The Image of Women in Wilkie Collins' Works

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ABSTRACT

The article provides an overview of Wilkie Collins' work. At the same time, the artistic means in the works of Wilkie Collins have been extensively analyzed. The images in the works are also highlighted.

Keywords: Wilkie Collins, multidimensional characters, narrators, novels, spiritual guidance of women, talkative characters, storytellers.

I. Introduction

Wilkie Collins was a major sensationalist of the Victorian era, known for introducing the novel into detective fiction. Her novels feature intense social criticism and dynamic, multidimensional characters, many of whom are women, which makes her novels rich material for exploring gender norms, power dynamics, and differences in Victorian society. Her major works include The Woman in White (1860) and The Moonstone (1868), two of which I will focus on. Previous critics have focused on the anxious male narrators in these novels and their attempts to establish positions of authority by controlling the story. A necessary consequence of this eclipse is the violent destruction of the women's voices in this text because they were ignored or rewritten. While it is clear that it is difficult to hear in a patriarchal society that rejects women's experiences and perspectives, the use of silence in Wilkie Collins' novels is much more complex. There is no need to silence women in these novels; they often choose silence as a means of controlling their lives. In contrast to the explicit narrative, the chosen silence allows women to establish their own authority within the patriarchal system, but is distinct from it. They can then use this power to protect those who have been removed from the patriarchy and to ensure justice that the legal system cannot do.

II. Literature review

In Victorian times, the ideology of segregation portrayed men as part of the public world of politics and law, while women were sequestered in the private world of the home and family. Men achieved their participation in the public world through hard work and consequently their contribution to the nation; and women are "private, not public". This division deprived women of active participation in public affairs; instead, they were to exercise power by exerting a positive moral influence on the men in their lives. This belief in the spiritual guidance of women is not only to justify their falling into the realm of housing because they have the right to power and representation, but also to protect women

from subtle and moral weakness, harshness also served to make. However, this separation was only ideological. This is defined in the legal system, which denies the legality of married women as individuals. Although single women have the right to own property and enter into contracts, once married, the woman is subject to her husband, who is the sole legal representative of the two.

III. Analysis

The property of the married women was immediately transferred to their husbands, and they were not entitled to enter into a contract, to sue, and to sue. They had no legal control over the disposal of their income or property. Legally, women ceased to exist after marriage. Such a practice of concealment gave the husband absolute power over his wife, which created the potential for abuse of power and provided very little legal assistance to oppressed wives. However, in Collins's novels, women choose silence and repeatedly find power, authority, and a unique place. Although they often act carelessly, they have significant control over the movement of stories and are able to resist turning their stories and experiences against them. Although the patriarchy equated the voice with power, this norm often exacerbates the frustration associated with the disappearance of male heroes. In many of these novels, the loudest, most talkative characters are the weakest. The most impressive are the heroes whose silence allows them to stay in the background. Instead of competing for public testimony, the female protagonists acknowledge the limitations of the system, as well as its exclusion, and establish power and control by working outside that system. Hall argues that "the absolute assumption of their subordination implies that their activities are secret," a marginalization that women have used to their advantage. Bypassing mass world procedures, they establish justice for those who have failed by the legal system. The silence chosen in these novels provides self-expression and authority rather than trapping these women in limited social roles. This tension between silence and self-expression gives an idea of how women can disrupt patriarchal governance without direct resistance. While silence is often seen as a shortcoming, these novels complicate the idea. Adrien Rich writes, "Silence is violence in a world where language and naming are power". This view has often been the view of literary scholars who have focused on excluding women from these texts. However, silence can also be read as agency and resistance. In a study of Virginia Woolf's novels, Patricia Lawrence points out that silence can be "a refusal to take a submissive position". Thus, in the guise of "society's wordless", women can become true storytellers of the novels they are outside.

Similarly, Carol Senf reads the story's silence in Ann Bronte's "Wildfell Hall Tenant" (1848) as a means of drawing attention to the gaps in the story and destroying women's views by society. In this context, Kate Grant-Devy argues that silence can often draw attention to something that is overlooked, thereby disturbing the audience, questioning her assumptions, and leading to critical reading. However, he stressed that controlling silence is important for using it effectively and at full power. Thus, it is important to understand the essence of the silences in these novels. To understand the different silences, more precise terminology is needed to assess similarities and differences. Grant-Davie presents five scales that can be used to assess silence and its rhetorical impact. The first scale checks whether the silence is voluntary or not. He then focuses on the significance or randomness of the silence and checks the level of purpose. Then, referring to the perception of silence, it assesses whether the silence is unexpected or expected, as well as whether the silence is active or static. Active silence is something that viewers perceive as silence, often causing a feeling of discomfort, while static silence fades into the background and is often not felt behind other movements that occur. Finally, depending on whether the silent person is silent for a certain period of time or on a particular topic, the silence can be assessed as temporary or topical. This argument examines the chosen silence, so that all the silence discussed is voluntary and

important. However, the silences being analyzed differ on the last three scales, giving a more complete picture of the types of silence encountered in the novels. Sensational novels include middle- or upper-class domestic crimes, which confuse realism with Gothic romance, Newgate novels, and social novels. The sensational novels, which reveal the secrets of the virtue of housing, undermine the respect of the Victorian era without explicitly addressing social or political issues. The breach of moral prestige in the Victorian era parallels the systematic breach of the narrator's reputation. Because sensational novels relied largely on mysteries to create suspicion, authors were asked to create new storytelling techniques that would reveal and hide story information. However, the deliberate concealment of information by storytellers undermines their reputation and credibility, making them suspicious and unreliable.

IV. Discussion

Both The Woman in White and The Woman in the Moonstone emphasize the need to create an objective, fact-based, credible story through the testimony of witnesses, who were the first to fight the falsity of this vague narrative. However, this move only increases the unreliability of the story and forces the editors to constantly defend their project. Walter Hartwright opens the story in The Woman in White: [T] The incident quoted here is told by several pens, as the crime was told by several witnesses in court. the same goal, in both cases, to always present the truth in the most direct and understandable way ... the people who are closest to you ... connect the words through Similarly, "Moonstone" opens with the same promise: "We should all take turns writing the story of Moonstone - the more personal experience we have, the farther we will go". Document collector Franklin Blake reaffirms: "Nothing is added, changed or removed ... I keep them as authentic documents certified by witnesses who can tell the facts". However, no novel fulfills these promises, which raises questions about the gender differences between the story agency and its control. It is clear that the testimony of the first person promised in "The Woman in White" was not taken into account. In the middle of the novel, Walter emphasizes that the story is under his control, "Marian's story and Laura's story should be next. One is particularly noteworthy given that Marian contributed to the story earlier. The missing parts in the documents compiled in "Moonstone" are less clear; the plaque collection would not be complete without his testimony, during the initial investigation, his silence was restored two years later in Franklin's collection of stories, the female protagonists involved do not participate in the story movement, in the silent silence.

Once adopted, these stories apply to female protagonists, indicating the need for such a cautious approach. When female protagonists are able to choose silence, they use this silence to circumvent the legal system and ensure justice that the legal system does not want or does not want. When Hartwright abruptly abandoned his first-person testimony plans and described himself as an objective narrator for the rest of the novel, there was a great deal of critical attention to the dramatic transformation of The Woman in White. As a clear example of the male protagonist's control of the words and stories of the female protagonists, the critical discussion of this event focuses on the gender dynamics in the novel. D. A. Miller argues that the male protagonists of "The Woman in White" are threatened by female freedom, and therefore the entire period of the novel is not interconnected and therefore seeks to limit uncontrolled female protagonists. Thus, Hartright's skill in narration is to try to establish control over Marian and Laura, which helps them to capture the interior under Hartright's guidance. Miller, on the other hand, points to the futility of these "anxious male imperatives" and "cannot achieve the sluggishness or closure of the story by arresting or detaining the woman".

He also notes that the characters who are the least reliant on legal standards of evidence most successfully discover the truth. Just a few years later, Pamela Perkins and Mary Donaghy extended Miller's analysis, arguing

that, although Hartright is attempting to dominate the women of the novel because he is threatened by them, Collins does this intentionally to highlight Victorian gender inequities, not to reinforce them. By showing how even Hartright, the male protagonist, is warped by this unjust system, Collins critiques contemporary social conventions. Later criticism focused increased attention on issues of identity, although gender continues to play a main role in these critical analyses. Gwendolyn MacDonagh and Jonathan Smith focus on the ways in which the male characters use writing to establish their identity. They note that all of the male characters, Glyde, Fosco, and Hartright, use writing to fill blank spaces and establish their identity. Reading Hartright more critically than previous scholars, they argue that, if villainy in the novel is based on the creation of false narratives, Hartright has much in common with the antagonists. Looking at gender differences in the practice of writing, they contend that, for female characters, power lies in erasure and the blank spaces that the men are so desperate to fill, not in the creation of texts, establishing distinct differences in the power of men and women. Similarly, M. Kellen Williams argues that, contrary to Perkins and Donaghy's sympathetic reading of the text as social critique, Collins was in fact reifying gender norms and sexual difference in the face of the contemporary breakdown of strict gender differences. He also argues that characters that rely the least on the legal norms of evidence are the most successful at discovering the truth. A few years later, it expands on the analysis of Pamela Perkins and Mary Donaghi Miller. Collins criticizes modern social conventions and shows how even the male protagonist Hartwright was violated by this unjust system. Criticism has since focused on identification problems, although gender continues to play a key role in these critical analyzes. Gwendolyn McDona and Jonathan Smith focus on ways to use writing to identify male protagonists. They point out that Glyde, Fosco, and Hartwright use male writing to fill in the gaps and identify themselves. Reading Hartwright more critically than previous scholars, they argue that while evil in the novel is based on the creation of false stories, Hartright has much in common with antagonists. Looking at gender differences in writing practice, they emphasize that the power for female protagonists lies not in creating texts by establishing clear differences in male power, but in eliminating gaps and gaps that men hope to fill and women. Similarly, as M. Kellen Williams points out, in contrast to Perkins and Donagin's sympathetic reading of the text as a social critique, Collins actually identified gender norms and gender differences in the context of the modern fragmentation of rigid gender differences.

Williams points out that Hartright's control of the legend and their appointment as head of the household only happens after acknowledging the difference between Anna Keterick and Laura Fairley, the woman in the white dress is not only different, but empirical, represents a form that can be verified and shows that male identity and safety depend on the ability to recognize this difference. Recent criticism has continued to focus on gender, agency, and individuality, with Anne Gailin analyzing the possibilities of male and female protagonists to tell separate stories. Combining many aspects of previous critiques, he emphasizes the importance of writing in Hartright's story management and manipulation, as well as in identifying identities, and emphasizes that the novel is concerned with women's mobility and the risk of women going beyond society-approved boundaries, roles and gaps. Ultimately, this mobility and narrative control should be limited to traditional, patriarchal structures. However, reading the same social critique made by Perkins and Donaghi, while he reassures ordinary readers by preserving the surface, "the excessive killing of the desired story casts doubt on its permanence". However, questions about gender differences in the story agency and "Moonstone" are more subtle than "The Woman in White," so there's a lot of critical attention elsewhere. Many scientific articles on the moonstone are read as a critique of British imperialism, given that this gem was restored in its homeland. Others focus on science and rationality, explore the

interaction of different ways of knowing, and draw conclusions about the different levels of success and confidence that this provides in different ways. As the first detective novel, "Moonstone" is also explored for transforming the short story form into a novel length and its impact on the genre. However, the novel focuses on story strategies. Lewis Roberts examines the tension between detective fiction experiences and knowledge and disclosure. Roberts argues that The Moonstone reflects the gender bias of traditional Victorian narratives, in which female protagonists typically gain power by concealing information, while male protagonists gain power through knowledge.

V. Conclusion

Thus, Rachel is most interested in keeping her secret, and when her secret is revealed, she goes into the background. Finally, Roberts argues that women are associated with absence and silence, while men are associated with existence and stories. This reflects a similar dynamic in The Woman in White, and proves a larger pattern in Collins' work. For him, for you, and for me, the fact that Rachel Verinder is not narrated in The Moonstone is a noticeable absence in the text, and this gap casts doubt on the full set of visible testimonies, and the reader is asked to read between the testimonies encourages. The premise of the collection is that "the whole story" is told, and "each of us must write the story of the Moonstone ... based on our personal experience". It is not uncommon for Franklin to use the word "all". His efforts to create a comprehensive account include searching for old family documents, re-establishing contact with an elderly family member who had an antagonistic relationship with him, and asking for testimony from anyone remotely associated with these events, includes, even if they have a personal relationship. This is so limited that their contribution is only a few pages, for example, Murthwaite. In addition to this comprehensive encounter, Franklin assures the reader of the integrity of the stories throughout the novel and emphasizes that "no line breaks from the first to the last," as contributors are encouraged to "own" themselves ordered a restriction the personal experience of individuals and events ... as a true witness".

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