common in the protection of the characters. This justice is always done in gothic literature even though the degree of the harm, and crime which has been committed by the characters. Thus, in the *Woman in White* we notice that justice is realized by God. Despite that both Fosco and Mr Percival were not punished by the law, but justice at the end had a significant role, where Mr. Percival has been died in a church when he tries to hide his secret identity. The only one who feels pity on him is Walter. Even though he dislikes him, he tries to save him at the end. Also Fosco has been killed by Pesca after he betrays him.

Death is considered as the only solution for Ann Catherick. Thus, she accepts death with "calmness" and "peace". Her only escape can't be except through death. She contradicts Laura and Marian in *The Woman in White*, who triumph after all the tribulations that they have faced in front of Sir Percival and Fosco, because the true female gothic heroine always triumph after all the tribulations that they have faced as Hoeveler argues:

The true female gothic heroine always triumphs over evil because she is totally good; her motives are always utterly pure; her conduct and speech always above reproach. No spot of corruption touches her, and thus she always fends off and destroys her oppressors because good always triumphs over evil. This very powerful ideology-that professional femininity or goodness always wins out-exists at the core of the gothic feminist mythology, assuring women that their carefully cultivated facade, their masquerade of patience and long-suffering will be rewarded. Again, we appear to be in the terrain of "wise passiveness", of waiting for the tyrant to self-destruct through the consequences of his own misguided evil deeds. (95)

Both Fosco and Percival will be punished at the end, because they are the helpless villains of *The Woman in White*. If we refer to Hoeveler, we find that both of them "appear to self-destruct through their own misguided arrogance and egoism, but we know better"(7). It means that, Fosco and Mr. Percival are double-faced. They appear to be polite and gentle; especially, their eloquence led the other characters to believe them. Thus, throughout the novel Fosco is referred to a "refinement of the Gothic villain"(Bernstein 292). Mr. Percival is another character who enjoyed by Mr. Frederick Fairlie because of his eloquence. Both of them deceive the characters of the novel, and the most important of them is Laura, whom they deprive from her money and leaving her in poverty.

Conclusion:

This second chapter is mainly based on the use of the traditional gothic elements and "Gothic Feminism" as a theory, to explore our work through exemplifications from our novel, *The Woman in White*. Furthermore, our aim is to explain and simplify this theory. *The Woman in White* is written in the Victorian period by Wilkie Collins. We used the theory of "Gothic Feminism" to a novel written in the Victorian period by a male figure. At the same time, to show women's awareness of the confinement in a patriarchal system, and the awareness of the male authors of the suffering of woman. This depicts that Hoeveler did not analyze Collins' novel. But through the application of her ideals of "Gothic Feminism", we discovered that, Wilkie Collins as a male author was acting in the same way as any female gothic author. He is well aware of the danger that surrounded women of his time.

This theory shed light on some gothic and feminist works. It was discussed with the use of the feminist and gothic features that had been studied by many critics and how it had been used. Thus, "Gothic Feminism" aims at making women equal to men by putting an end to the suffering of women under the patriarchal system.

As we can see in this story, the female characters struggle against male-centric thinking and societal "norms", which suggests that there is no justice between male and female. This is why that many critics suggest that *The Woman in White* is a masterpiece which set against the Victorian conventions of patriarchal ideology. Especially, it manifests itself in the nineteenth-century marriage, where that marriage practices prevent woman from controlling her own actions, and expressing her feelings and emotions. In addition, these patriarchal ideas deprived the women from their identities as we can see in the character Laura.

In the next chapter, we will delve into another novel written by a woman, but in the 20th century. We will try to show whether the anxieties of women still dominate their daily life, and whether the gothic with its mystery is still alive.

III. Contextual and Textual Analysis of *The Woman in Black*

Introduction

This chapter is divided into three sections: The first section will be devoted to the introduction of the historical background of the twentieth century. Then, a brief introduction to Susan Hill's biography by including her life, family, and the major works which has been published. After this, we will provide a summary for the novella.

The second section is an examination of the relevance of traditional gothic elements on *The Woman in Black* by extracting examples from the text, and providing some ideas of other literary critics which go hand in hand with our analysis of the work.

The last section will be devoted to the application of Hoeveler's theory of "Gothic Feminism" on the characters throughout the themes and characters.

III. Contextual and Textual Analysis of *The Woman in Black*

III.1. Analysis of Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black*

III.1.1. Susan Hill's Biography

Susan Elizabeth Hill is an English novelist and short-story writer, whose production first reached its highest peak in the late 1960's and early 1970's. She was even regarded as an English author of fiction and non-fiction. In her novels, she portrays the lives of eccentric people in her community, who look for life and warmth in their often icy and sterile lives.

Susan Hill was born in 1942 in North Yorkshire. She always wishes that her home town will be changed for the better. Hill went into grammar school in Scarborough and Coventry to attend her studies, and she graduated there. She became successful with honors in English from King's College, University of London, in 1963. Then, Hill reviewed books for the Coventry Evening Telegraph until 1969.

In 1975, she married Stanley Wells who was better known as a Shakespearean scholar. She gave birth to her first child who was a girl. She lived in Royal Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, and Oxfordshire.

Hill published between 1961 and 1975 eight novels, three books of short stories, and one collection of radio plays. In 1971, she received the Somerset Maugham Award, the Whitbread Literary Award in 1972, and the Rhys Memorial Prize 1972. In the late 1970, she became well known for her novels on which the central theme is marriage and motherhood. She returned also into describing life in the Oxfordshire countryside in her work and an autobiographical work entitled *Family*. Hill's novels are written in a descriptive gothic style,

especially her ghost story *The Woman in Black*, published in 1983. The book was performed and made into a film in 2012 and Daniel Radcliffe was the actor. In 2004, Hill began a series of crime novels featuring Detective Simon Serrailer entitled *The Various Haunts of Men*. The series has more than seven installments.

Susan Hill showed her interest to the traditional English gothic of the eighteenth century and the Victorian period, especially the influence of Marry Shelly's *Frankenstein* is so evident in her short story *The Woman in Black*.

Susan Hill also wrote another ghost story which has similar elements, *The Mist in the Mirror* (1992), and a sequel to du Maurier's Rebecca entitled *Mrs. De Winter* in 1993. Due to her experience as wife and mother, she wrote many works concerning marriage and motherhood. In 1983, after the publication of *The Woman in Black*, she also went into writing children's books and book reviews.

Finally, she succeeded in writing other novels which are sustained for the adults such as *Air and Angel* (1999) as a romance, and other gothic novels such as *The Mist in the Mirror* (1991) which is a gothic mystery.⁵

III.1.2. Summary of *The Woman in Black*

The story is told from the unreliable narrator's point of view which made the reader more familiar with him, and even closer to the story, where the reader understand the other character's points of view through Arthur's narration.

The novella opens with Arthur Kipps who is celebrating the holidays and enjoying Christmas Ève with his family at their little cottage entertaining and telling stories of ghosts. But, when his stepchildren start to tell them, he gets a little strange and disturbed because he has faces such kind of stories when he was a young.

Thus, he begins telling his own story when he was a young man, especially it took place in the town of Crythin Gifford, where he was sent to settle some affairs of a deceased woman named Alice Drablow. This town is isolated from the mainland. The first time Arthur comes here, is during the funeral of Alice Drablow, where he sees an old woman dressed entirely in Black. In the beginning, he thinks that she is one of Alice Drablow's mourners; However, when Arthur is send in a mission to settle some affaires of the deceased woman in her home, he starts to discover many things and secrets which are hidden from the past and continued to haunt the Eel Marsh house. This house is also weird since it is cut off by the tide at certain hours of the day. During Arthur's residence there, it happens that spooky things like a rocking chair which moves by itself in the nursery and the continued sound of the pony and trap, and

5. See Susan Hill's biography in <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Susan_Hill>.

even the sound of a child in the night.

Arthur in the beginning does not believe in such things, but after his experience in Eel Marsh house, he discovers that *The Woman in Black* is the ghost of Jennet Humphrey, and even the sound of a child who is her son is a ghost too.

He learns the whole story of *The Woman in Black* by Mr. Daily and through the letters that he reads. Thus, he understands why she now haunts the area and even causes the death of children. After this, Arthur determines to return to London for his safety. He returns to London and continues life as usual.

He gets married to a woman named Stella and they have a child named Joseph. One day, Joseph and Stella go on a pony and trap ride and as they ride off, Arthur sees *The Woman in Black* again. When the horse sees her, it gets spooked and Stella and Joseph get into a terrible accident and both die. Arthur is left alone and bereft and the woman in black has gotten her revenge. This is why Arthur Kipps is not a fan of ghost stories.

Finally, *The Woman in Black* is Arthur Kipps's story. Thus, the entire story is told from Arthur's point of view, which makes us experience all the confusion, realization, and terror at the same time as he does. He makes this clear at the end of the first chapter of the book, when he commits to telling the story: "I decided at once that it should be, at least during my lifetime, a story for my eyes only. I was the one who had been haunted and who had suffered—not the only one, no, but surely, I thought, the only one left alive..." (17).⁶

III.2. Traditional Gothic Elements in *The Woman in Black*

Nature

In fact, in *The Woman in Black*, there is an embodiment of some aspects of nature. For example in this novella, the man plays only a small part compared to the tide, the marshes which are harmful and dangerous, and even the wonderful setting of Monk's Piece. Thus, Arthur has been affected by the powerful nature when he claims: "I had never been quite so alone, nor felt quite so small and insignificant in a vast landscape before, and I fell into a not unpleasant brooding, philosophical frame of mind, struck by the absolute indifference of water and sky to my presence" (63-64). What he wanted to express by "indifference" is as if nature is out to get him, since he is small, and "The causeway also cuts him off from the town when the tide is high; the wind wakes him up in the middle of the night and makes the whole house whistle; and the boggy marsh nearly kills him when he goes to rescue Spider" (23), and

6. For a further reading, see <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Woman_in_Black>.

this is what has been argued by daily.

Nature seems to be terrifying to Arthur, because of the injuries that it causes to human being. The best example is the description of the Causeway, in which the tide has killed Jennet's son and with the nursery and the driver. Thus, in this novella, nature is against man and the gothic elements which are used such as darkness, and a shock that goes against Arthur. All these provoked a sense of pessimism among Arthur, because he is a subject to the confrontation of all these elements of fear and horror.

In addition, despite all the modern technological advances as we can see in the story such as the steam train and the telephone, the power of nature is inevitable and wins over the advance of technology, because it separates Arthur from the rest of society. Moreover, when Arthur arrives there as a modern man, he finds that there are no cars, instead there is only the pony and trap as he says: "No car appeared. Instead, there drew up outside the Gifford Arms a rather worn and shabby pony and trap"(50).

In addition, Crythin Gifford is a place which is filled with secrets as it is dreary, bleak town and even cut from the tide as Daily claims to Arthur: "When the tide comes in, you're cut off until it's low again"(23).

When Arthur arrives at Eel marsh, he gives a terrifying description of it, where he describes it with "the ruin or the walls of the old burial ground, away across the field" (100).

Setting

If we talk about the setting, we find that the whole story of *The Woman in Black* is set in the 20th Century in England, because of the use of the pony and trap and the steam train which go back to the Victorian period.

Anyway, our story takes first its place in Monk piece, where Arthur lived in pleasure with his new family because of its safety and peace, and his life was the happiest one as he argues: "I stood taking in the night air at the door of my house, on that Christmas Eve. For some fourteen years now Monk's Piece had been the happiest of homes -Esme's and mine, and that of her four children her first marriage"(9). Then, he introduces us to another place which is Crythin Gifford which is described as charming by Sam Daily saying that:"There's the drowned churches and the swallowed-up village," he chuckled. He also adds that: "Those are particularly fine examples of 'nothing to see.' And we have a good wild run of an abbey with a handsome graveyard—you can get to it at low tide" (32).When Arthur enters to the house, he finds that "There was a great, seething silence" (59). In addition, "There were various other

doors, all of them closed"(61).

Of course this setting has to do with gothic literature since it embodies its characteristics of strangeness, mystery and horror. As we can see, Eel Marsh House is the large forbidding house, where Alice Drablow lived out the last of her days. It is obviously haunted by memories of past and full of secrets, big, unoccupied, and even far from the mainland. This is why Arthur says: "I looked up ahead and saw, as if rising out of the water itself, a tall, gaunt house of gray stone with a slate roof, which now gleamed steadily in the light" (52). This description gave the house a personality where the ghost of *The Woman in Black* continues to appear and acting as living one. The description of the Crythin Gifford contradicts now the description of the Monk Piece, where Arthur and his new family reside after he gets rid of his past.

The Monk peace is described by Arthur as a "tiny hamlet [...] tucked snugly into a bend of the river below, white walls basking in the afternoon sunshine" (7) .It is in fact a relief and comfort for Arthur.

The Sublime

The characteristic of the Sublime is that it comes from the nature's power, and this powerful nature can be either terrifying or beautiful in the gothic. In our story, the sublime can be expressed itself through the feeling of terror. As a reference to Hogle: "The extremes that sublime or Gothic images point toward, in other words, are distanced and blunted enough by transformative representations to be pleasant in their terror. They not only lead to mixed but safe" (14).

The sublime also causes reactions from the characters and this is seen in our story through Arthur Kipps's emotions when he says:" My head reeled at the sheer and startling beauty, the wide, bare openness of it. The sense of space, the vastness of the sky above and on either side made my heart race. I would have travelled a thousand miles to see this. I had never imagined such a place" (51). This is expressed when he arrives to Eel Marsh where Walter shows his admire to the natural world in Grythin Gifford. This is what we distinguish as the fantastic.

However, his reaction changed later on where he shows the landscape in Eel Marsh as completely fallen as he says:" the mist was still so thick and darkness had completely fallen, and it was with a gasp of relief that I felt the turf and then the gravel beneath my feet and fumbled my way blindly to the door of the house. Behind me, out on the marshes, all was still and silent; save for that movement of the water, the pony and trap might never have

existed"(66).

It means that landscape becomes terrifying for him because of its silence, the mist which fills it and even the darkness which covers it. This is what pushes him to declare that he stood " helpless in the mist, my feet held fast, my body pulled back, and while behind me, though I could not see, only sense her dark presence, hovered the woman"(74).

Bad weather also plays its important role in the sublime, because it aims at provoking a bad atmosphere and this throughout the use of some elements such as cold, annoying, and hatred.

The Woman in Black contains all of what foreshadowing, atmosphere, and Gothic elements such as darkness, shock and cold. The man is confronted by nature such as the tide and rain. Arthur is confronted by the dark House of Alice Drablow with the voices, the lack and the ghost of *The Woman in Black* that continued to haunt it. All these, left a strong emotion within Arthur. Thus, Arthur uses nature as a kind of punishment for him, and this is one of the romantic characteristics, this meant that; what man nature will requites. The atmosphere is achieved by presenting bad weather as being cold and annoying. Even the events which portrayed by Arthur goes hand in hand with nature.

There is also another important element which is the tone. It raises the recitation melody in the whole story, in which the weather makes Arthur depressed and sad at the same time, because of the gloomy atmosphere that it provokes. Thus, Arthur says that: "My spirits have for many years now been excessively affected by the ways of the weather, and I confess that, had it not been for the air of cheerfulness and bustle that prevailed in the rest of the house, I should have been quite cast down in gloom and lethargy" (5).

It means that the weather left him out of despair, especially when he is forced to confront the ghost of *The Woman in Black*. All these things of the past, cause trouble on him. This is why he excuses his family and changes the place, preferring his loneliness.

Supernatural Elements

The supernatural elements in this story included ghost. Its importance as an element in gothic literature is showed in David Punter through his work *The Literature of Terror*; arguing that "To contemporaries, however, it was usually a different feature of Gothic fiction which appeared to be the most significant and around which critical controversy raged, namely, the element of the super-natural."(10).Thus, gothic here, exemplifies Arthur's experience in Alice Drablow's house, connected to the ghost as we can see through Arthur: "I had seen a woman whose form was quite substantial and yet in some essential respect also, I had no doubt,

ghostly"(59).

The strange voices also can be one of the supernatural characteristics, and they are showed in the story throughout Arthur's settling in the house as he says: "Then I realized that the mist played tricks with sound as well as sight, for not only did the noise-of the trap stay further away from me for longer than I might have expected but also it seemed to come not from directly behind me"(65). There are also other examples which are related to the description of the mansion such as graveyard and secret. All these, created a sense of mystery, gloomy atmosphere, fantastic and macabre. This can be related to David Punter in his work *The literature of Terror*, where he states that: "an emphasis on portraying the terrifying, a common insistence on archaic settings, a prominent use of the supernatural, the presence of highly stereo-typed characters and the attempt to deploy and perfect techniques of literary suspense are the most significant."(1).

He also added that: "'Gothic' is also used in a less tendentious sense to refer to horror fiction itself, in the common form of the ghost story. Here there is a clear historical element in the usage"(3). This is showed in our story, where the ghostly figure is presented by Jennet Humphrey in the name of *The Woman in Black*.

The element of haunting is also of a great importance as it is showed in Jerold Hogle's introductory essay to his work *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Literature*:

These haunting can take many forms, but they frequently assume the features of ghosts, specters, or monsters (mixing features from different realms of being, often life and death) that rise from within the antiquated space, or sometimes invade it from alien realms, to manifest unresolved crimes or conflicts that can no longer be successfully buried from view. It is at this level that Gothic fictions generally play with and oscillate between the earthly laws of conventional reality and the possibilities of the supernatural— at least somewhat as Walpole urged such stories to do – often siding with one of these over the other in the end.(2-3)

When Arthur arrives in the house, he finds that the house is filled with secrets which continued to haunt Eel Marsh house, and even its inhabitants. Thus, as a reference to Jerold Hogle:

"Within this space or a combination of such spaces, are hidden some secrets from the past (sometimes the recent past) that haunt the characters, psychologically, physically, or otherwise at the main time of the story."(2).

This is also showed in our story through Arthur, when he claims that: "certain people claimed to have a stronger than normal intuition of such things and those certain old places were said to be haunted, of course I was aware" (59).

In addition, the people of Crythin Gifford Village refuse to offer help for Arthur, and clarify him the mysterious things about the evil that faces them in that village.

The Evil

In *The Woman in Black*, the evil is not only embodied in the character of Jenet, but also in the character of Jerome, the employer who sends Arthur Kips as a solicitor to Crythin Gifford to settle some affairs of a deceased woman Alice Drablow. Despite that he knows the danger of that, he refuses to give Arthur the exact information about the mysterious house of Alice Drablow in Eel Marsh. This is why Arthur is disappointed saying: "I was not thinking that you would do anything personally,' I said in a soothing tone. 'But perhaps you have a young assistant.' There is no I am quite on my own" (77).

All these suggest that: "In gothic universe one simply and suddenly [...] everything is set right because nothing was ever permanently wrong. Evil, that is, is as ephemeral as good is portent and everlasting" (Hoeveler 121).

The other argument which is given by Hoeveler in her novel:

Evil has a strangely projective quality in the gothic novel. Evil characters do unto others what will end up being done to them. And strangely we find ourselves drawn to this powerful ideology because it's one we want very much to believe. We know we live in a world peopled by oddly evil characters, and sometimes they are even our parents. (Hoeveler120)

Accordingly, in the gothic novel the aspects of evil can be found everywhere.

The Pull of the Past

The pull of the past is shown through Arthur as in the story, where he comes to Crythin Gifford as a modern young, expecting to use telephone there and finding cars. However, when he comes to settle there, he finds that the present is related to the past where *The Woman in Black* represents the past. It's all about the pony and traps which makes the whole story unsettled.

As a reference to Hogle: " Gothic has long been a term used to project modern concerns into a deliberately vague, even fictionalized past. It has thus served over the years to refer, with equal functionality"(16).

The coming back of the pony and trap caused the death Arthur's wife and child after they ride them. In this circumstance, the pony and trap still represents the pull of the past. It means that the past repeats itself where both Stella and Joseph" had almost come to a halt when they passed the tree beside which the woman in black was still standing and, as they did so, she

moved quickly, her skirts rustling as if to step into the pony's path. (144)

Horror and Gothic Fiction

If there is one way to characterize this story, we say that it is a good old-fashioned ghost story, complete with the death of a reclusive old lady, a big creepy mansion, and a ghost that keeps appearing at the most spine-tingling moments. On top of that, it's told in old-school British gothic fashion, with a focus on the environment's ability to inspire dread and fear.

Susan Hill used elements of the classical gothic genre in order to create suspense in this ghost horror story. This conventional gothic elements are marked throughout the setting, which is Eel marsh with its isolation from the rest of land. As a reference to David Punter who argues that: "When thinking of the Gothic novel, a set of characteristics springs readily to mind: an emphasis on portraying the terrifying, a common insistence on archaic settings, prominent use of the supernatural, the presence of highly stereo-typed characters and the attempt to deploy and perfect techniques of literary suspense are the most significant"(10).

The suspense is characterized by the feeling of horror that Arthur faces in the Eel Marsh house, which was a kind of threat to him, and even the shadowy and the gloomy atmosphere that caused on him troubles and this is showed in David Punter *The Literature of Terror* arguing that:

The first of these holds characters and readers mostly in anxious suspense about threats to life, safety, and sanity kept largely out of sight or in shadows or suggestions from hidden past, while the latter confronts the principal characters with the gross violence of physical or psychological dissolution, explicitly shattering the assumed norms (including the repressions) of everyday life with wildly shocking, and even revolting, Consequences. (3)

III.3. Gothic Feminism

III.3.1. Analysis of the Themes and Characters in The Light of Gothic Feminism

The story of *The Woman in Black* has to do with the theme of memories of the past such as Crythin Gifford and Eel marsh house, and even Arthur's story with his beloved Stella.

The relationship between Arthur's current life and his past life and family is that his past is so hurting and sad, especially after the losing of his family. He is still haunted by the events that happened to him when he was a young man, and still grieves the death of his beloved wife Stella on the delivery of their son Joseph four years ago.

In this respect, Jerold Hogle claims that in gothic literature:

They look back to a past existence which can never be recovered and so can be reconceived, yet

they also look ahead to marketable recasting of old remnants in modern technologies (from Walpole's printing press at Strawberry Hill to the computer systems and software of today) in which what is already counterfeited can be transformed into a simulation antiquated repositories into which modern quandaries can be projected and objected simultaneously. (15-16)

The theme of isolation also showed not only through the isolation and the appearance of *The Woman in Black* to Arthur Kipps alone, among bogs and fogs, but also through Arthur, who also finds himself isolated and separated from the rest of society when he arrives to Eel Marsh House. Especially, this is showed through the setting which is cut off from the mainland when the tide rises. Finally, when he comes back to London to continue his normal life, he finds himself alone even with his new family. Accordingly, the past prevents him from enjoying his new family when he comes back to the memories of the past that he can never forget with the others. This is why that Arthur seems alone as he says: "I wanted company, and I had none"(59). He also adds that: "I thought it most likely that, if I were to stay here for any length of time, I should become quite addicted to the solitude and the quietness"(54).

Fear also is the most prevalent theme, where the setting is itself frightening since it is isolated, especially in the night as it has to do with nature, sublime, and revenge, but its major interest is the fear interest. Arthur is afraid of *The Woman in Black* from the very beginning, when she appears to him in the Eel Marsh house. He even refuses to sleep in the house, because of the odd voices that he hears such as the crying of the baby. *The Woman in Black* wants all people to be afraid of her, not only through her spooky costume, but also through her behavior and the way she is looking at the others. This is why the villagers are so afraid of talking about *The Woman in Black*, because of her bad effects on people. Her trying to make people afraid is showed throughout her power that she does not possess when she was alive. In showing this, she appears like omen for the death of a child. She does not cause fear to Arthur through her appearance, but also through her dress in black and disembodied ghost which is shown through the sounds of bump in the night.

The Woman in Black's appearance tells us that she is as sad as Walter claims: "what extremes of sad feeling she was now suffering, alone there"(45). Especially, her soul is not relaxed and her appearance is different from what it has been before, and the most reason which changed her is the death of her son. *The Eel Marsh House's* appearance is so frightening since it's the place where Jennet's son lived. Thus, in true gothic fashion, *The Woman in Black's* ghastly appearance is an accurate reflection of her inside.

The theme of mystery and exploration is another theme which is showed in *The Woman in Black*. This woman seems to be mysterious, especially for Arthur during the first time he

sees her. In the beginning, Arthur gives a rational description of The woman in Black, saying:

I half-turned, discreetly, and caught a glimpse of another mourner, a woman, who must have slipped into the church after we of the funeral party had taken our places and who stood several rows behind and quite alone, very erect and still, and not holding a prayer book. She was dressed in deepest black, in the style of full mourning that had rather gone out of fashion. (41)

However, her continued appearance to Arthur Kipps, pushed him to investigate the reality even though Arthur Kipps is rational. He recognizes later how much he is ignorant saying: "I needed an explanation. It is remarkable how powerful a force simple curiosity can be. I had never realized that before now" (59). In addition, during his settlement in Eel Marsh, where he hears the strange voices and the rocking chairs. Despite his fear, he continues to explore and detect these hidden secrets and he stays, because he wants to solve the mystery of the old house. This is why Arthur is considered as the victim of this mystery, because he spends much of the time fearing about his safety. This is shown when he says: "In spite of my intense fear and sense of shock, I was consumed with the desire to find out exactly who it was" (59). Consequently, Arthur can be related to the gothic hero of Hoeveler's book *Gothic Feminism*, who argues that Gothic heroes want "to find something hidden, mysterious, deep, and esoteric behind the black veil"(Hoeveler 3).

What indicates that Arthur Kipps is a rational is showed when he says that: "until this day, I had not done so, and whatever stories I had heard of them I had, like most rational, sensible young men, dismissed as nothing more than stories indeed" (59).

It means that, Arthur does not believe in ghost stories, because he says: "I did not believe in ghosts. Or rather, until this day, I had not done so, and whatever stories I had heard of them I had, like most rational, sensible young men"(59). This shows in our view, the rationality of the modern man in the twentieth century who does not believe in the supernatural phenomena, but unfortunately, he starts now to doubt its presence.

The theme of family is showed through Jennet in *The Woman in Black*. We notice that even though Jennet allowed by the Drablow's family to stay in front of her son, she is prevented from telling her son that she is his real mother. It suggests that, even though we are in the twentieth century, woman still has difficulties in expressing themselves freely such as the case with Jennet, and this can be seen at a time where women were given the right to express themselves freely. This is due to the feminist movements, whose demands expanded to express other things such the right into education, since many women were forbidden from expressing their ideas, considering them as ignorant.

Thus, in *The Woman in Black*, Jennet Humphrey can be considered as those gothic

heroines which are depicted in Hoeveler's book as "The typical female gothic novel who presents a blameless heroine triumphing through a variety of passive-aggressive strategies over a male-created system of oppression and corruption, "the patriarchy ""(9).

As a reference to the female gothic, this theme of family is connected to the decaying of families which is found in the female gothic novelist of the 18th century to which Hoeveler points: "the theme of familial and dynastic ruin " (198). This is also shown in *The Woman in Black* as a prevalent story written in the 20th century.

The Woman in Black can be classified among the female gothic heroine whose "life-long frustrated love can find release only in causing pain, torture, or destruction to each other"(Hoeveler 201).

The theme of marriage is existed in *The Woman in Black* in spite that we can not feel it. Alice Drablow stays with her husband though she did not have children. However, she has adopted Jennet's son as her child in order to stay in her status; maybe she is afraid of divorce. We notice also how both Stella and Arthur are happy in their marriage, except The Woman in Black who has never married with the man she loves and caused her to be pregnant. Thus, her state is deteriorated, because if she had really married, she would never have to give her son to her sister. The marriage is the only way which could allow her to keep her son.

In *The Woman in Black*, Jennet Humphrey also seems to be a bad mother in "Gothic Feminism" since she leaves her son and gives it to her sister just after his birth, and even though she suffered after his death, but the fact that she gives her son to her sister, gives us bad insight about her as a mother since she does not assume her responsibility toward him.

However, since the marriage also seems to be so important, and if The Woman in Black had married, she would not have such a problems with her sister who refused to give back her son, and her son may be still alive even though his death is an accident.

On the other hand, Hill makes Jennet stands against marriage and even the conventions of the Victorian period, where she demands her right as a mother into her own son, and she wants to take care of him without the help of the son's father who refuses to marry her. Thus, Jennet is not repressed because of her sister who refuses to give back her son. But in reality, the real cause of her repression as we can see is caused by the man who betrays her and determined never to marry her. This is why that Stella became a vengeful woman, where her ghost haunts the town and decides to take revenge on the people's children who go especially to the Eel Marsh house. Through this Arthur claims that "the intensity of her grief and distress together with her pent-up hatred and desire for revenge permeated the air all around"(130).

The female in distress is an inevitable theme which embodies the character of Jennet,

and throughout the story, sane is the word that is applied to Jennet Humphrey to describe her madness in *The Woman in Black*, her anger and despair made her crazy that she wants to get revenge and destroy everyone. And after Arthur confronts her ghost he goes a little crazy. Especially, after the death of his wife and son. Thus, the repression of woman is evidently seen here in this story as it is showed in gothic literature when David Punter claims that "The repressed, archaic, and thus deeply unconscious Feminine is a fundamental level of being to which most Gothic finally refers "(11).

In this story, *The Woman in Black* is not the only character who was in distress, even Daily's wife as portrayed by Arthur: "Mrs. Daily was a quiet, shy-seeming, powdery-looking little woman, even more ill at ease in her surroundings than he. She said little, smiled nervously, crocheted something elaborate with very fine cotton" (86).

The story of *The woman in black* deals also with the theme of betrayal. It means that, Jennet was betrayed by her sister who refuses to give back her only child. In addition, Alice Drablow is considered as the most responsible for the death of Jennet's child. Thus, the *Woman in black* complicated the theme of betrayal, and she did not understand her sister's way to take care of her nephew when she adopted him. But in reality, Jennet is deceived first by the man she loved after he refuses to marry her. Then, her sister refuses to give back her beloved son, and all this caused on her pain and deceit. Thus, her release can't be except through causing pain to others and through her revenge. Especially, she is always blaming her sister as the most responsible for her tribulations. This is why she appeared in her funeral, which means that she never forgives her about the death of her son. As Walter states: "But the feelings that must accompany the death of someone as close to my heart and bound up with my own being as it was possible to be, I knew then, in the nursery of Eel Marsh House" (115). Accordingly, the theme of betrayal is not an excuse for Jennet to be in such a case. Without any doubt it is her heartbreak which leads her to blame her entire community.

In the theme of power, we notice that even *The Woman in Black* was written in the 20th century. It still resembles the ideas of Wollstonecraft, who argues:

women's minds were essentially identical to men's, but these minds became more emotional, less reasonable, and more prone to excess through the orrupting influences of patriarchal education.[...] women would be wise to bury their emotions, become, that is, reasonable "honorary men". Such a position had the effect of reinforcing "feminist humanism" and the domestic ideology, paradoxically maintaining the marginalization of women in the home. (Hoeveler17)

Accordingly, Wollstonecraft wanted to say that women should be devoid of their emotions. Thus, if we apply this to *The Woman in Black*, we find that Jennet is the best

example. Hoeveler claims in that the female gothic writer creates

what she thinks are alternative, empowering Female-created fantasies. In her triumphant act of self-creation she rejects her subjugation and status as "Other", whether object or absence and she refuses to subscribe passively to confining male-created ideologies of the "woman as subject". (19)

Even though *The Woman in Black* is absent and dead, she refuses to be subjected to the constraint of society. Thus, her ghost comes back to act as a living object.

On the other hand, in order that woman can overcome their status of fear and emotion, they should adopt the man's mind which allows them to control themselves and throughout her masculinized role, she is no longer the victim of the patriarchal society. In this respect Diane Hoeveler claims:

According to the female gothic trajectory, the heroine, in her new and valorized masculinized role and identity as oedipal detective and reasonable, rational seeker of the family's buried secret, has become acceptable only because she has managed to object/reject her "naturally" passionate feminine tendencies toward excess and emotion and cultivated in their place a rational and masculinely identified mind. Possessing the mind of a man means that women are first and for most reasonable, calm, and easily able to control or better yet repress their emotions. (32)

This resembles the character of Stella in *The Woman in Black*, who could never have triumphed over the evil of *The Woman in Black*, where she becomes her victim.

Concerning the woman's power, Hoeveler claims that: "For Irigaray, only when women bring themselves to a new and unmediated position of Selfhood, subjectivity, and language-apart from the patriarchy-will they be able to become "feminine feminine" women, that is, defined by woman-marked codes, values, and beliefs" (Hoeveler 12). When we relate this to our story, we find that women can identify themselves as "feminine feminine", and this only through their subjectivity and voices. This can be related to the novel when Stella gives her child and travels to another place where she worked. Just after her return, she determines to resume a relation with her son, because she acquired her subjectivity which leads her to claim her right.

The theme of revenge is also unavoidable in gothic literature. It can not be acted only by the living persona. It is acted as well by the dead spirits or mortals in the form of ghost as we can see in gothic literature and in our story as well, where the ghost of Jennet Humphrey comes back to take revenge even after her death, and causes harm to other people's children. Its reason here is due to the death of her child. Thus, Jennet acts her revenge which is the only solution for her release and even to get rid of her troubles. Consequently, her ghost leads to

the death of many children, including Jerome's child and Arthur's child. However, her heroism resembles that of the eighteenth century female gothic heroine who enacts according to Hoeveler "all these episodes the revenge of the gothic anti-heroine on her avatar, the gothic feminist. She promises through her violent actions to warn as well as punish her more docile sister by standing as a living object" (216). This curse also found in a novel of the 20th century as it is shown in *The Woman in Black*.

Even though the death of her son Nathaniel was no one's fault, *The Woman in Black* was filled with hatred. As we can see, Jennet is not only angry about her sister, but for the whole society and decided to take revenge on all people's children, and this after the death of her son Nathaniel because of her madness.

The Woman in Black considered as a heroine, because her death contains a number of gothic female characteristics such as madness, suffering, and sadness. Her distress is only showed through Arthur's interpretation of the letters that he read about her.

As we can see, the whole story of *The Woman in Black* suggests "the return of revenge of the earlier and repressed sentimental tradition" (Hoeveler 196). It means that *The Woman in Black*'s revenge is the result of her repression and broken heart on her son. This is why her ghost comes back to revenge and she succeeded in this. This is shown in the novella where Arthur claims that Jennet Humphrey becomes "Mad with grief and mad with anger and desire for revenge" (135). However, her revenge turns even after her death, where it caused the death of Arthur's family; we mean his wife Stella with his son Josef.

In addition, this novel resembles the traditional gothic texts as Hoeveler claim: "It's as if the sentimental erupts into this gothic text and will not die. The sentimental hero wages a life or death battle with his nemesis, the gothic antihero, and He wins a partial Victory" (196).

In contrast, the most characteristics of *The Woman in Black* is the source of sorrow. She is unwillingly forced into her role of female gothic by denouncing her vengeance, since her madness led her to do so. She becomes as a "murder victim". This can be related to the Gothic heroines of Hoeveler who, "denounce vengeance and persist in disobedience" (72).

In fact, *The Woman in Black* is like those gothic female who "does not triumph over evil, but is actually brought down by its power because she is complicit with it" (Hoeveler 95). Her revenge can almost be seen in acting it against Arthur's family, where she causes the death of his wife and his son, and she always considers herself as the victim of society. However, this leads her under the criticism of anti-feminist critics who assert that women victimize themselves in order to survive. Thus, *The Woman in Black* returns in order to take revenge, and the real victim of feminism here is Arthur's wife Stella, who has died with her

son. However, the theme of triumph persisted largely in this story where, *The Woman in Black* could not have her triumph on her sister, because she is dead; however, she succeeded in causing pain to other people by causing the death of their children.

In gothic feminism, Arthur Kips can be considered as those weak men when referring it to Hoeveler, in which she argues that:

A weak man, that is, a man who has been professionally gendered as "masculine" according to the bourgeois ideology, will not think he can tyrannize over his wife and children; this man will not attempt anything as foolish as adultery or its attendant sins, he will not chain his wife to rocks in a cave. (Hoeveler 32)

In the original gothic novel, the justice always had been done even though the degree of the crimes which was committed. The characters will be punished later, or justice may be done by God. Consequently, *In The Woman in Black* the sense of justice can be seen after *The Woman in Black* got her revenge. For her, the justice means causing death to other people's children.

Conclusion

In this last chapter, we introduced Susan Hill's biography, and the summary of her novella *The Woman in Black*. Then, we tried to apply the traditional gothic elements and "Gothic Feminism" as the basis theory in our analysis.

Throughout the analysis, We have used some literary works like David Punter's *The Literature of Terror* and Hoeveler's *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës*, since *The Woman in Black* holds these characteristics and features of "Gothic Feminism". We used both of them to examine their relevance on characters and themes of the novella.

Even though The story was written in the twentieth century, it has popularized this theory of "Gothic Feminism". It sheds light into gothic features which was characterized in the eighteenth century, and showed their relevance on *The Woman in Black* even though it was written in the twentieth century. These Literary works were discussed by using the features of gothic such as: a distressed heroine who is largely studied by many critics from the eighteenth century till nowadays.

The application of the "Gothic Feminism" as a theory showed us the major characteristics of female gothic in the twentieth century. Its major characteristics are female as a victim, professional femininity, tender and patriarchy.

General Conclusion

Along this dissertation, we have tried to establish parallels and differences between Collins and Hill's work. At the same time, we tried also to look beyond the main differences. However, we found that both works embodied the same suffering, pain, and past injuries, but in different manners.

Throughout our analysis of both works, we found that both authors portray their respective communities, and both of them adopt a new way of expressing his or her opinions, which are distinct from the same kind of writers.

The aim of the study was to look at the representation of female characters. Furthermore, the choice of both stories is not ambiguous or rough, but on purpose to appreciate the characteristics of the traditional gothic elements, and Hoeveler's theory of "Gothic Feminism" to establish parallels and differences between the two stories.

"Gothic Feminism" seemed to be the most appropriate theory for our research, and proved its relevance. In addition, our interest lies in the female characters, representation of women, and their reaction to their sufferings. Particularly, both works bring to light how characters are immersed in the same causes, which gave birth to a wide range of reactions among writers.

Both works are so original, in which the application of "Gothic Feminism" added things which are expressive and distinctive, and both contain deep truth that most gave no attention.

We have not only used some old clichés, but we also tried to bring some originality. For instance: as an old cliché, we exposed separately the two author's biographies and we brought to light their main contribution to literature. As a second step, we tried to define the word Gothic; its characteristics, its elements and its development through time. Then, feminism and its moves then comes our literary theory of "Gothic Feminism" and its criticism.

In the third step, we came to analyze the elements of the traditional gothic in both works by relating them to the setting and the plot. In addition to this, we used "Gothic feminism" as a theory which is applied on the characters throughout the themes. However, the first comparison between the two works centered around the application of the elements of the traditional gothic on both works, then comes the themes and characters.

Thus, throughout the examination of our work, we came with an answer to our research questions. As an answer to our first question: we can say that both authors portray the women through their historical period as oppressed, sad and in isolation to their world such as Laura Fairlie and Ann Catherick in *The Woman in White* during the Victorian period, and Jennet in

The Woman in Black in the twentieth century.

They were also presented in a state of being sanity, because all of them experienced bad conditions. This is why that both works introduced formally the same injustices, suffrage, pain, and past damages, and this is shown through the fictional characters. Thus, both works delve deep into the truth of the woman's suffering whose reactions expressed differently.

Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* talks about the status of woman under the exercising unjust power of patriarchal system during the Victorian period in England. Especially, about the woman who was confined in the asylum.

Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black* deals with the motherhood or the mother's suffering for the death of her son, something that can be related to the real life of the twentieth century, and her struggle to protect him before losing him, and ending in her madness until she died.

However there is always contradiction, where the female characters manifest themselves differently in the light of the application of "Gothic Feminism", and this is shown through their response.

Both *The Woman in White* and *Laura* are presented as a weak characters, because they are silent and calm all the time. Something that is considered as passive in the mold of "Gothic Feminism". They can be classified as the "victim feminism" because both of them are the embodiment of the Victorian ideals whereas Jennet in *The Woman in Black* acts as a "professional femininity". Before her son's death, she claimed her right into his custody. Especially, her response to the death of her was so clear, and this can be seen when she determines to take revenge on all people's children.

This character of Jennet also resembles that of Marian in *The Woman in White*, who seems to be powerful not only through her masculine figure, but also through her actions that also represents the characteristics of the "professional femininity". They are both performing The New Woman's role. Thus, this theory of "Gothic Feminism" is so relevant due to its general concern and view point about women. In addition to this, it helped us even in relating these female characters to their historical period throughout the literary context.

Both works effectively rework the traditional Gothic conventions. In addition to this, the social and cultural background of the time created both novels with the representation of female characters within gothic literature. So, both works combine between the traditional gothic genre and feminine traditional roles of the eighteenth century with both author's social periods. Farther, the theory of "Gothic Feminism" which was applied to works of women authors of the 18th century proved to be adequate to a novel written in the Victorian period by man and for a novella written by a woman in the 20th century.

This proved that female characters manifest themselves in the gothic literature, and both of them showed similarities and differences not only through the traditional gothic elements on the nineteenth century work, but also on the twentieth century.

In order to enforce these answers, we have to show first the similarities and differences between both works, in terms of the relevance of the traditional gothic elements. Then, to investigate how the female characters have been represented.

This dissertation based on two comparisons, and this achieved through the use of the new literary theory which is "Gothic Feminism", because it has provided a place for the traditional interpretive concepts of literary criticism, such as the two authors' respective biographies, characters and themes.

Our choice of using traditional Literary criticism of feminism in relation to gothic literature became known nowadays as "Gothic Feminism", in which its characteristics has been shown as victim feminism or (professionalization of femininity), gender and patriarchy are the major elements which can be applied on both works, in which the female characters embody these characteristics in both works.

Throughout the use of the literary criticism's traditionalist interpretive concepts, we have found similarities in both works in terms of gothic elements such as nature, sublime, horror, mystery, plot, setting. In addition to the same themes such as appearance, deceit, betrayal, revenge, power, memory, gender, marriage, and family.

However, according to few differences, what makes the story of *The Woman in Black* noticeably different from the story of *The Woman in White* is the techniques that both of the authors relied on in the narration of their stories.

Through the use of the narrative method, both authors bring to light their people's point of views, where Wilkie Collins told the story from various testimonials and characters. This is why *The Woman in White* considered as an epistolary novel whereas Susan Hill depended on the unreliable narrator, who will tell the story from the beginning to the end from his point of view. Particularly, *The Woman in White* was written during the Victorian period by male writer whereas *The Woman in Black* was written in the twentieth century by a female author.

Even though these entire differences, we find that through the application of "Gothic Feminism", the social and cultural background of the time created both works with the representation of female characters. In addition, both female characters in *The Woman in White* and *The Woman in Black* are gothic heroines who become in a complete mental break down; especially, they were trapped in their gender roles.

The "Gothic Feminism" showed us that both Marian and *The Woman in Black* conforms

the Victorian role of *The New Woman* and the modern role such as showing themselves as rebellious and conforming. In addition to this, both of them acquired masculine features of strength and aggression. This is what we distinguish as a professionalization of gender, where both female victims determine to revolt in order to establish their real status in the society.

However, Stella also in *The Woman in Black* also seems to embody the traditional role of the female gothic where she chooses at the end to stay with her son and accepting the idea of the Angel in the House. She had many characteristics of the New Woman; she chooses the traditional feminine role as a wife and mother in the end. Thus, her role resembles also Laura as a dutiful woman.

In contrast to them, Marian's characteristics are far removed from the idea of the Angel of the House which surfaces again in connection with marriage.

The comparison between the two stories' main elements and themes related to the research major question, proved the relevance of both traditional gothic elements and "Gothic Feminism" on both works.

In the light the application of the "Gothic Feminism" as a theory, we found that both stories include the same and different characteristics of the traditional gothic heroines with the Victorian and twentieth century gothic heroines.

It was not easy to compare these two powerful works. However; I understand why the suffering of woman was a conflict which has been the source of conflicts to the generations of writers. Both works were really challenging especially, when we came to deal with *The Woman in Black* as a recent work about which very few criticism was provided.

The difficulties which we found in the process of analysis have to do with the theory. These problems are showed in the application of the traditional gothic elements on both works.

We found some difficulties in using these theoretical concepts in our analysis of both works. Especially, there is no equivalence in some of these parts, for example: the female characters in *The Woman in White* are showed some of the gothic conventions of the eighteenth century which are relevant to the Victorian values, and eighteenth century values as well as to the modern values as we can see in *The Woman in White*, through Laura who has equivalence with that woman of the eighteenth century while her sister resembles those modern women, and she is described as a *Newly Woman*.

Even though the difficulties that we have faced in our process of analysis. Our research has introduced us to the world of fear and horror which can be caused by human beings. This is why that our topic is worthy of study. Particularly, both novels deals with horror menace of

death and pain more vividly than pleasure. In addition to this, both of them have their appeal on the reader as a Victorian in their design, and nearly all of the elements of good ghost story are presented in both works. Thus, both authors succeeded in creating the gothic works.

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