

**T.C.  
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**THE EMERGENCE OF “NEW WOMAN”  
IN VICTORIAN DRAMA**

**MASTER THESIS**

**Didem YALÇIN**

**Department of English Language and Literature  
English Language and Literature Program**

**October, 2019**

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**Supervisor: Öz ÖKTEM, PhD**

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T.C.  
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ONAY

Prof. Dr. Ragıp Kutay KARACA  
Enstitü Müdürü

*For my mother and all women,  
who are prosperous as leaders in life.*

“It may seem blasphemous to link woman’s association with fairies, mermaids, and other grotesques to her domestic incarnation as an angel, but popular Victorian angelology was itself a radical theological modification, that flirted with blasphemy.”

Nina Auerbach

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that all information in this thesis document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all materials and results in this thesis.

**Didem YALÇIN**



## **FOREWORDS**

This work which is prepared as Istanbul Aydın University Social Sciences Institute English Language and Literature Department Master graduate thesis, aims to contribute to the field by examining the New Woman concept in three Victorian plays by Henrik Ibsen, George Bernard Shaw and August Strindberg under the scope of feminist criticism. I would like to thank to my Supervisor, Öz Öktem, PhD., for her guidance, support, help and patience. And i would like to say special thanks to Professor Türkay Bulut, Gamze Sabancı PhD., Filiz Çele PhD. and Gillian Mary Elizabeth Alban, PhD. Also, i would like to thank to all of my professors at Yeditepe University in the department of English Language and Literature. I would also say special thanks to my first English teacher, Gülergün Toprakçı. I would like to thank and tell my appreciation to my best friend, Zeynep Kocalp. And i would like to express my endless gratitude for my mother, RanaYalçın and my father, Hakan Yalçın for their support, trust, help and inspiration.

**October, 2019**

**Didem YALÇIN**

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## VICTORIA DÖNEMİ'NDE YENİ KADIN'IN OLUŞUMU

### ÖZET

Bu tez bir karşılaştırmalı edebiyat çalışması olup, Victoria döneminde yazılmış üç oyundaki “Yeni Kadın” kavramı Feminist eleştirel kuramı altında incelenecektir. İlk oyun Henrik Ibsen’in *Bir Bebek Evi*, ikinci oyun, George Bernard Shaw’ın *Bayan Warren’ın Mesleği*, ve son olarak August Strindberg’in *Matmazel Julie* adlı oyunu ele alınacaktır.

Yeni Kadın on dokuzuncu yüzyıl sonunda ortaya çıkan ve kadınların toplumsal ve siyasi alanda özgür ve bağımsız olmalarını destekleyen, ve daha çok edebiyat ve entellektüel alanda desteklenen bir kavramdır. Ibsen ve Shaw bu kavramı özellikle desteklerken, Strindberg yermekte ve eleştirmektedir. Bu kavramın tiyatro eserlerine nasıl yansıtıldığı Feminizm akımı altında incelenecektir.

Dönemin sonlarına doğru ortaya çıkan Yeni Kadın, aslında ataerkil toplumun yarattığı bir kadındır. Ortaya çıkan Yeni Kadın, artık kendi ayakları üzerinde durabilen, kendi ekonomik bağımsızlığını kazanma yolunda adımlar atan ve kendi başına yaşam mücadelesi verme çabası içine girer.

Birinci bölümde, Victoria Dönemi’ndeki alışlagelmiş, toplum kurallarını göz önünde bulunduran “Eski Kadın” figürüyle, dönemin sonlarına doğru doğan Yeni Kadın figürü ele alınacaktır.

İkinci bölümde *Bir Bebek Evi* adlı oyunda ana karakter Nora, oyunun sonunda evini, kocası Torvald Helmer ve çocuklarını terk eder. Her ne kadar Nora, kocası Torvald Helmer için para bulmak istiyormuş gibi görünse de, aslında kendi Sosyo-Ekonomik bağımsızlığını göz önünde bulundurmak ister.

Üçüncü bölümde, *Bayan Warren’ın Mesleği* oyunu incelenecektir. Vivie’nin annesi Bayan Warren, Frank, Praed ve oyundaki diğer karakterler ile başa çıkmaktadır. Oyundaki tüm karakterler Vivie’yi baskı altına almaya çalışmışlardır. Fakat Vivie kendini ataerkil toplumun yarattığı baskılardan sıyrılır.

Dördüncü bölüm ise *Matmazel Julie* oyunu incelenecektir. Oyunda August Strindberg, bir ev sahibesiyle hizmetkarının ilişkisini anlatmaktadır. Matmazel Julie ile hizmetkarı Jean arasındaki ilişki toplumsal kuralların dışına çıkan bir ilişkidir. Oyunun sonunda Matmazel Julie korkularıyla yüzleşmemek için ve kendi gurunu kurtarmak için intihar eder.

Görüldüğü üzere, üç oyundaki kadın karakterler hep bir toplumsal baskı altındadırlar. Buna rağmen gelinen nokta üç kadın da kendini kurtarmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Yeni Kadın, Nora, Vivie, Matmazel Julie, Feminizm.*



## THE EMERGENCE OF “NEW WOMAN” IN VICTORIAN DRAMA

### ABSTRACT

In this study, a comparative literary work, the concept of “New Woman” is analysed in three Victorian plays, under the critical theory of Feminism.

The first play is Henrik Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, the second is George Bernard Shaw’s *Mrs. Warren’s Profession* and the final play is August Strindberg’s *Miss Julie*.

The “New Woman” emerges towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century under the scope of literary works and intellect. The concept has been supported by inter-disciplinary branches, under socio-political issues. While Ibsen and Shaw exalt the New Woman, Strindberg criticises it. The reflection of this concept in drama of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is analysed in this thesis.

The New Woman is a product of patriarchal society. This New Woman can stand on her feet and move independently. She steps for gaining her economic independence and survival efforts on her own.

First chapter mainly discusses the traditional subservient “Old Woman” and how the concept of New Woman emerged towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In chapter two, *A Doll’s House* will be analysed. At the end of the play, Nora leaves her house, her husband, Torvald Helmer, and her children. Although Nora tries to sign a bill in order to find money for her husband, she tries to consider her Socio-Economic independence.

The third chapter the play, *Mrs. Warren’s Profession* will be analysed. The main character Vivie tries to keep up with her mother, Mrs. Warren, Frank, Praed and the other characters in the play. All of the characters in the play try to suppress Vivie. In spite of the fact that Vivie is under pressure, she manages to get rid of the problems.

In the fourth chapter, *Miss Julie* will be analysed. The relationship between a house mistress and her valet is inappropriate. At the end of the play, Miss Julie commits suicide in order not to face with her fears and saves her dignity.

As it will be discussed all three female characters end up by somehow rescuing themselves, despite the social pressure that they are exposed to.

**Keywords:** *The New Woman, Nora, Vivie, Miss Julie, Feminism*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This study is preoccupied with an in-depth analysis of three selected plays in light of the concept of the “New Woman”: *A Doll’s House*, *Mrs Warren’s Profession* and *Miss Julie*. This thesis will focus not only on the British Victorian drama, but also on the 19th century Scandinavian drama.

In this thesis, the representation of the “New Woman,” under the scope of three Victorian plays will be analysed. It will first start with an introduction in Chapter One which the concept of the New Woman is discussed. Second, the thesis will move to Henrik Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House* Chapter Three then will move to George Bernard Shaw’s *Mrs. Warren’s Profession* and finally in Chapter Four August Strindberg’s *Miss Julie* will be analysed. Lastly, the thesis will end with a conclusion.

The “New Woman” concept can be explained as a liberated woman from patriarchal norms and conventions that society imposes. In the Victorian society certain conventional roles and stereotypes were attributed to women such as home-keepers and child carers. Coventry Patmore’s famous poem “Angel in the House” (1856) makes the frame for how a woman was stereotyped in the Victorian age. However, in *fin de siècle*, under-employment and tough economic conditions made some upper-middle class women encounter difficulties. By the end of 1880s, this concept of “New Woman” began to take shape. The New Woman could be identified as a woman who becomes free and independent under social, political and economic circumstances. This thesis will argue that while Shaw and Ibsen support the concept, Strindberg criticises and insinuates the New Woman in *Miss Julie*.

The New Woman concept is a metamorphosis for women: that they are not the housecarers anymore. Men and women used to belong to different spheres where women were kept within the houses and men were tackling the outside activities. With the emergence of the New Woman concept women started to transgress their boundaries and step into the realm of public sphere. In these three plays, we will see women breaking the traditional restrictions posed on women. For example in Shaw’s

play our protagonist reads detective stories and smokes cigarettes and in Ibsen's play a woman leaves both her house and children, all quite radical actions in their social context.

In short, the thesis will discuss that Nora in *A Doll's House* is like an "angel in the house." The play begins with a proper family life in which Nora is the house keeper where as her husband is the representative figure of the patriarchal society at home. However, at the end of the play Nora leaves both her husband and her responsibilities as a mother and a wife by leaving the house. Then, it will be discussed that George Bernard Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession* deals with one of the most significant problems of the Victorian society: prostitution. In the play all of the characters except for Vivie are part of the problem. Despite the pressure put on Vivie by the other characters in order to make her a conventional Victorian woman, she emerges from the play as an independent woman thanks to her determination and her own moral values.

Yet, the final play *Miss Julie* will be analysed from a different point of view. The New Woman concept will be analysed. The play could be likened to an ice-berg. Miss Julie is the master of her house and Jean is the servant. Miss Julie is the upper hand. She flirts with her servant. The thesis will argue that the depiction of the dynamics of the relationship between Julie and Jean reveals the patriarchal anxieties concerning the empowerment of women.

## 2. THE CONCEPT OF “NEW WOMAN” *INFIN DE SIÈCLE*

The term “New Woman” was used for the first time by Michelle Elizabeth Tusanin “The Social Standing of the New Woman” published in 1893. She argues that women become a social and political icon. New Woman begins to stand against dominant patriarchal power by taking over more responsibilities and gaining agency to be on par with her opposite sex. She begins to represent the female identity towards the very end of the 19th century. Women start to take an active role and involve in what had always been male activities (Beaumonts, 2007). As Tusan(1998) puts it:

New Woman represented feminists’ utopian vision of the model social reformer. Her interest in politics and social justice, however, were not represented as a challenge to her dedication to the home, but rather were depicted as an extension of her domestic duties (p. 170).

The mass media in Victorian era, especially the emergence of women’s magazines – such as *The Ladies’ Cabinet* (1832), *The New Monthly Belle Assemblée* (1834) and *The Ladies’ Companion* (1871), to name a few – , played a significant role in shaping this new concept of woman. Women writers created their own image of femininity in their periodicals during this period. The discussion of the New Woman first appeared in May 1894 in *The North American Review*. According to this discussion, “she [the New Woman]” is the “hope for England’s future” as she has escaped from her passivity in domestic sphere to take an active role in the public life.

The so-called mistress of the Victorian house or the angel in the house, to borrow from Gilbert and Gubar, has begun to awaken in the 19<sup>th</sup> century emancipating herself from the dependence on her husband. She starts to take control over her life and gain agency rather than being a passive object to which things happen. The heroines of *A Doll’s House* and *Mrs Warren’s Profession* and *Miss Julie*, among early female characters, manage to rescue themselves from the stereotypes imposed on them and gain some amount of agency. However, although Mrs Warren, Vivie’s mother, in *Mrs Warren’s Profession*, is eternally trapped in what Simon de Beauvoir calls the *eternal feminine*, Vivie herself manages to resist the patriarchal conventions that

impede women of the time. This in short is best manifest in Nora's abandoning her habitat towards the end of the play to establish her own agency. Similarly, to a great degree Vivie rescues herself from all of the sources that cause problems in her life for example by rejecting to marry and resisting her mother's will through the process of which she gains her independence. And in the final play, Miss Julie commits suicide at the end of the play as a resort to go out of the impediments of the patriarchy. Therefore, these three plays have various common concerns with women's freedom and agency and also with a kind of anxiety that the female characters create for the male characters as a result of their autonomy. Therefore, this research aims to explore how the three main female characters represent the concept of the New Woman and in what ways they crack the surface of patriarchy almost for the first time in literature to challenge the imposed female stereotypes and gain their agency and autonomy.

Elizabeth Langland quotes from Isabella Beeton that "the mistress of the house is the commander of an army" (Langland, 1994, p. 45) because the mistress is the Alpha and the Omega of the house, that is, she is the core of the domestic life and sphere. Victorian houses were considered the smallest core of the Victorian society. The Victorian woman functioned as a regulator in the house among the social domesticity. The domestic role of the Victorian woman has evolved by the end of the century. Langland suggests that the *etiquettes* have changed the social barriers and the borders between the female sex and the opposite sex. Michelle Foucault also makes a diagnosis about how the typical male and female relationship should be implemented under the unity of marriage (Foucault, pp. 217-223, 2013). Marriage symbolizes the moral and the ethical values in society. It aims to pursue the values that enhance to live in welfare. An example of this Victorian female role was the typical housewife who would wait for her husband by holding vigils at home to welcome him home with open arms. Especially, middle class women were affected by these domestic ideologies. These domestic ideologies were actually manuals that would give women instructions about how to behave in society. But gradually, this changed in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, Marriage is the institution, which made both sexes bind to each other and it also essentially concerns moral fidelity and loyalty. This made the house a "sacred place" as John Ruskin observes (*Of Queen's Garden, 1845*). Victorian house was the core symbol of loyalty. Husband and wife coordinate

each other mutually, so that it constructs Victorian society's maintenance. Victorian marriages should aim at happiness, sentiment and oneness. Ben Griffin states that Victorian politicians were afraid of women losing their limits from subordination (Griffin, 2013, pp. 59-63) Because of the religion, husbands are the representative figures of God in Victorian home. The Victorian house should keep the hazard away. St. Paul's wisdom orders men to use their power wisely, 'presupposes quite wisdom, earnest character, rational behaviour with benevolence bearing, forbearing patience with mildness and friendliness.'<sup>1</sup>

For instance, Florence Nightingale complained that women from middle and upper class homes were taught trivial accomplishments to fill up days in which there was nothing to do (Langland, 1994, p. 37). She herself was expected to stay at home to supervise the domestic duties of servants. Conducts and manuals instructed women on what to wear, how to speak, how to behave towards their husbands, how to walk, what to read and how to pray.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, women were kept in their houses as house-keepers, caretakers, to await the house and children. The women of the society were entrusted with the household chores as their duty as domestic householders and child carers. As Hughes puts it, "[w]omen were thought physically weaker yet morally superior to men. So they were best suited for the domestic sphere" (Hughes, 2014, Gender Roles in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Separate Spheres section, para. 2). The typical Victorian woman, as far as religious and cultural beliefs were concerned, was a representative figure of morality, motherhood and domestic order. In other words, she was instructed to be the angel in the house. Women were also seen as inferior to men. They represented submission and lack of intellect. For some, such as Alfred Lord Tennyson, they had "shallower brains" (Tennyson, 1842 / 2012). Women were also restricted within the private sphere of the house. As Lynn Abrams has it, "[t]hey represented the privacy in the home of hearth, where far away from the chaotic public life, business and hustle and bustle, whereas men represented the public sphere of business, politics and sociability" (Abrams, 2001, Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain: The Icon section, para. 2). They had to display their boundary limits in the society. Especially Victorian women played the model daughters, wives and mothers. "They were the

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\*K. Braune, the Epistle of the Paul to the Colossians. Translated from the German, with additions, by M.B. Riddle, DD (Edinburgh, 1870), p.75. quoted from Ben Griffin.

moral and spiritual guardians (Nead 2004, *Women and Urban Life in Victorian Britain: Woman's Mission* section, para. 3). Samuel Smiles identifies women as the nurseries of the nation (Nead, 2004). Domestic ideal was the mothering to her child. Being a mother was not only the virtue of fertilization, but also a "sweet vocation" (Abrams, 2001, *Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain: Wife and Mother* section, para. 1). As Abrams (2001) notes, mothering was the identification of affirmative. It was a social responsibility that cannot be paid. It was something that women should learn. Unmarried, childless single women were pitied. They were seen as failure or abnormal. They were forced to find a work as governesses so that they can compensate their loss. Therefore, marriage represented maturity and respectability.

Also, Victorian houses were the shelter of private spheres, domesticity and social stability. Victorian era made a challenge between countries and cities. Countries were the settings of health, moral life, happiness, peace and nature as oppose to cities. Because big cities were seen as the problems, such as crime, danger and poverty. As Lynda Nead argues, "[d]omestic purity was the equivalence of purity" (2004). The traditional women's role in Victorian society is best illustrated in Coventry Patmore's poem "Angel in the House", first published in 1854. As an instruction or a manual, it defines the notion of an ideal woman from the traditional conservative Victorian perspective: A dutiful loving wife devoted her life to her husband, children and home.

Queen Victoria became the representative figure of middle-class femininity and domesticity as an icon. She was the symbol of marital stability and domestic value and the mother of the nation. She was the embodiment of the society (Abrams, 2001, *Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain: The Icon* section, para 4)..

Her husband Albert and their nine children constructed a wholesome family life as Professor Kate Williams states, After the death of her husband, King Albert, the Queen wore black to show her grief and that she was in eternal mourning (Williams, 2009). This is the indication of her loyalty to her husband. She also used to keep a diary after her husband was gone, her words were: "I have been unable to write my Journal since my beloved one left us, and with a heavy broken heart I enter on a new year without him!" (Queen Victoria, 1861 / 2012). Queen Victoria reveals her awareness of sacrifices which marriage imposed upon women, by saying:

There is great happiness... in devoting oneself to another, who is worthy of one's affection; still men are very selfish and the woman's devotion is always one of the submissions, which makes our poor sex so very unenviable. This you will feel hereafter

– I show; though it cannot be otherwise as God willed it so (Queen Victoria, 1861 / 2012).

As Abrams notes, “[t]he separate spheres were not bind to an adherence to a set of imposed values” (Abrams, 2001, *Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain: The Ideal Woman* section, para. 6). By the time the industrial era paced in Britain, the ideologies which defined femininity and masculinity were gradually shifting from the one based on which women were the figures of domestic and private sphere in their houses while men were the dominance of business, commerce and politics to a more liberated one for women.

Because of the high birth rates and improvement in life expectancy, the Victorian families were large. Industrialization and market conditions required women to contribute into economy and therefore brought women to work outside the domestic core of the family. As Greg Buzwell (2017) argues, “[w]ith educational and employment prospects for women improving, marriage followed by motherhood no longer seemed as the inevitable route towards securing a level of financial security” (*Daughters of Decadence: The New Woman in the Victorian fin de siècle*, para. 1). As Pat Hudson sates, many “[y]oung people, especially young women, migrated to towns and big cities in search of work so as to find an accommodation through domestic services in the homes” (Hudson, 2011, *Women’s Work: Families and Households* section, para 2). Abrams states, Britain, as an industrial nation, paved the ways of new kinds of work and new kinds of urban living, which made a change (2001). Female employment in 1850s, 60s and 70s appeared to be at the utmost level. Women were working as petty traders, such as in confectionery, pottery, metal wares, seam stressing, brewing, laundry work, cleaning and retailing. The status of the widow provided women some space and freedom. Before marriage, women’s guardianship belonged to their father, then to their husbands. Only when husbands and fathers died, they were free. The widows would take over and continue the family businesses whereas the spinsters would find employment as governesses, or in other suitable trades for women, such as, millinery, inn-keeping, grocery retailing.

Victorian women provided a flexible, cheap and adaptive work force for sweat shops and factories. Their wage-earning ability influenced familial order, ordering community and decision-making. They had to survive their families under bad employment conditions. Consumption increased independence and fashion consciousness of young women. “The more women worked for wages, the less they



had to produce their own goods for the house” (Hudson 2001, Women’s Work: Women’s Work Industrialisation and Gender section, para. 2). Working women shouldered the double burden of waged work and the bulk of household responsibilities but their role in politics remained marginal (Hudson 2011).

Despite the regulation of hours and conditions of work for women and juveniles in certain sectors, the demand for female labor expanded. Factory Acts of Parliament (1802-1878) ruled the conditions of labor in mines and factories. Working sixteen hours was tough for women. Hudson (2011) notes, “[m]any households were dependent upon female earning, especially those households run by widows” (Woman’s Work: Families and Households section, para. 1). Yet, women also preferred to keep their income-earning as a secret from their husband (Hudson 2001). Marriage deferred because of the highest increase of prostitution in the big cities. Despite the domestic image of womanhood, the demand for female labor was increasing. There were highly pitched brothels in England and prostitution was highly increasing.

Then there were the prostitutes, some 8,000 of them in London (sometimes estimated at up to 10 times that number), members of an overcrowded occupation that was perhaps a social necessity at a time when fear of childbirth and notions of female purity made marriage something less than a sexually satisfying institution. The prostitutes who saw obsessed Victorians such as Prime Minister William Gladstone were, Murray argues, not a separate order of women. In fact they were broadly representative of 19<sup>th</sup> century Englishwomen: “The obviously dehumanizing quality of the prostitute’s work, her alienation from her own body and from her capacity for pleasure, differs only in degree from the general situation of women whose sexual and emotional lives were similarly inhibited and defined by their economic dependence on men.” (Maier, 1982)

Moreover, the term New Woman has become the cultural icon of the *fin de siècle*. According to June West, the concept is a gradual shift in roles and it is crystal clear that the concept is a 19<sup>th</sup> century women’s movement. (West, 1955) New women are quite intellectual, well-educated, freed, independent and self-supporting (West, 1955). At the end of the century, the New Women concept played a significant role. There were available opportunities for women in the male-dominated world. Blue-stockings usurped men’s “natural” intellectual superiority. From the beginning of 1848, women had opportunities to get into Oxford and Cambridge. And they also began to take significant roles with the contribution of Suffrage Act. (1837). Yet, many families refused to let their daughters attend the colleges, because they feared this would destroy eligibility as a homemaker. Buzwell identified the concept of the New Women as “[f]ree-spirited and independent, educated and uninterested in

marriage and children, the figure of the New Woman threatened conventional ideas about ideal Victorian womanhood” (Buzwell. 2017, *Daughters of Decadence: the New Woman in the Victorian fin de siècle*).The concept of the dutiful wife was challenged later in the century and gradually was replaced by the notion of New Woman. It was quite different from the woman of earlier generations. The domestic women and mothers were kept in their houses, like the *angel* in the house. But New Woman formed into an ideology and became the sign of a woman who remained unmarried (Beaumont, 2007).She began to ride bicycles, and smoke cigarettes. She wrote diaries and read detective stories; she also began to wear men’s clothing. The first woman, who dared to wear pants was one of the most famous feminists Coco Gabrielle Bonheur Chanel. She removed the corsets that a woman has to wear. Her change is also attributed to the “social corset”, that is the social restrictions, which women used to wear. A modern woman and an economically independent woman did not throw herself onto her beds and burst into tears at the slightest provocation or adversity. Women in earlier generations could gain more through their curls, now the new woman learnt to wear high heels and blue-stockings (West, 1955).

On the one hand, they were restricted within the house, on the other there was a great demand for women’s labour in industrial factories and mines and also for prostitution business. There had also been changes in women’s rights, superiority of male labour force, education for women, divorce legislatives and single motherhood. Their mission about morality became a political mission because they wanted to gain better education and opportunities for employment, vote and as a consequence the mission influenced their fate.

Economic welfare, changes in education and socio-culture made this New Woman concept around the turn of the century. Richardson and Willis state that:

The New Woman was by turns: a mannish amazon and a Womanly woman,... she was anti-maternal or a racial super mother, she was male-identified, or manhating and or man-eating or self-appointed saviour of benighted masculinity, she was anti-domestic or she sought to make domestic values prevail, she was radical, socialist and revolutionary or she was reactionary and conservative (as cited in Pykett, 2011, xii).

June West states that:

the majority of husbands did not prefer their wives to work, because women could gain their own economic independence and husbands were scared of women for being their economical rivals. As a result, husbands might lose their dominance. Yet, for some, as long as women’s salaries did not exceed theirs, they could work. Husbands did not feel secure if they could not make enough money to take care of a home and a child. Men

found themselves feeling upset by the mannishness of a woman who in sports, business, politics, drinking, sexual freedom and even in dressing had come closer and closer to take men's position. Women began to act, think and talk like men (West, 1955, pp. 59-60).

This process continued to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After World War I, women's independence increased. There were economic and educational opportunities. Because women began to earn their own money, there was also equivalence in sexual and economical freedom (West, 1955).

In addition, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was given that when a woman would go beyond the limits of her drawing room, she would violate the order of nature and tradition. Women could not vote or hold any political office until 1918. However, there were some educational opportunities for women in that they could attend the universities and the colleges by the end of Queen Victoria's reign. Also stagnation was the chief reason for women getting rid of their stereotyped identification as the angel in the House. A turning point occurred in the mid-Victorian period. As Lynda Nead (2004) states, "Victorian era was the expression for women to seek independence in life" (Women and Urban Life in Victorian Britain). Because women were under a burden inside and outside the house, hundreds and thousands of lower-class women flocked to factories and mines as labourers and also to prostitution because of the urbanisation. Urbanisation was sought to be the frequent solution to the problem and also working conditions and under-unemployment drove thousands of women into prostitution. Especially, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century this profession was increasingly popularized (as cited in Greenblatt, 2012, p. 1031).

To be bored was the major privilege of upper and middle-class wives and daughters. Women were living in such a condition that, idleness and comfort caused them to find themselves in a "nothing to do" situation, as Dinah Maria Mullock sates. This was due to the fact that the role of women as taking care of children, running the households and doing the chores was taken over by the servant.

Basically, middle-class, bourgeois and managerial women constituted the scope of the concept of "New Woman" (Langland, 1994, p. 42). In order to stabilise the patriarchal authority, female sensuality set a barrier against this (Langland, 1994, p. 240). Fathers and husbands were considered to be the representative figure of God at home, because, providentially God enabled them to exercise his authority by proxy in Christian society. However, John Stuart Mill defends the fact that family life

should be held within a harmony. Shared authority would not cause any dispute between the partners. Collaboration enacts the gender equality.

The family, justly constituted, would be the real school of the virtues of freedom... What is needed is that it should be the school of sympathy in equality, of living together in love without power on one side or obedience on the other (Boardman, 2000, p. 156).

House was an isolated place for women, which was far away from the chaotic life, economic problems, politics and other problems in society. This was meant for all women to choose themselves a place like home. However, the private sphere of women gradually shifted. As a result, the alteration due to the demand for labour among women caused an awakening and the emergence of the New Woman at the very end of the Victorian era as they had to move out of the house and consequently abandon their angelic duties which had been imposed on them earlier.

### 3. THE BIRTH OF MODERN DRAMA: THE CASE OF HENRIK IBSEN'S *A DOLL'S HOUSE*

But, till men became attentive to the duty of a father, it is vain to expect women to spend that time in their nursery which they, "wise in their generation," choose to spend at their glass, for this exertion of cunning is only an instinct of nature to enable them to obtain indirectly a little of that power of which they are unjustly denied a share: for, if women are not permitted to enjoy legitimate rights, they will render both men and themselves vicious, to obtain illicit privileges (Wollstonecroft, 1792 / 2012 ).

Henrik Ibsen is the father of modern drama. In 1879, November, 4th *A Doll's House* was published. He wrote the play in on Summer day. Frederick W. Roe agrees that Ibsen was more than just a modern dramatist and regards Ibsen as a philosopher and a poet at the same time. Ibsen is a translator of readers' emotions which are reflected in his characters in the plays. Ibsen was far more experienced as far as his skills as a dramatist are concerned (Roe, 1905). Not only in *A Doll's House*, but also in his various plays, such as *Ghosts*, he shared some of his pain into his plays, so that the reader can also have tendency to reread the plays (Roe 1905). It is fair to nominate the play, *A Doll's House* as a purification of a domestic ideology. The reason is simply because of George Bernard Shaw's identification for Henrik Ibsen's famous play. Stanley Kauffmann draws from George Bernard Shaw's *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*: "a play that might be turned into a very ordinary French drama by the excision of a few lines and the substitution of a sentimental happy ending for the famous last scene." But he says it is the last scene that "conquered Europe and a new school of dramatic art" (Kauffmann, 2000, p. 275).

Ibsen's plays could arguably be regarded as the birth of modern drama. One of his that stands out is *A Doll's House*. Although widely argued, this research contends that the play portrays Nora, the heroine, as the representative of the New Woman in the last decade of 19<sup>th</sup> century. This chapter will explore how Nora comes to gain some degrees of agency and autonomy in a patriarchal context, therefore representing this new concept of New Woman. The play is about Nora who is married to Helmer and has three children. It starts on the Christmas Eve when Nora is decorating a Christmas tree. The time is very significant as it symbolically stands for Nora's own realisation and revelation throughout the play towards the end. At the

beginning, her marriage seems to be flawless and happy in the vein of romance. As a case in point, Helmer showers Nora with seductive compliments: “my little squirrel” (Act I, p.2). As the play continues, things are about to reveal themselves. Even the very compliment reveals patriarchal attitudes of Helmer towards Nora as he dehumanises and reduces her to a little fluffy object to play with. Nora’s relationship will be tarnished by lies, blackmails and intrigues. Krogstad is the antagonist in the play and uses Nora as a tool against Helmer to gain benefits and blackmails her because he knows Nora’s secrets as she has committed forgery by faking her father’s signature (therefore imposturing him) on an IOU bill without the consent of her husband. He gives some money to Nora as she is in need because of Helmer’s illness. However, this is a trapset up by Krogstad. The date of the bill is left blank by Krogstad. The only thing that Nora ignores is there is a clash between the date of her father’s death and that of the forged signature.

The play sets the house Nora and her husband live a playing room. Torvald always calls Nora “sky-lark” and “squirrel” (Act I, p. 2) like his baby-doll. He treats her as a baby child, not a mature human, therefore denying her of agency and autonomy. Nora says “...you have always been so kind to me. But our house has never been anything but a play-room. I have been your doll wife, just as at home I was Daddy’s doll child.” (Act III, p. 80)

Their marriage is not based on equal terms but more like father-daughter relationship in which the dad is playing with her little child. When the play proceeds, these behaviours get more irritating. As Nora borrows money, she puts the family in debt. She is criticised by Helmer:

HELMER: Nora, Nora! Just like a woman! Seriously though, Nora, you know what I think about these things. No debts! Never borrow! There’s always something inhibited, something unpleasant, about a home built on credit and borrowed money (Act I, p. 3).

As this quotation reveals, Helmer denies Nora’s autonomy in financial affairs. However, Nora as the representative of the New Woman acts in order to survive. Her forgery and debts are towards her own survival as an individual. Mrs Linde, a family friend, is a foil character to Nora. She speaks out this patriarchal notion that women should not deal with financial affairs:

MRS. LINDE: Well, a wife can’t borrow without her husband’s consent.

...

NORA: I haven't said I did borrow the money. I might have got it some other way. *{Throws herself back on the sofa}* I might even have got it from some admirer. Anyone as reasonably attractive as I am... (Act I, p 14)

She fabricates a story about the source of the money she has borrowed. Her lies are instruments towards her own autonomy and individuality. Nora takes a more active role which is best manifest in her storytelling (lies) about the source of the money. The storytelling here is very significant as she does not want to be written but to write her own life-story as an active subject (agent). Also, she even nibbles the macaroons without the permission, given that she is almost always criticised by Helmer for taking up sweets:

HELMER: Didn't you nibbling a macaroon or two?

NORA: Mo, Torvald, honestlu, you must believe me...! (Act I, p. 5)

It was not a common practice for women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to have any regular incomes. As West puts it:

...there will still a continuing resistance against the economic independence of women. Husbands did not like to have their wives employed because the resulting economic independence meant that wives were economic rivals of the husbands and were not subject to domination (1955).

Nora does not ask for any gifts, but for some money from her husband, and Torvald says:

You are an odd little soul, very like your father. You always find some way of wheedling money out of me, and as soon as you have got it, it seems to melt in your hands. You never know where it has gone (Act I, p. 5).

Nora is mainly concerned with her own financial autonomy as it seems to be the first step towards the construction of the New Woman. As Mrs.Linde is a widow, Nora points out that, "[h]e [Mrs.Linde's husband] left you nothing" (Act I, p. 8).

While Mrs.Linde is bored of her life and finds it quite empty. She thinks there is no one to live and dedicate her life for and says: "Here to find something which will busy me and occupy my thoughts." (Act I, p. 11). To compare the two women, Mrs. Linde is sacrificing herself to other people: her mother and brotherwhile Nora is making her own autonomous subjectivity and life:

Well, then I found other ways of earning money. Last Winter I was lucky enough to get a lot of copying to do; so I locked myself up and sat writing every evening until quite late at night. Many a time I was desperately tired; but all the

same it was a tremendous pleasure to sit there working and earning money. It was like being a man (Act I, p 16).

This is very similar to Virginia Woolf's concern expressed in a *Room of One's Own* where she deems the first step for an autonomous free woman is to have a room of her own and a small amount of money. Once again, the act of writing for women is very significant as the New Woman is the first who takes the pen to write (that is to construct) her own individual identity. Nina Auerbach notifies the position of women ". . . all women were exhorted to be, enveloped in family life and seeking no identity beyond the roles of daughter, wife, and mother. 'Angel' and 'house' become virtual synonyms" (Auerbach, 1982, p. 65). As Elizabeth Langland also emphasises, the house is the private haven as opposed to the public (1994). Nora is keeping up with the household during her marriage with her husband. Butsheis considered to be one of the most important components of a mechanism for change because she leaves her husband, her children and her house.

Yet, the gender roles start to change as the play progresses. Nora begins to become more masculine and Helmer more feminine. In the final act, we see that Helmer is almost good at knitting. Mrs. Linde says she was not sure how to knit. Helmer's knitting is an indication of this gradual shift to some femininity. He is the androgynous.

NORA: We have now been married eight years. Hasn't it struck you this is the first time you and I, man and wife, have had a serious talk together (Act III, p. 79).

HELMER: Nora, how unreasonable... How ungrateful you are! Haven't you been happy here?

NORA: no, never. I thought I was, but I wasn't really.

HELMER: not ... not happy!

NORA: no, just gay. And you've always been kind to me. But our house has never been anything but a play-room. I have been your doll wife, just as at home I was Daddy's doll child. And the children in turn have been my dolls. I thought it was fun when you came and played with me, just as they thought it was fun when I went and played with them. That's been our marriage, Torvald (Act III, p. 81).

HELMER: Surely you are clear about your position in your own home? Haven't you an infallible guide in question like these? Haven't you your religion? (Act III, p. 82).

This conversation shows Nora demands equality. She wants to be treated on equal terms rather than a doll in the hands of a player. She wants to play a role in the rules of this game. Now the two spheres have changed. Men have begun to plunge into women's work, as manifest in Torvald's sewing and knitting. On the other hand, Nora



does what men were supposed to do: working and writing. Therefore, there is a crisis gender roles and gender identification. This is the breaking point. Men are no longer defined by peculiarities which were traditionally attributed to masculinity such as working, earning money and writing. Similarly, women are no longer identified as passive objects and stereotypes to which things happen. There are no more discriminations between the two sexes.

NORA: Well, Torvald, that's not easy to say. I simply don't know. I am really confused about such things. All I know is my ideas about such things are very different from yours. I've also learnt that the law is different from what I thought; but I simply can't get it into my head that that particular law is right. Apparently a woman has no right to spare her old father on his death-bed, or to save her husband's life, even I just don't believe it. (Act III, p. 83).

Nora sacrifices herself. She put up with the blackmails from Krogstad. She told white lies. The forgery that she has committed has a purpose, so that she can get the money even though she has got it from the illegitimate ways. But at the end Torvald only concerns on his reputation. Although Torvald tries to make the things up, anything would be the same. Although he chides Nora as if she is a child she has grown up. The domestic ideology, in which women were the house keepers, isolated from the public sphere do not work out anymore in this context.

In this play, Nora tells lies, commits a forgery, is exposed to the blackmails by her opposite sex and leaves her three children at the very end of the play. She has been blamed by her husband as a two-faced wife. For this reason, Nora could not bear. We see the enlightenment and awakening of a baby doll. Now she has become a young, mature woman, well enough to leave her family and her house. Additionally, Nora is quite aware of her growth, metaphorically. She has already been an subversive woman. She has rejected her duty as a mother and a wife. She has left her so-called wifely responsibilities. For her own sake, she had to think of herself first. As a woman, she goes against male authority which is represented by her husband. She used to be a sacrificing woman, who tries to save her husband's life. No matter how she committed illegal ways, the only thing she considered was her husband and her children.

At the end of the play, she blames her father and husband for her weakness and self-detest. As Bernard J. Paris states that:

Nora needed to merge with a powerful, dominant male, and Torvald loved being master. She was excited by his strength and he by her weakness and

dependency. She wished to be possessed and Torvald was extremely possessive (Paris, 1997, p. 46).

A baby-doll cannot have a right to cause fear and anxiety upon her dying father's life, and she cannot have a right to save her husband's life (Paris, 1997 p. 47). Torvald's marriage with Nora has been broken up. His flawless life has gone. Nora does not have to be exposed by the chides and threats of her husband anymore. As a father and the responsible man of the household, Torvald does not care for his wife and children. The only thing he concerns is his pride and honour.



#### **4. ONE OF SHAW'S DAUGHTERS: EMANCIPATION OF VIVIE IN *MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION***

This chapter aims to explore the concept of New Woman in Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. The relationship between Vivie, the heroine, and her mother Mrs. Warren is very significant because while Vivie's mom tries to put her into the conventional mould of womanhood, Vivie stays unmarried and asexual – an unconventional and almost very untypical of the 19<sup>th</sup> century woman. In the play, we can see that the conventional Victorian codes of womanhood are imposed on Vivie not only by her own mom but also by almost all the characters. At first sight, the play's major theme and concern is prostitution. However, this chapter aims to analyse the relationship between Vivie and other characters notably her own mum.

Vivie Warren is a 22 year-old, well-educated woman who has a very reverse relationship with her mother. Mrs Warren runs brothels all around the Europe. At first, Vivie appreciates her mother because she saved Vivie from the tough conditions during childhood. But, at the end of the play, Vivie learns that her mother is still continuing the same infamous business of tempting other young girls into prostitution. Vivie learns that Mrs. Warren runs some brothels all around the Europe with the help of one of her old partners, Sir George Crofts. The man who cannot see the starvation, overwork, dirt and disease are as anti-social as prostitution—that they are the vices and crimes of a nation, and not merely its misfortunes—is (to put it as politely as possible) a hopelessly Private Person (as cited in Greenblatt 2012, p. 1783). Sir George Crofts fits this definition of the Private Person very well as he does not care for all the miseries in the society and on the contrary contribute to them.

In 1880s Frank Harris, an Irish editor, identified London as “[t]he center of civilization, the queen city of the world without a peer in the multitude of its attractions, as superior to Paris as to New York” (as cited in Greenblatt, 2012, p. 1028). Thanks to technology and the industrial revolution which made production a fast and easy job, London became the capital of consumerism. Yet English

imperialism and English economy which was built on the empire enacted various rebels came out of colonies such as, Indian Mutiny (1857); the Jamaica Rebellion in 1865 and the defeat of Bismarck's Germany against France in 1871, confronted threats to its naval and military position and the developments contributed England to deal with industry and trade. Furthermore, the recovery of the United States made a big change not only in agriculture but also in industrialisation. These changes caused competition. The developments affected England and "[t]he typical English farmer had to confront lower grain prices and a dramatically difficult scale of productivity, which England could not match" (Greenblatt, 2012, 1029). The economic depression in the years between 1873 and 1874 directed people to emigrate. Also because of the growth of labour, the working class was becoming a powerful and an economic force. These changes influenced both English women and English literature. Also, prostitution was an economic phenomenon and actually one of the most significant problems in late 19<sup>th</sup> century England.

In 1857, *The Lancet* stated that one house of every sixty in London was a brothel. One female in every six-teen (at all ages) was a prostitute. There were approximately 6.000 brothels and 80.000 prostitutes in London. In Birmingham, a working girl had to spend about fourteen shillings for a week, so that she could live in welfare. However, if she worked in a decent job she would be paid only ten shillings. For those girls there was no other option than working as prostitutes. A prostitute could earn over a thousand pounds a year (Laurence, 2004, p. 39).

Shaw shows how the British social system was hypocritical. Shaw used Vivie as a potent weapon to criticise the economic and social system (Safak, 2014). It is not surprising that the play was censored by the authorities. In October 1905, when the play first staged in New York, the police padlocked the play. The play was criticised also by the written media. For example, *New York Herald* viewed the play as "morally rotten... and degenerate" (Laurence, 2004, p. 39)).

On the Victorian stage, the character prostitute was depicted either as a villain or as a victim. (Laurence, 2004) However, in Shaw's play Mrs. Warren is portrayed as neither a villain nor a victim. In the character of Mrs. Warren, Shaw creates a sentimentalised person. Shaw does not blame Mrs. Warren for becoming a prostitute, rather he puts the blame on the society. In other words, Shaw's main criticism is not about women, who were economically afflicted and found a solution for living in prostitution, but the members in the society. Mrs. Warren is the society's fault. And she becomes the symbol of the greed in the materialistic society. Instead of toiling

themselves in factories, six-teen hours a day for two pence an hour, it was natural for women to prefer to sell themselves on the streets.

By writing *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, Shaw diagnoses the society's one of the most important socio-economic problems: prostitution. At the same time, he offers a solution to the problem by depicting the character of Vivie, as representative of the New Woman. Vivie, is portrayed as an independent and confident young woman, who has finished a vigorous academic program at Cambridge. Instead of finding herself a proper husband like many young women of her day, Vivie plans to become an actuarial accountant and hopes for a successful business career. Vivie's portrayal confirms Gairdner's remark that "the drama of the New Woman attempts to assert herself, to surround and overcome the story of the older generations' attempts at conventional market machination (*Shaw's Daughters*, 1994, p. 36).

VIVIE: ...I'm not ready to go back to work yet. [PRAED sits] You both think I have an attack of nerves. Not a bit of it. But there are two subjects I want dropped, if you don't mind. One of them [To FRANK.] is love's young dream in any shape of form: the other [To PRAED.] is the romance and beauty of life, especially Ostend and the gaiety of Brussels. You are welcome to any illusions you may have left on these subjects: I have none (Act IV, pp. 1821-2).

We meet Vivie in the opening scene of the play. In Act I, before Praed introduces himself, Vivie is reposing in a hammock and reading her book. She ignores him as he approaches and expresses dislike with his visit, saying:

My mother was rather a trick of taking me by surprise –to see how I behave myself when she's away, I suppose. I shall take my mother very much by surprise one of these days, if she makes arrangements that concern me without consulting me beforehand (Act I, p. 1784).

Mrs Warren always makes appointment and decisions for Vivien without consulting her, therefore denying her of any agency and free will to which Vivien resists. This is a beginning of the conflict between Vivien and Mrs Warren. Mrs. Warren also warns Vivie not to go outside without letting her know. Langland states that conventional Victorian women should not stay outside for so long (Langland, 1994).

Yet, she goes and brings a chair for Praed so that they can have a small talk. Here, Vivie reveals her negative attitude towards traditional women's roles. Praed appreciates her unconventionality:

PRAED: I'm glad your mother hasn't spoilt you?  
VIVIE: How?

PRAED: Well, in making you too conventional! You know my dear Miss Warren, I am a born anarchist. I hate authority. It spoils the relations between parent and child: even between mother and daughter (Act I, p. 1785).

As the two continue talking Vivie reveals more about her unconventional womanhood. She admits that she has no interest in romance and beauty; all she knows is calculations:

VIVIE: I am supposed to know something about science; but I know nothing except the mathematics it involves. I can make calculations for engineers, electricians, insurance companies and so on; but I know next to nothing about engineering or electricity or insurance. I don't even know arithmetic well outside mathematics, playing tennis, eating, sleeping, cycling, and walking. I'm a more ignorant barbarian than any woman could possibly be who hadn't gone in for the tripos (Act I, p. 1786).

Vivie is an upright character. Because she rejects the conventional Victorian house duties and she is not behaving like a proper Victorian young woman: "I like working and getting paid for it. When I'm tired of working, I like a comfortable chair, a cigar, a little whisky and a novel with a great detective story in it" (Act I, p. 1786). Vivie is a blue-stocking, a social status that expresses one step into freedom. Knowledge opens up the gate for freedom. One again her education is expressed in her awareness of different scientific subjects. Her wish to smoke, work independently, being paid professionally, drinking whisky – which are all very unconventional and perhaps revolutionary for a typical Victoria girl – are a very early preoccupation of later women writers such as Virginia Woolf, with the kind of equality and liberty that women should have and gain as best expressed in *A Room of One's Own* and *The Profession of Women*. Actually and ironically, this play is not about Mrs Warren's profession but about Vivien's profession as a gateway to women freedom and agency. When Vivie says "[k]nowledge is power, and I never sell power" (Act I, p. 1786), she is emphasising the importance of education especially in the power relation between women and men. She also implies that knowledge turns into money which is a first step to gain autonomy and independence. It is also a critique of this new capitalist system that exploits human labour by buying its force when she rejects to sell her knowledge.

Praed is taken by surprise with Vivie's statements. He believes if she works that hard it must be almost impossible to participate in cultural pursuits. To the contrary, Vivie assures him that she loves to work hard, and had only objected to her education in that it was so expensive and not necessarily practical. Praed expresses disbelief that

Vivie should prefer a life without art and culture, assuming that she has not yet had the opportunity to enjoy it. Then Praed criticises the English system. This is ironic, because, he is also a component of the ruined system. Praed is keen on art and conventions: “When I was at your age, young men and women were afraid of each other” (Act II, p. 1798). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, women and men were to have small talk. This was one of the most significant conducts and a social pressure. Women and men were belonging to a certain kind of a sphere, which are two dimensions (Langland, 1994).

Well, frankly. I am afraid your mother will be a little disappointed. Not from any shortcoming on your part, you know: I don't mean that. But you are so different from her ideal (Act I, p. 1787).

Vivie likens her relationship with her mother to a fierce battle. Emma Liggins argues that, “...literary texts exposed to fears and fantasises surrounding the sexually experienced woman, particularly in the New Woman's reaction to her 'fallen sister'” (Liggins, 2004, p. 40). Vivie and her mother do not have a very close relationship. They are not the two of a kind. Mrs. Warren does not even know that Vivie has already been drinking whisky.

Reverend Samuel and Frank are introduced to Mrs. Warren and Vivie. Reverend Samuel says:

I have not seen her at church since she came.

FRANK: Of course not: she's a third wrangler. Ever so intellectual. Took a higher degree than you did; so why should she go to hear you preach? (Act I, p. 1790)

After this debate, they had another argument about Reverend Samuel. We as the readers can see that even Reverend Samuel as a colonel supports the ruined system. Because Frank reveals that Reverend Samuel used to have an inappropriate relationship with a prostitute for 50 Pounds per night and he also wrote letters to her. There is a dramatic irony because after that explanation, we see that the colonel used to have a relationship with Mrs. Warren. By the inclusion and portrayal of Reverend Samuel, Shaw is suggesting that prostitution is the result of the socio-economic system. Even the colonel is part of this corrupt system. A moral preacher is supposed to be the highlighter of the sage and wisdom. But here, he supports prostitution resulting in the upper-middle class women coming into prostitution. It is also ironic, because Frank calls his father “Gov'nor”. A governor is the head of the

society and the family. But the colonel is the corrupt head. Metonymically, the colonel is the head of the body society and if the head is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt.

Frank is one of the suitors of Vivie. He is enthusiastically keen on getting married to her. But, Vivie is reluctant to get married. She wants to remain single. When Frank proposes to marry Vivie, Mrs. Warren looks at a different point. Her face falls. Because she thinks Frank has got no money. George Crofts asks:

FRANK: Vivie and I are such chums.

MRS. WARREN: What do you mean? Now see here: I won't have any young scamp tampering with my little girl. Do you hear? I won't have it (Act II, p. 1795).

Frank and Vivie have a brother and sister like relationship.

MRS. WARREN: I suppose you don't want to marry the girl to a man younger than herself and without either a profession or two pence to keep her on. Ask Sam, if you don't believe me. {To the Parson} How much more money are you going to give him? (Act II, p. 1797)

Reverend Samuel answers back: "Not another penny. He has his patrimony and he has spent the last of it in July" (Act II, p. 1797). In the Victorian society, marriage is built mostly upon money. We see the fickleness of Mrs. Warren and Reverend Samuel's.

Mrs Warren wants Vivie to be her opposite educated and socially acceptable but still espousing her traditional Victorian values of womanliness, marriage and the assumption that "the only way for a woman to provide herself decently is for her to be good to some man that can afford to be good to her" (Gainor, 1994, p. 251). She believes she has arranged for Vivie to be like "any [other] respectable girl brought up ... to catch some rich man's fancy and get the benefit of his money by marrying him" (Gainor, 1994, p. 249).<sup>2</sup>

Gainor's analogy between the New Woman and Vivie is very overt here.

One of the most important factors in corrupting the society is George, who wants to buy Vivie from her mother. But also George woes Mrs. Warren by saying; "... I'll settle the whole property on her, and if you want a cheque for yourself on the wedding day, you can name any figure you like..." (Act II, p. 1800).

Mrs. Warren is considering how to benefit from selling her daughter to George via marriage bond. Mrs. Warren thinks Vivie is not very much experienced in love

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\*\*From the *Collocated Letters* quoted from Ellen Gainor. See *Shaw's Daughters* (1994) pp. 36-7).



affairs. Yet, she is tempted to allow Vivien marry only when wealth and money is involved.

When Vive says to her mother; “Do you think my way of life would suit on you? I doubt it” (Act II, p. 1803).Mrs. Warren asks if her daughter wants to show her independence. Vivie is curious but also very cynical about what kind of life she should live and share with Mrs. Warren and George. Mrs. Warren almost burst into tears as if she is the daughter of Vivie. And Vivie is the mother. Mrs. Warren acts rather hysterical, because she obeys her daughter. Vive represents the authority, whereas mother is the “crazy monkey.” In fact, Mrs. Warren expects some respect which, she couldn’t have seen from her daughter. Mrs. Warren couldn’t accept Vivie’s treatments, because she is supposed to be the authority and Vivie says; “you attacked me with the conventional authority of a mother: I defended myself with the conventional superiority of a respectable woman”(Act II, p. 1804).Mrs. Warren tells the whole story about why she starts this business. Mrs. Warren has three sisters. Two of them were sisters and the other two were half sisters, who were “undersized”, “ugly”, “starved looking”, and “hard working honest poor creatures.” Lizzie and Mrs. Warren were good-looking and they thought they had a very well-fed father. One of them worked in a factory, for nine shillings a week until she dies of poisoning. “The other was always held up to us as a model because she married a Government labourer.” Mrs. Warren tells her (Act II, p. 1805).

Mrs. Warren’s sister was a bleacher, compared to Mrs. Warren, Liz was keeping up with the life burdens as oppose to Mrs. Warren. She was administrating a brothel house. At the first interrogation between Mrs. Warren and Vivie, they compromised. Mrs. Warren tells her daughter that Vivie cannot survive without the money of Mrs. Warren’s. When she says the fact that every girl dislikes to work and make money, she is mentioning about starvation and says “Starvation is for factory girls and girls from the gutter” (Act I, p. 1794). By mentioning this problem, she makes a gaff. She is also doing her business not to get starved and to survive. And Vivie says “... but she can choose between rag picking and flower-selling, according to her taste.” (1804). Vivie also reveals her belief on fate by saying:

VIVIE: Are you my mother?

MRS. WARREN: (Appalled) Am I your mother! Oh, Vivie!

VIVIE: Then where are our relatives? my father? Our family friends?(Act II, p. 1803).

Everybody has some choice mother. The poorest girl alive may not be able to choose between being Queen of England or Principal of Newnham; but she can choose between ragpicking and flowerselling, according to her taste. People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances.

The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they cant find them, make them (Act II, p. 1804).

Mrs Warren's argument is that she did not have a free will to make her own choice but was bound in circumstances beyond her control. Yet, Vivien thinks quite differently and recognises degrees of free-will, control and responsibility. Eventually, Vivie concludes that her mother is part of the convention and problem. Vivie strongly believes that Mrs. Warren could have succeeded in any kind of business rather than prostitution. Then Mrs. Warren talks about how much the world is filled with hypocrites: "Oh, the hypocrisy of the world makes me sick!" (Act II, p. 1806). She says there was no other better employment than doing this business. Because she thinks marrying to a labourer, working at a bar and working at factories would lead only to starvation and slavery. She says, "do you think I did what I did because I liked it, or thought it right, or would have gone to college and been a lady if I had the chance? (Act II, p. 1804). However, she is fascinated by the marvellous luxuries in Brussels.

MRS. WARREN:[ Liz and I] both went to a church school – that was part of the lady like airs we gave ourselves to be superior to the children that knew nothing and went nowhere. Liz went out one night and never came back. Clergyman was always warning me that Lizzie'd end by jumping of Waterloo Bridge (Act II, p. 1805).

Vivie still tries to understand the reason why Mrs. Warren still continues this business. Mrs. Warren answers back, "The house in Brussels was real high class: a much better place for a woman to be in than the factory" (Act II, p. 1805).

The social and economic troubles caused her to bump into this business. She was a man -eater and a social climber. Money means power and it also represents your social statue. When Mrs. Warren and Vivie were making a discussion about how rich Mrs. Warren is, the former says:

Youre too young. It means a new dress every day; it means theatres and balls every night. It means having the pick of all the gentlemen in Europe at your feet, it means a lovely hose and plenty of servants, it means the choicest of eating; it means everything you like, everything you want, everything you can think of. (Act IV, p. 1826)

Mrs. Warren tries to display her motherly authority towards Vivie, but they are not very getting on well with each other. Vivie is not a very easygoing woman. The play's main concern is about why Mrs. Warren still goes on doing her job. Vivie says she did not know anything about her mother. They argue and Mrs. Warren says;

... your head is full of ignorant ideas about me. Havent I taught you up to be respectable? And how can you keep it up without my money and my influence and Lizzie's friend. Cant you see that youre cutting your own throat as well as breaking my heart in turning your back on me? (Act IV, p. 1827)

Vivie tries to gain her independence as a woman by saying that Frank is in need of a wife and she doesnot want a husband. Secondly, Mrs. Warren wants a daughter but Vivie doesnot want a mother.

MRS. WARREN: We're mother and daughter. I want my daughter. I've a right to you. Who is to care for me when I'm old? Plenty of girls have taken to me the daughters and cried at leaving me; but I let them all go because I have you to look forward to. I kept myself lonely for you. You've no right to turn on me now and refuse to do your duty as a daughter. (Act IV, p. 1828).

Mrs. Warren hopes her daughter to be a proper fine lady, but Mrs. Warren is part of the corrupt society.

Praed, Frank, George and Mrs. Warren put pressure on Vivie to make her a conventional Victorian woman. Praed reminds her to become more involved in art which Vivie rejects. Frank is like a parasite on Vivie. George wants to marry her, in other words, he wants to buy her from her mother. Frank is a typical lover, but rather hysterical. He cannot make his day without seeing Vivie. Frank says, "I can't be easy, if I have to pass a week without seeing you. It's what brothers and sisters" (Act IV, p. 1819). VIVE answers back by that kind of relationship would be a very appropriate one for them or she would hurt his feelings. Also when Vivie says there was no beauty and life in romance for her, she is also aware of what she was doing. She does this kind of treatment on purpose. She is not a sentimental Victorian woman. Vivie wants to remain single and unromantic. "If we are to remain friends, I must be treated as a woman of business, permanently single (TO FRANK) and permanently unromantic (TO PRAED)." (Act IV, p. 1822).

On the other hand Mrs. Warren puts motherly pressure on Vivie. These pressures are about her, not to drink alcohol, not to walk outside, that Vivie will have a life with her mother, until she gets married. Despite all these pressures, Vivie emerges from

the play as an independent woman, thanks to her determination and with her own moral values. In this historical and sociological context, the play becomes more meaningful. Mrs. Warren says:

Yes, Heaven forgive me, it's true, and you are the only one that ever turned on me. Oh, the injustice of it! the injustice! I always wanted to be a good woman. I tried honest work, I was a good mother; and because I made my daughter a good woman he turns me out as if I was a leper. Oh, if I only had my life to live over again! I'd talk to that lying clergyman the school. From this time forth, so help me Heaven in my last hour, I'll do wrong and nothing but wrong. I'll prosper on it. (Act IV, p. 1829).

Mrs. Warren wishes for a last chance to change her way of life. She is regretful. She makes confessions. As Safak puts it: "...neglecting duties is a favourable condition and a possible state of mind for women who want to emancipate themselves from the shackles of domestic drudgery and imprisonment. Shaw here argues that these are the only women who are worth to appreciation" (Safak, 2014, p. 140).

Vivie is unreachable. This makes her suitors more dote upon her. Safak also diagnoses that men are the chief reason for the emergence of the New Woman, partly because women were restricted. Men also encounter a change and he also should behave in accordance with women and support them. Being the New Woman is a revolutionary attitude. That is why Vivie is a strong figure when she breaks the conventions. She shows that she is not an ordinary Victorian woman, who sits at home and waits for her husband. Also, she is not the one, who is the part of the ruined system. She changes the direction of the route. Nevertheless, Vivie eludes herself from the social troubles. And this way constantly paves the way of being the New Woman as an alternative emancipation. Nina Auerbach signifies the fact that, a fallen woman is "the prisoner in her expensive house" (Auerbach, 1982, p. 78). Vivie identifies her mother as the prisoner who is trapped in her cage and does not manage to escape. Yet, her daughter, Vivie opens up her wings and gets away from the trap.

## 5. SUICIDE AS A STEP TO WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION:

### 5.1 August Strindberg's *Miss Julie*

The play *Miss Julie* was published in 1888 and performed in 1889. It was first translated into English in 1912, later in 1950. Miss Julie is an upper-middle class woman who has a relation with her servant but then the dynamic changes and there is a shift in their social class. Jean who in the beginning takes the role of a servant becomes the boss and Miss Julie becomes the servant. Therefore, this chapter argues that Miss Julie represents the 19<sup>th</sup> century woman who falls despite her high social status to a lower one and that is an indication of inferiority of women when it comes to gender power relations. In other words, there are still patriarchal conventions that determine the mechanisms of a relationship between a man and a woman. However, in the end Miss Julie's last resort is to take an active step towards her own liberation from the stereotypically imposed norms in the relationship.

The beginning of the play foreshadows Miss Julie's fall and descend as she comes down from upstairs to the kitchen. AsyaUçar makes an analogy between Miss Julie's coming down the stairs to the kitchen and social descend. Miss Julie comes to the kitchen to give orders to Jean. Also, this scene establishes Miss Julie as the boss in the house and the person who gives orders. She also plays the stereotypical (archetypal) seductive enchantress as her orders carry strong seductive intentions.

As opposed to Miss Julie, Jean ascends from a lower social class to take the place of the boss and the dream they talk about (that she falls from a fence and Jean who is under the tree reaches the top) becomes true. Although in the beginning he seems polite, he starts to humiliate her and lead her to death (Uçar, 2016). According to Elizabeth Langland, the typical Victorian house symbolises the class identity as well. For instance, the kitchen of the house is a place, in which "kitchen odors or smells, associated inevitably bodily processes and needs, were taboo" (Langland, 1994, p. 42). As a result, there is a class distinction materialised and expressed between the physical kitchen and the living room. The kitchen is fairly distant from the living

room. Therefore, the distance between the family and the servants is highlighted here. As Langland (1994) continues, “[t]he best servant was an invisible one; aside from personal attendants, who obviously were exempt, servants were expected to time their work so that they would never meet with the family” (p. 43). We see Miss Julie has committed a subversive relationship with the servant. Miss Julie cannot rescue herself from the obsession with Jean is also seductive because he is unreachable to her. JEAN: “There are still barriers between us, as long as we remain in this house – there is the past, there is his Lordship...” (p 87)

When Jean is telling Miss Julie: “I saw a pink dress and a pair of white stockings – it was you” (p 82), he seduces her. He tells a lie to set up a hotel and pompously praises Miss Julie by saying: “The mistress of the house, the jewel of the establishment (p. 87). However, they start an affair. Therefore, the boundaries between them as a servant and his boss are broken. The dynamics change from the Ballet scene onwards. Miss Julie becomes to take the lower position while Jean takes the upper one. The reason for Jean’s ascent is his pride and arrogance. Miss Julie cannot resist him because she is engulfed by his mysterious behaviours. He is indeed a cold-hearted man, as Strindberg highlights. Miss Julie: “Aren’t you my friend?” and Jean says: “Yes, sometimes. But don’t rely on me” (p. 93).

It could be argued that Strindberg has depicted the New Woman in a negative way in his play *Miss Julie*. Compared with George Bernard Shaw’s plays, Strindberg depicts women as problematic. In Shaw’s plays, women are exalted, whereas Strindberg pictures women as they are padlocked and the only escape from the failure is to commit suicide. Kay Boardman signifies the idea of a servant must be in accordance with the best domesticity so as to protect the house from the outside. This shows privacy’s identity. A Victorian middle-class woman should keep in touch with the servants (Boardman, 2000). Although the characters are focusing on a relationship between one middle-class 19<sup>th</sup> century lady and one valet, the play mainly concerns with the gender and class mobility (Gainor, 2009, p.160).

The whole play is mainly constructed upon two sexes’ challenge that is to say women are far away from a proper human being. They are defected physically when compared to men. For, she encounters with an “absurd” trial with him. Among the 19<sup>th</sup> century Victorian society, women are struggling and conceived. The playwright embodies the identification with this situation:

A (the man) and B is (the woman) start from the same point C, A with a speed of let us say 100 and B is a speed of 60. When will B over take A? Answer never. Neither the equal education or equal voting rights –nor by universal disarmament and temperance societies – any more than two parallel lines can ever meet. (*Preface*, p. 60)

It is for sure impossible for women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to be equal with men. Because, it is clear that there is a physical distance and difference between the two sexes.

Miss Julie is undoubtedly the closest thing to a Naturalist drama that Strindberg is ever to write. The hero and heroine –“characterless like real people–have been provided with an elaborate social psychological history, and are determined by heredity and environment; the action is loose, natural, and compact without being plotty; the dialogue has the aimlessness of real speech; and the acting style, makeup, costumes, settings, and lights have all been designed for a minimum artificiality. (Brustein, 1962, p. 155)

In the *Preface* Strindberg depicts women in a misogynistic way. Jean manipulates other Julie’s feelings. He is a social climber. He is fickle and hard-hearted. At first he accepts Miss Julie’s higher social status in order to win her sympathy yet after all, “he takes it all back when he finds it expedient to separate from the mob” (*Preface*, p. 62). And Strindberg keeps telling Jean as: “He is polished on the outside, but coarse underneath” (*Preface*, p. 62). Also Strindberg informs the reader before hand as a foreshadowing:

Apart from the fact that Jean is coming up in the world, he is also superior to Miss Julie in that he is a man. In the servant sphere, he is the aristocrat. He has the strength of male, more highly developed senses, and the ability to take the initiative. His inferiority is merely the result of his social environment, which is only temporary and which he will probably slough off along his livery. (*Preface*, p. 62)

This is a social collapse of Miss Julie. In the play’s Preface Strindberg notes that Jean “is awed by the count mainly because the count occupies the place he wants most in life, and the awe is still there even after he has won the daughter of the house and seen how the empty that beautiful shell was” (*Preface*, p. 63). Jean is a wolf in a sheep’s clothing. He seemed so voluntarily smitten on Miss Julie that he pulled the wool over Miss Julie’s eyes by saying that they will build up a hotel in Switzerland. This was only a sweet dream in Jean’s dystopia. Setting up a hotel was chasing the rainbows. It was only a wish that never came true. The fiasco which Miss Julie had with her fiancé made her feel ashamed.

When Kristin, a flirtatious maid who is also wooing to Jean in the kitchen, and Jean are gossiping about Miss Julie, Miss Julie enters. She sees Jean and Kristin dancing. Miss Julie is jealous because she wants to steal Jean to dance for a moment and Jean very courteously says: [retreating] “I wish you wouldn’t misunderstand me, Miss Julie. It just doesn’t look right for you to prefer one of your servants to the others who are hoping for the same unusual honour” (p. 78). Yet, Jean sets boundaries between himself and Miss Julie by saying: “Someone might come in and see us” (p. 78) and therefore it might be inappropriate if they are seen together. “So what?” says Miss Julie. Miss Julie is not talented enough to foresee and predict the future like an aristocrat young woman should and a valet like Jean’s dance could be misunderstood in 19th century society. Furthermore, Miss Julie represents the daydreamer woman when she was asking for some lilacs from Jean by saying: “Aren’t you letting your imaginations run away with you?” (p. 79). She is *verliebt*<sup>3</sup> in a servant. Men were considered as the stability and rationality whereas women were daydreamers. In Fatmagül Bektay’s view, colonising a territory could be likened to a woman’s losing her chastity. (2012).<sup>4</sup>

When Miss Julie is giving orders, she seduces Jean underneath and says: “Kiss my hand first” (p. 80). Jean seems to do his work as a servant, but he is also calling and trying to make Miss Julie to be provocative. Jean says: “For what? Are you twenty-five years old and still a child? Don’t you know it’s dangerous to play with fire?” (p. 81). He kisses Miss Julie’s hand and she slaps her face. “More games? Or are you serious?” (p. 81). In fact, Jean always tries to warn Miss Julie to be careful, I am just a man, and you are to put the blame on but no one else (p. 81). But Miss Julie is always breaking the rules by playing word games with Jean by asking questions about his personal love affairs and who the first kiss of Jean’s was. A sexual intercourse between a servant and his boss was a class taboo.

Miss Julie’s dream and Jean’s are opposite each other. One is dreaming of fall, whereas Jean is dreaming of being on the top. Their dreams could be a frame of the play.

MISS JULIE,,,I’m sitting on top of a pillar. I’ve climbed up it somehow and I don’t know how to get back down. When I look down I get dizzy. I have to get down but I don’t have the courage to jump. I can’t hold on much longer and I

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\*\*\*InLove in German

\*\*\*My translation into English



want to fall, but I don't fall. I know I won't have any peace until I get down; no rest until I get down, down on the ground. And if I ever got down on the ground, I'd want to go farther down, right down into the earth.... (p. 79)

And Jean talks about his dream.

JEAN ...I used to dream that I'm lying under a tall tree in dark woods. I want to get up, up to the very top, to look out over the bright landscape with the sun shining on it, to rob the bird's nest up there with the golden eggs in it. And I climb and I climb, but the trunk is so thick, and so smooth, and it's such a long way to that first branch. But I know that if I could just reach that first branch, I'd go right to the top as if on a ladder. I've never reached it yet, but someday I will – even if only in my dreams. (p. 80)

Miss Julie is telling her dream about a fall. Her fall could be associated with her death. This is a foreshadowing of her own fate. Because Miss Julie does not only fall literally, but she also encounters with a social mobility. Julie's fall signifies the death. They are both concerned with class mobility. When Miss Julie is sloping and trampled, Jean is rising to the up above.

When Jean saw Miss Julie in a pink dress and with her white stockings, Robert Brustein makes an analogy that:

...he went home to wash himself all over with soap and water. Now he is still washing himself, in a metaphorical sense, by trying to rise above his lowly position and aping the fastidious manners of the aristocracy. (Brustein, 1962, p. 158)

“He has become a lower-class mob through his association with his betters, wavering between an aristocratic affection of French manners and tastes, and a slavish servility amidst the Count's boots” (Brustein, 1962, p. 158). Jean is wavering between an aristocrat as his French manners and tastes cause him to have a hesitation like August Strindberg because Strindberg had an aristocrat father and a lower class mother. Strindberg reflects his troubles into his plays. That is why his plays are life-like.

Until the Ballet Scene, Miss Julie is playing the upper class lady. Yet, after the scene the reader can also see that Jean takes over the role from Miss Julie. Now, he is the upper, Miss Julie is the lower. She is the fallen woman. The Ballet Scene could be likened to a peak point. The audience and the reader recognise that the play is like a pyramid. After the peak point, the falling action and the dénouement come. The fall of Miss Julie is the closing scene of the whole play. Miss Julie is always hysterical and sentimental because she always asks if Jean loves her. She has some hesitations and suspicions about his feelings. No matter how Miss Julie is deluded about Jean's feelings, the reader is fully aware of them. He is never satisfied with Miss Julie. She

always asks perpetually: “Tell me you love me. Come and put your arms around me.” And Jean hesitates; “I do love you – what a shadow if a doubt – How can you doubt that Miss Julie?” (p. 87).

There is a Biblical reference to Genesis that Miss Julie calls Jean *Joseph*.<sup>5</sup> This creates a dramatic irony because the more Miss Julie tries to get closer to Jean, the more Jean becomes emotionally unreachable in spite of the fact that Miss Julie says:

Do you think I am going to live under the same roof with you as your mistress? Do you think I'm going to have people sneering at me behind my back? How do you think I'll be able to look my father the face after this? No, no! Take me away from here Jean – the shame, the humiliation ... what have I done? Oh my God, my God! What have I done? [She bursts into tears.] (p. 89)

Miss Julie broke the barriers with her hands by saying Jean that he did not have to be formal with her, and likewise she tells Jean to call her only by her name. She lets Jean to manipulate her feelings. From now on Jean calls Miss Julie as “contemptible”. Jean feels pity for her. Thus, he says “Don't play the fine lady with me” (p. 103). Julie is sorrowful and sad, begging for mercy: (Julie falls to her knees and clasps her hands together) “Oh, God in heaven put an end to my worthless life! Lift me out of this awful filth. I'm sinking in! Save me! Save me!” (p. 178). She feels helpless and has lost her hope. And Jean admits: “I had the same dirty thoughts that all boys have” (p. 90). Their relationship begins to deteriorate. They lose their intimacy. Their love has become unrequited. Until Jean gets the opportunity and reaches his target and finally he came up with *how empty the sea shell was*. The play continues disrespectful swears at each other. Miss Julie says “You lackey! You shoeshine boy! Stand up when I talk to you!” (p. 91). Miss Julie is trying to preserve her superiority but she could not manage, because Jean imitates Miss Julie by humiliating her by:

JEAN: You lackey lover! You bootblack's tramp! Shut your mouth and get out of here! Who do you think you are telling me I'm coarse? I've never seen anybody in my class behave as crudely as you did tonight. Have you seen any of the girls around here grab at a man like you did? Do you think any of the girls of my class would throw themselves at a man like that? I've never seen the like of it except in animals and prostitutes! (p. 91).

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\*\*\*\*\* Joseph: In the Bible, a son of Jacob, after Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, his good looks made his master's wife make sexual advances toward him; when he refused her, she falsely accused him of rape. (Genesis 39, 6 – 18).

Then Miss Julie tells the story about her mother who had an ill-advised marriage:

-- My mother's parents were very ordinary people, just commoners. She was brought up, according to the theories of her time, to believe in equality, the independence of women, and all that. And she had a strong aversion to marriage. (p. 93)

Likewise the way how Miss Julie's bringing up and her mother's base instincts and her relationship with her fiancé had an impact upon her moods and psychology.

Strindberg indicates the fact that

Miss Julie is a modern character not because the man-hating half woman has not existed, but because she has now been brought out into the open, has taken the stage, and is making a noise about herself (*Preface*, p. 60).

...My mother decided to bring me up as a nature child. And on top of that I had to learn everything a boy learns, so I could be living proof that women were as just good as men. I had to wear boy's clothes, learn to handle horses –but not to milk the cows! Girls did that! ... And on the estate all the men were set to doing women's chores, and the women to doing men's work – (p. 93).

Then, Jean tells Julie to get dressed. She is not aware that she is trapped in Jean's pack of lies. She is again desperate for the future about what to do, where to go and she begs for help. She feels tired as if she is tired of the whole burden that she had throughout her life.

When they were ready to go, she wants to take her canary bird with her. But Jean is rather without understanding and misogynistic. He even chops the canary's neck. She is horrified and hopes to be killed. Julie's real concerns about men are revealed: "I'd love to see the whole of your sex swimming in a sea of blood just like that. I could drink blood out of your skull. Use your chest as a foot bath, slip my toes in your guts. I could eat your heart roasted whole!" (188). This passage seems to be Strindberg's own view of women that all women are sick and mentally paralysed.

MISS JULIE: ... Oh, I'm so tired. I can't bring myself to do anything. Can't repent, can't run away, can't stay, can't live ... can't die! Help me, Jean. Command me, and I'll obey like a dog. Do me this last favour. Save my honor, save his name. You know what I ought to do but can't force myself to do. Let me use your willpower. You command me and I'll obey. (p. 108).

Robert Brustein states that Jean is sexually the aristocrat and the social slave, whereas Miss Julie is the sexual slave and the social aristocrat (*Male and Female in August Strindberg*, Robert Brustein. 1962). Strindberg is not only quite keen on social conflict, but also he is mainly interested in sexual wars between the two sexes. Miss

Julie is far more restricted and Jean is one of the most complicated characters, compared to Strindberg's previous period as a playwright. By killing herself, she remains as an aristocrat in a metaphorical sense, and shows her rebel against a male figure, Jean. He returns to his first status as a servant as there is no Julie left for him to climb up the social class especially because there is no one to obey and to give orders to. Brustein draws an analogy between Miss Julie and Jean by emphasising the irony of Strindberg's own life. Jean's sownbaseness has remained with him to the very end of the play. In short, Miss Julie's suicide could be a first step towards becoming the New Woman as she deprives Jean of his masculine superiority and it is a gateway to her agency (a way of emancipation from the male tyranny) although ironically by putting an end to her own life.



## 6. CONCLUSION

To conclude, the concept of New Woman which became a social and political icon towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was discussed in this research in detail. It was argued that New Woman stood against dominant patriarchal power by gaining agency through taking over more responsibilities to be on an equal level in social activities with men. She became the female identity (icon) towards the very end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was also debated that a significant contributing factor in the emergence of New Woman was the appearance of an early form of mass media which included women's magazines such as *The Ladies' Cabinet*, *The New Monthly Belle Assemblée* and *The Ladies' Companion*, to name a few, played a significant role in the construction of this new concept of femininity. This new image of femininity found its presence in many periodicals, as it was discussed, and opposed the dominant stereotypical image of women in the Victorian period: what was known as the mistress of the house, the angel in the house. This angel began to emancipate herself and get out of the kitchen, reminding us what Virginia Woolf said in her famous 'Professions for Women' (1931).

Subsequently, the research proposed its main argument that the three main characters in *A Doll's House*, *Mrs Warren's Profession* and *Miss Julie* prefigure the concept of New Woman early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and that they demystify the legitimacy of patriarchy of a certain magnitude arguable for the first time in literature and contest the imposed feminine attributes which had turned women into a set of already set-up stereotypes, a second sex, to borrow from Simone de Beauvoir. Accordingly, and in so doing, the three heroines gain some sort of agency. Having established the main argument of the research, the role of a core family and marriage which were of highest significance in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were debated and explored. It was argued that marriage stood for the moral and the ethical values in the 19<sup>th</sup> century society. A typical example of this female role was the housewife who would wait for her husband by holding vigils at home to welcome him home with open arms. It was also made clear that these domestic ideologies functioned as pragmatic manuals with

certain instructions for women about how to behave in society and at home. However, the period witnessed a gradual change in the concept of femininity and womanhood after the turn of the century.

Similarly it was argued that marriage, as a significant institution made sexes connected to each other and it essentially concerned concepts of fidelity and loyalty. Consequently, the house became a holy place and Victorian house became the symbol of loyalty. Moreover as it was argued, due to the high influence of the religion, husbands were equal God in Victorian home while women had to stay at home busy doing trivial activities such as supervising domestic duties. The so called manuals taught women what to wear, how to wear, what to say and how to behave towards their husbands. These 'angels' were the guardians of the house, the caretakers. They were the symbol of morality, motherhood and domestic order as well as stability. This was intensified, and best represented, in the role Queen Victoria, together with her populated household (nine children), played as a figure of middle-class femininity and domesticity. It was also clarified that a typical Victorian family was large enough because of high birth rates, which made the role of women in the family more central.

The research also pointed out that the 19th century women, although were exploited, were considered as a cheap labour force. This consequently drove them out of the house into professions thanks to a shift of the society towards consumerism. As the demand for women labour increased, more women found their ways in the market and left the kitchen. This provided a means of women's financial independence which was a first step in gaining their agency and constructing the concept of New Woman. As more and more women became educated and employed, they began to behave differently, for example wearing men's clothing and writing diaries, challenging the Victorian concept of femininity and the set-up expectations. Prostitution was also rife and became a business especially because of urbanization and the fact that there were not enough jobs available for them. This was another significant challenge to the image of a woman as a virgin or angel. In addition, women found their way to universities and colleges towards the end of the century. Put in a nutshell, New Woman was synonymous with a social reformer, an active almost independent agent as opposed to a passive dependent object.

The research then turned to explore the concept of New Woman in Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. It was argued that Ibsen exalts his female character, Nora. She has completely shown her authority upon her husband, Torvald. Despite the fact that her husband tries to make conciliation, Nora shows a subversive attitude and challenges the male domain. Therefore, she breaks the identification attached to women as "domestic angels." It was explored how Nora intentionally tries to gain some degrees of agency, independence and autonomy in a patriarchal context, therefore representing New Woman. It was pointed out that Helmer's (Nora's husband) compliments (a fluffy little object) are patriarchal and although they are supposed to exalt her, they diminish her as a second sex. It was also discussed that Nora's secrecy in the Krogstad financial affair is an indication of her autonomous and independence of thought and action as she tries to control the situation. In addition, it was explored that Nora's marriage is not based on equal terms but is that between a father and daughter who also functions as a toy to play with. However, Nora gain some agency as she acts to survive by ironically resorting a set of lies which work as instruments towards her autonomy and individuality; liberation. Her main aim is to have a financial economy and control as a first step towards the construction of New Woman.

In doing so, the conventional roles of masculinity and femininity is subverted with Nora as the masculine and Helmer the feminine as best manifest in his knitting. Therefore, the play is one of the first to address the concept of New Woman in that men are no longer defined by peculiarities which were traditionally attributed to masculinity such as working, earning money and writing and women are no longer passive objects and stereotypes to which things occur. Nora's telling lies forgery, exposing to blackmails and leaving three children behind (an unforgivable act according to the convention of femininity and motherhood) are all steps, though unpleasant and with unhappy consequences, towards her freedom as a New Woman.

In Chapter Three, it was argued that Vivie in *Mrs. Warren's Profession* is another early female character who prefigures New Woman. It was debated that as her mom, representing the forces of the patriarchal society, puts pressure on her to conform to the 19th century conventions of womanhood, Vivie remains unmarried and asexual deliberately, an act which was not expected of a young woman in the era. It was made clear that Frank, Crofts and the Reverend as representative of the patriarchal

authority try to gain power over Vivie while she defies her position to she save herself from the male dominance. Moreover, a significant factor in driving young women such as Vivie towards becoming free New Woman in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the industrial revolution that left London as a capital of consumerism. This consequently led to many women working outside the household as a cheap labour force. Therefore, the working class became an economic force and included women too. As a consequence, as more and more women ran into finding jobs to help the financial costs of their households, less jobs were created. That resulted in unemployment of many women who turned to prostitution, another serious challenge to religious and social conventions of virginity and chastity.

Also, it was discussed that Mrs. Warren does not match the 19th century conventional view of a prostitute as either a victim or a villain but it is the society with its socio-economic forces which is criticised. In that light, Mrs. Warren is a manifestation of the wrongs of the Victorian society, industrialisation and its self-induced afflictions. In addition, she stands for an economic greed of the society. Therefore, Shaw's diligent diagnosis of a major affliction of the Victorian society, that is prostitution, is engineered to offer an alternative. Vivie, as an educated young woman, is an ideal independent, confident and professionally ambitious alternative to all other characters. Her goal is not to find a husband and live happily ever after but to go up the ramp of business success.

Also, it was debated that the conventions of womanhood was contrasted to Vivie as she and Praed were discussing traditional female roles. Her pursuit of knowledge and career is an early serious attempt towards becoming liberating New Woman. On the other hand, the corruption in the Victorian society is presented and criticised by Shaw as evident in George trying to buy Vivie from Mrs. Warren in a marriage bond. It was also discussed that Shaw delves into a deeper afflictions of the Victorian society by portraying what hardship Mrs. Warren went through in her childhood, supposedly putting the blame on circumstances. Yet, Shaw also adds another perspective represented via Vivie that Mrs. Warren could have equally become successful in any other businesses, therefore, it was her own decision to end up as a brothel owner. Moreover, it was made clear that Vivie tries to gain independence by her rejection to marriage and to her mother's moral recommendations and pressures such as when Mrs. Warren warns her not to drink alcohol and not to walk outside.



Finally, Chapter Four discussed Strindberg's *Miss Julie* in light of New Woman. It was argued that suicide for women could be a first step towards emancipation from patriarchy. Miss Julie falls in spite of her high social status as the social roles and ranks between her and her servant, Jean, which whom she has an affair change gradually. It was also argued that her fall indicates the writer's view of women as inferior to men in gender power relationships. The play suggests that the determinant factors in the power relations are still patriarchal conventions although Miss Julie does not remain a passive object but gets her hand on agency by leaving everything behind and saving her class and dignity.

Although the play starts with a foreshadowing of Julie's fall, towards the end of the play she exerts some sort of control and autonomy. On the other hand, it was revealed Jean is a manipulative social climber, a wolf in a sheep's clothing. It is worth noting that a sexual relation between a servant and his boss was not a social norm. In this respect, Julie is going through a sexual revolution anticipating much earlier the sexual revolution of the 1960s by having a premarital sex with a servant. Also, it was argued that the Ballet scene is a turning point where the falling action begins. Finally, by killing herself Miss Julie regains her status and because is no one left for Jean to climb up the social class, he falls from a high status too. To sum up, Miss Julie's suicide can be regarded as a first step towards becoming New Woman as she denies Jean to his masculine superiority. It is also a gateway to her agency (a way of emancipation from the male tyranny) although ironically by putting an end to her own life.

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