CHAPTER FIVE

A Comparative Analysis of Masculinity in the Novels of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen

This chapter deals with the comparative analysis of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen in the selected novels *Jane Eyre, Villette, Pride and Prejudice, and Emma* with reference to the Victorian gentlemen and the concept of masculinity. The construction of masculinity of Charlotte Bronte will be studied comparatively with that of Jane Austen. They share some techniques while constructing masculinity in an age which was dominated by men in every aspect of life. However, everyone has her individuality to construct a new form of masculinity during the Victorian period in spite of the fact that Jane Austen wrote in the Regency England. Literally, they belong to one period namely the Victorian Period.

5-1 Charlotte Bronte vs. Jane Austen:

Comparing Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen is similar to comparing apples to oranges. They are both fruit that grows on trees but their taste and texture are totally different. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen occupy a position of great significance in the history of women’s literature in particular and in the history of the Victorian literature in general. They were the forerunners of women novelists who dominated the novel genre in the nineteenth century. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen were among the first English women writers who broke the male monopoly of the novel writing. Eighteenth and nineteenth centuries’ society was patriarchal per se. Literature was thought to be the business of men only. The question of womanhood was presented in the novels of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. They struggled for a woman identity in their works. They found that women were treated miserably. They found that women were given the gender roles related only to the private sphere. The gender roles available during the era, in which both Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen lived, were to be an unseen daughter or a docile wife. Victorian women could only gain recognition through marriage and were expected domesticity.

Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen won respect for female writers like Virginia Woolf, Elaine Showalter and others. They paved the way for women writers and novelists of the
twentieth century. They were feminists before feminism. They portrayed the miserable situations of women during the period in which they were living in. Without these forerunners, Jane Austen and the Brontes could no more have written than Shakespeare could have written without Marlowe. The initial step is the most difficult one in the writing of women novels and in the construction of feminism. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen wrote in an age in which there was no chance for women at all. Jane Austen declared that “Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove anything”.¹ This indicates the dominance of men over women during the nineteenth century in education and literature. Jane Austen was writing when Wordsworth and Coleridge were writing too. Wordsworth and Coleridge were educated at Cambridge. Most male writers of her age got education whereas she could not get the same chance. That is why she claimed “Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands”.² Austen had no formal education. She portrayed this patriarchy in her novels in the relationship between the female and male characters.

Charlotte Bronte was astonished by a strange reply from Robert Southey when she sent him her poems for a feedback. His reply was:

Literature cannot be the business of a woman’s life, and it ought not to be. The more she is engaged in her proper duties, the less leisure she will have for it, even as an accomplishment and a recreation. To those duties you have not yet been called, and when you are you will be less eager for celebrity.³

This reply was frustrating for Charlotte Bronte. From these quotations, we find that education and literature are solely made for men. The chance of Austen’s education is nothing compared to that of male figures like Wordsworth and Coleridge is nothing. Her education was at home. She could hardly find a room of her own to write at home. Charlotte Bronte fought against the notion of literature male domination proposed by Southey and George Lewes. Even the style of her writing is too masculine to make the critics of her time think that Jane Eyre is written by a man.

Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen find new roles for women rather than those available during the nineteenth century. They have presented new gender roles as to be a writer; to be a teacher; and to have her own work to get independence financially as to start her own private school. This is what happened with Charlotte Bronte with her sisters establishing their own school in 1844. To have seen a woman novelist at the outset of the nineteenth
century is something strange and unnatural. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen break off the stereotype gender roles of women. Women were dependent upon their fathers or other male relatives. Their main gender role, if to gain a basic level of respectability, is to look for ‘a single man in a possession of a large fortune’. Man, for Victorian women, means shelter and protection.

Marriage is a frequent theme in the novels Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. On the one hand, this is because marriage is misunderstood as a way of dominance over women during the Victorian period. On the other hand, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen have a problematic issue so far as marriage is concerned. In spite of the fact that Jane Austen wrote six novels with happy endings, she never wedded the man she had always wanted. Actually, she did not wed by any stretch of the imagination. There were three men who played roles in Austen’s love story; namely Thomas Langlois Lefroy, Samuel Blackwell and Harris Bigg-Wither. The first one, Lefroy could have been the model for Pride and Prejudice’s Mr. Darcy. The family of Thomas refused to let him marry because of Austen’s social standing. This is one of the reasons for Austen not to marry due to social constrains. Dr. Andrew Norman, in Jane Austen: An Unrequited Love, says there was another conceivable contender for Austen’s warmth. He was a priest named Dr. Samuel Blackwell. Austen got the sole marriage proposal from Harris Bigg-Wither in 1802 which was in public. In the early morning, she retracted her acceptance. Another reason is that Jane Austen refused to marry without love as it was with her refusal to marry Harris. She was of the opinion that “Nothing can be compared to the misery of being bound without Love”. This indicates that she does not like marriage which is based on dominance rather than love. Her lack to find her ‘Mr. Darcy’ has been the subject of much literary conjecture. However, the most significant reason is the absence of the ideal man at the late years of the eighteenth century, whose marriage is based mutual love and affection. In a letter to a member of her family; Fanny Knight, Austen advised her that “Anything is to be preferred and endured rather than marrying without affection”. She added that “Nothing can be compared to the misery of being bound to one without love and preferring another”. Thus, Austen could not find this ideal and gentle man in her life. Instead, she had constructed the ideal man for her heroines in her novels. Had Jane Austen find that man, we could not find the fantastic Pride and Prejudice or Emma. If she got married, she could not find a room of her own to write her novels.
Marriage is the linking theme in the personal life of Charlotte Bronte as well as Jane Austen with little difference that Charlotte Bronte got married one year before her death. Charlotte Bronte’s story of marriage is similar to that of Austen’s to some extent. Charlotte Bronte got marriage proposals from many including Henry Nussey and Rev. James Bryce. However, she declined their marriage proposals. She justified to Henry Nussey her refusal saying:

I could not sit all day making a grave face before my husband. I would love and satirize, and say whatever came into my head first. And if he was a clever man, and loved me, the whole world weighed in the balance against his smallest wish should be light as air.  

This reply indicates that Charlotte Bronte wants mental independence. She wants mental freedom so that she can say whatever comes into my head first. This marriage proposal is reflected in Jane Eyre in the proposal of St. John River to Jane Eyre. Both Jane Eyre and Charlotte Bronte decline men dominance in marriage.

Rev. James Bryce, on a visit to Mr. Bronte, loved Charlotte Bronte at first sight. Quickly and ardently he made her a proposal. Charlotte Bronte declined this proposal replying to his letter: “Having opened and read it, it proved to be a declaration of attachment and a proposal of marriage … I have heard of love at first sight, but this beat all. I leave you to guess what my answer would be, convinced that you will not do me injustice of guessing wrong”. So, her fear of injustice is the real reason for her decline of the second marriage proposal from Rev. James Bryce. This is the fear of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen to be treated in injustice under the matrimonial life controlled by men. Moreover, the lack of freedom, justice, and independence is the prevailed factor in the matrimonial life of the Victorian women reflected in the novels of both Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen, namely in Jane Eyre, Villette, Pride and Prejudice, and Emma. Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe, Elizabeth Bennett and Emma are no more than Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. These heroines fight against the lack of freedom, justice, and independence in their societies.

The most significant factor in the agony of Charlotte Bronte is the unrequited love with M. Heger in Brussels, the capital of Belgium. In 1842 Charlotte Bronte went there to teach English to earn for a living. She fell madly in love with her teacher M. Heger, the master of a French School. Though, he was married, Charlotte fell madly in love with him. She wrote him many love letters, however he barely responded. In one of the most passionate letters, she expressed how she was madly engrossed with her teacher, M. Heger. She wrote:
Day or night I find neither rest nor peace. If I sleep I have tortured dreams in which I see you always severe, always gloomy and annoyed with me. I do not seek to justify myself, I submit to every kind of reproach - all that I know - is that I cannot - that I will not resign myself to losing the friendship of my master completely - I would rather undergo the greatest physical sufferings. If my master withdraws his friendship entirely from me I will be completely without hope ... I cling on to preserving that little interest - I cling on to it as I cling on to life.  

Charlotte Bronte’s relation with men makes her reshape the concept of masculinity as it does with Jane Austen. Because of her unrequited love with Heger, she undergoes physical sufferings as well as mental unrest. This unrequited love is presented more clearly in her novel, *Villette*. Lucy’s love with Paul Emanuel stands for her love with M. Heger. The unhappy ending of the novel proves the similarity. Such unrequited love affair reflects the patriarchal philosophy of men of Bronte’s time. Woman is a secondary thing to man. She has option to choose her own lover. Charlotte Bronté suffers in silence and no one can respond to her suffering.

Charlotte Bronte neglected the significance of marriage as an institution of society, because she could not fulfil her sexual satisfaction and remained spinster till the age of thirty eight. Charlotte Bronte could “leave sunny imaginations hope” but unfortunately it was the dark and cloudy sky of the Victorian society in which patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity are prevailing that era. Finally, she accepted the proposal of Arthur Bell Nicholls, the curate of her father. She accepted it as a must since she was a spinster. After the marriage, she died with unborn child.

Both Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen suffered from unrequited love. This affected their writing and their way of thinking towards men. As a result, they rejected the traditional model of men of the Victorian period. They struggled to gain a new woman identity. The same agony they faced in their society made them fight for their rights. Both of them refused the domestic sphere given to women. The angel of the house was no longer in their philosophy. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen constructed a new identity for woman. Furthermore, they reconstructed the concept of masculinity of Victorian gentlemen.

Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen wrote their novels using pen names. The pseudonym style of writing helped them to overcome the literary patriarchy. Charlotte Bronte wrote under the guise of the pen name Currer Bell. Jane Austen wrote using the pen name ‘By a Lady’. Joanne Wilkes argues that “Jane Austen’s first published novel appeared
as ‘by a lady’, and subsequent novels came as by author of the previous novel. Her identity was only disclosed after her death”\textsuperscript{12}. Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte’s choice of pseudonym enabled them to generalize their authorial power in a way that they thought their names could not. Charlotte Bronte clarified that in describing her and her sisters’ decision to adopt pseudonyms:

Averse to personal publicity, we veiled our own names under those of Currer, Elis, and Acton Bell; the ambiguous choice being dictated by a sort of conscientious scruple at assuming Christian names, positively masculine, while we did not like to decline ourselves, women, because we had a vague impression that authoresses are liable to be looked on with prejudice.\textsuperscript{13}

There were many reasons for Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen to hide their woman identity as writers. The first reason is that publishers have no interest to publish for women writers. The Victorian society did not recognize woman to be a writer. The only available sphere for women was the domestic sphere; accordingly they had a few gender roles either to be a wife, daughter, mother, housemaid and little as well. To be a writer or a novelist at traditional level was something strange and unusual. So, writing a novel during the eighteenth and nineteenth century was not a bed of roses. Charlotte Bronte, George Eliot, and Jane Austen were extraordinary women writers. From a male perspective literature is not the business of women. Literature, according to Southey is the business of man’s life only. George Lewes valued \textit{Jane Eyre} positively before the disclosure of its author thinking that it was written by a man. After that, he changes his mind. Another reason is that during the Victorian era, women authors were not taken as seriously as male authors. Women authors were not supposed to have the trustworthiness that male authors had. That is why Charlotte Bronte wanted George Lewes and other critics to judge her as a man not as a woman. In a few ways, constructing that maleness on a piece of written work gave Charlotte Bronte more power, force of impact, and energy to investigate gender issues all the more completely.

Jane Austen has the same point of view like that of Charlotte Bronte about the male dominance over women. Jane Austen says: “Men have every advantage of us telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much a higher degree; the pen has been in their hands. Now, women seized the pen and female self-consciousness brought ... when I am by myself, I cannot sit without a pen in my hands”\textsuperscript{14}. Now, women seized the pen; and female self-awareness brought heroisms to literature. Austen snatched the pen and wrote literary pieces. The pen in the hands of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen gave them power to prove
their woman identity. Their dilemma under the literary patriarchy is a uniting factor in their struggle inside the male-dominated society. Both Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen used the technique of pseudonyms to prove the woman identity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In spite of the male pride over women, they proved themselves and become a landmark for the modern female writers and novelists. Charlotte Bronte and Austen challenged the domestic sphere and created a new sphere of their own.

Thus, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen are similar in being feminist before the advent of feminism. Most of the newly feminists get an insight from the teachings of Bronte and Austen. This is clear in the case of Virginia Woolf, Elaine Showalter and the rest of other feminists. The unrequited love of both Bronte and Austen has a significant role in shaping their ideas towards the gender relations. Therefore, the concept of marriage is a frequent theme in their novels. Marriage plays a vital role in the dynamics of power between men and women. Accordingly, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen reconstruct femininity as well as masculinity from a female perspective. Their use of pen names gives them a chance to indulge themselves strongly and skilfully into the field of literature in general and novel in particular. Unless they wrote without their pen names, we could not have lovely novels like *Pride and Prejudice* or *Jane Eyre*.

To know the comparison between Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte, one should not avoid the critical controversy between George Lewes and Charlotte Bronte on Jane Austen. After reading *Jane Eyre*, George Lewes advised Charlotte Bronte to read Jane Austen as a model for her. George Lewes did so justifying that “To make our meaning precise, we should say that Fielding and Miss Austen are the greatest novelists in our language. Now Miss Austen has been called a ‘prose Shakespeare’.” Charlotte Bronte was not happy with Lewes’ suggestion. She was astonished asking him in a reply: “Why do you like Jane Austen so very much? I am puzzled on that point. ... What induced you to say that you would rather have written *Pride and Prejudice* or *Tom Jones* than any of the *Waverley Novels*? I had not seen *Pride and Prejudice* till I read that sentence of yours, and then I got the book”. She told him that she could not find any poetic sense in Miss Austen’s writing. She excused him that it was nothing than the ‘fine eyes’ of Miss Austen.

However, it is not the ‘fine eyes’ of Jane Austen which makes her a prose Shakespeare; it is the dramatic power that Austen has. Jane Austen has the dramatic power which enables her to delineate real characters in her fiction. Her characters are perceived
for their marvellous reality. George Lewes is defending the greatness of Jane Austen before the severe criticism of Charlotte Bronte. George Lewes argues that “all her [Austen] power is dramatic power; she loses her hold on us; directly she ceases to speak through her personae; she is like a great actor off the stage”. Her Characters never step out of their environment. They are influenced by their environment and by each other. They are the product of their frame. Herein lies the greatness of Jane Austen and in this respect she is unapproachable. Jane Austen’s dramatic power and realism make George Lewes advise Charlotte Bronte to read *Pride and Prejudice* and the other novels of Austen.

Charlotte Bronte accuses Jane Austen as a writer without poetic sense and without passion. However, she has taken the advice of George Lewes into consideration. She has read both *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*. In a letter to her publisher, W. S. Williams, another Austen lover, Charlotte Bronte says:

> I have likewise read one of Miss Austen's works *Emma*—read it with interest and with just the right degree of admiration which the Miss Austen herself would have thought sensible and suitable—anything like warmth or enthusiasm; anything energetic, poignant, heartfelt, is utterly out of place in commending these works: all such demonstration the authoress would have met with a well-bred sneer, would have calmly scorned as outré and extravagant.... Passions are perfectly unknown to her; she rejects even a speaking acquaintance with that stormy Sisterhood; even to the Feelings she vouchsafes no more than an occasional graceful but distant recognition; too frequent converse with them would ruffle the smooth elegance of her progress.

This letter indicates that Charlotte Bronte get the benefit of reading Jane Austen to overcome the melodramatic writing, to finish more and to be more subdued as George Lewes has advised her to do. Nevertheless, she has accused Jane Austen of the lack of passion in her writing. She is of the opinion that passions are unknown to Jane Austen. In this regard, Charlotte Bronte seems to be right to some extent. Charlotte Bronte has expressed overtly while delineating her characters as in the case of Jane Eyre either inside the bedroom fired by Bertha; the room has two fires; one of which is sexual.

Likewise, through a deep reading of Austen’s novels, one can find that Austen does not lack passion but she is able to subdue passion to her art in a way that Charlotte Bronte cannot. Mr. Knightley’s relation with Emma, though conflicting, is so full of passion that both Emma and Knightley do not consider it of brother-sister relationship. It is an undercurrent passion; it is overt in film adaptations of Austen’s novels. Anthony Lane, the reviewer in the *New Yorker* about the popular filmed version of *Pride and Prejudice* (2005),
comments “What has happened is perfectly clear: Jane Austen has been Brontified”. This indicates that Austen’s novels are full of passion but she presents this passion differently.

Many critics were against Charlotte Bronte’s critique on Jane Austen. Earl Knies in his book, *The Art of Charlotte Bronte*, finds her critical vocabulary “vague and misleading”. Charlotte Bronte is not aware of the undercurrent passion that Austen presents in her novels. So, both Charlotte Bronte and Austen have passion expressed in their novels; Austen presents passion covertly, however Charlotte Bronte presents it overtly. The overflow of passion in Jane Austen is delicate. Passion starts from its natural spring and ends with a big kiss or a happy ending in Austen. Besides, passion is fulfilling in Austen. That is why Charlotte Bronte cannot read passion in *Pride and Prejudice* or *Emma*. Charlotte Bronte presents women characters with overt passion in order to empower them. This overt passion makes critics read Currer Bell as a man. They cannot understand that such women characters like Jane Eyre or Lucy Snowe are delineated by a woman. Both Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe challenge the norms of the society. It is not expected to find such characters in the midst of the nineteenth century with such passion. They are given strong passion to have sexual identity as well as social identity. Jane Austen has presented her women character as really they are in the society. This realism makes Elizabeth Bennet or Emma Woodhouse look for their identity through gender equality. Their passion is expressed delicately.

Most critics stand on behalf of Jane Austen against the objections of Charlotte Bronte. For me as a researcher, I find that because of Southey’s rejection to her role in literature and George Lewes’ advice for her to take Austen as an exemplar, Charlotte Bronte accuses Austen of lack of sentiments, passion and poetic power. George Lewes’ testimony of Austen as the greatest novelist makes Charlotte Bronte jealous of Austen as a rival. Moreover, her rejection of Austen, as a model prescribed by George Lewes, is a rejection to George Lewes who finds in Currer Bell’s *Jane Eyre* ‘originality and freshness’ but he finds Charlotte Bronte’s *Jane Eyre* unwomanly book. Her rejection of Austen as a model for writing novel is a rejection to the hegemonic masculinity of George Lewes. Another reason for her judgment, she is a violent challenger for the male novelists, unlike Jane Austen who challenges the norms of the society without bitterness. Jane Austen has written with a special quality of womanliness in tone, style and point of view. This quality is no longer found in Charlotte Bronte’s novels which are prevailed with violent passion, wildness and tragic events. If *Pride and Prejudice* were written by Charlotte Bronte, it
would never end happily. It would be full of tragic events. This is due to the harsh and
difficult life that Charlotte Bronte was familiar with. Charlotte responds to William S.
Williams on his criticism of Lucy Snowe in Villette, Bronte concedes that “Lucy may be
thought morbid and weak …. I consider that she is both morbid and weak at times; her
character sets up no pretensions to unmixed strength, and anybody living her life would
necessarily become morbid”.22 This morbid life is the cause of bitter writing which cannot
be found in Austen’s writing.

Virginia Woolf acknowledges that both of Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte are
novelists by birth. However, she praises the style of Jane Austen saying that “Here was a
woman about the year 1800 writing without hate, without bitterness, without fear, without
protest, without preaching.”23 Charlotte Bronte has written with hate, bitterness, and
protest. This is because Charlotte Bronte is not in consonance with her society as Austen
is with her family. The bitterness of Jane Eyre is Charlotte Bronte’s bitterness. She is more
courageous than Jane Austen. She protests violently against the patriarchy of Southey,
George Lewes, William S. Williams and other male critics. The alphabetical order of the
names of Austen and Bronte signify their merit. Austen is a great pillar of English novel.
Austen’s greatness does not mean to belittle Charlotte Bronte who, in spite of her
controversial protest against Austen, acknowledges that Jane Austen is “one of the greatest
artists, of the greatest painters of human character, and one of the writers with the nicest
sense of means to an end that ever lived”.24 Austen is the harbinger of English novel written
by women. Similarly, Charlotte Bronte defies the literary patriarchy of the male novelists
of the Victorian period. Both Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen have broken the male
monopoly of the English novel. They are the leaders of a new era in which new conceptions
of femininity and masculinity are formed; new gender roles are created and there is a
mingling for both private and public spheres.

5-2 Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen’s construction of Masculinity:

Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen are the leaders to construct a new movement in
literature, i.e. feminism or at least a new perception of femininity. This is known to all the
critics and theorists of both feminism and femininity like Virginia Woolf, Elaine Showalter,
Claudia Johnson, Gilbert and Gubar.25 However, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen are the
creators of a new masculinity in an age mostly dominated by men. They fought against the
traditional masculinity of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The traditional
masculinity is a hegemonic masculinity which humiliates woman as an inferior gender. The hegemonic masculinity of the Victorian period gave the private sphere to women and the public sphere to men. Woman was seen as an ‘Angel of the House’. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen have demolished the concept of the ‘Angel of the House’ in their novels. In Jane Eyre, Villette, Pride and Prejudice, and Emma, Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe, Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse are no longer the angels of the house. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen give them a wider sphere larger than that sphere given by the men of the Victorian period. Both novelists reconstruct the concept of Masculinity and the gender roles of men and women are totally changed according to a new policy prescribed by Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. The gentleneness of the Victorian men is not because of their birth or properties; Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen attribute gentleneness to the good conduct of these men. Behaviour is of paramount significance to decide the gentleneness of Victorian men.

This chapter sheds light on Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen’s new techniques and tools to construct the new version of masculinity which is a novel attempt in the history of English novel. While analysing critically Jane Eyre, Villette, Pride and Prejudice, and Emma, the researcher finds similar techniques used by Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen to create a new masculinity which is accordingly what a man ought to be. Though, this newly constructed masculinity is a must in the Victorian period, it has been figured from a feminist perspective. It invites men to change and to be aware of the new forms of masculine identity. Thus, the search of feminine identity leads to a new masculine identity. The heroines of Jane Eyre, Villette, Pride and Prejudice, and Emma are looking for a new woman identity; likewise the heroes of these novels have gained new masculine identity which is different from the traditional Victorian masculinity. So, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen’s search for woman identity leads to a new masculine identity and masculinity. Rochester, Paul Emanuel, Darcy, and Knightley are new versions of a new masculinity in the Victorian period. They are reconstructed to be what men ought to be.

The best theory of masculinity is of R. W. Connell to study Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen’s construction of masculinity in their novels Jane Eyre, Villette, Pride and Prejudice, and Emma. This is because Connell’s theory is applicable to these novelists’ perceptions of masculinity. Connell defines masculinity as:
Simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices on bodily experience, personality and culture. So, masculinity is a place or a social location in which women and men come together to have new gender roles based upon the culture of the society and their behaviour. So far as the novels of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen are concerned, it is found that both heroes and heroines come to an area of understanding the needs of each other. Men leave their traditional masculinity with its patriarchy and women leave their pride. Both men and women come to a social place in which everyone acknowledges the identity of the other. This is done through a set of practices understood by the society to be either masculine or feminine. So, the society and the individual’s behaviour figure out the essence of the new masculinity. Man is because of what he acts, not because of gentle birth or because of his rank in society. Also, it is society that makes him a man. So, a man is not born; it is society that makes him a man. Different societies construct different masculinities. Applying Connell’s theory of masculinity, we find that the masculinity of Mr. Darcy, as prescribed by Austen, is not only to the traditional norms of his society but according to his behaviour as a man. His masculinity is because of his coming to a ‘place in gender relations’ and doing certain practices in that place with Elizabeth and the ‘effects of these practices’ on their bodily experiences, personality and culture. Darcy and Elizabeth come to the place wherein they forget about their pride and prejudice. The effects of such uniting at this place is that both, Darcy as a man ought to be, and Elizabeth as an accomplished woman, gain new identity in one another. His masculinity cannot be seen out of Elizabeth’s femininity.

Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen let their men leave the hegemonic masculinity of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Rochester, Paul Emanuel, Darcy except Knightley leave their superiority as men and dwindle to Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe, Elizabeth Bennet but not Emma. They come to an area of mutual understanding; to a place of gender relations wherein the woman identity is acknowledged. Emma’s Knightley is a perfect man since the beginning of the novel. In this case, Jane Austen brings Emma to realize her gender roles by the help of Knightley. She assumes a masculine identity which is not hers. So, masculinity, according to Connell and these female novelists, is not of biological difference. The maleness of a person does not mean to be masculine. Masculinity is performative as it perceived in Jane Eyre, Villette, Pride and Prejudice, and Emma. The gentle behaviour of Rochester, Paul Emanuel, Darcy and Knightley determines their gentlemanliness and masculinity. Rochester’s sacrifice to save Bertha from fire, Paul Emanuel’s help for Lucy
Snowe to have a school and to get independence, Darcy’s help to let Lydia Bennet marry Wickham after elopement, and Knightley’s gentle behaviour towards both Harriet Smith and Miss. Bates present a new masculinity in which woman is not marginalized. The behaviour performed by these men determines their gentlemanliness and masculinity.

The perception of masculinity as performative is also applicable to Judith Butler’s theory of masculinity. Judith Butler argues that “gender is a role, or that gender is a construction that one puts on, as one puts on clothes in the morning, that there is a ‘one’ who is prior to this gender, a one who goes to the wardrobe of gender and decides with deliberation which gender it will be today”. Gender is a doing, a performative. An individual’s behaviour creates gender identity. This gender place is that R. W. Connell assumes in her definition of masculinity; this is the gender place that Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen bring their men and women together. In this social place men and women gain their masculine and feminine identity differently from the traditional perception of both masculinity and femininity.

Accordingly, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen’s new masculinity is a novel attempt in the history of Masculinity and in the history of English novel. It proves a change in the gender relations and gender roles in which woman participate in the construction of masculinity. Both Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte have used similar and dissimilar techniques and tools to create this newly born masculinity. The researcher finds great similarity while constructing this masculinity between Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. They also have their individual tools to construct masculinity by such female novelists. In the hands of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen, masculinity is not only a male product. This is a novel thing in writing novels by female novelists; and this is a novel thing in this thesis to study masculinity as a female product.

5-3 Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen’s Techniques to construct Masculinity:

The first technique to construct masculinity is the first encounter of the hero and heroine in the novels Jane Eyre, Villette, Pride and Prejudice, and Emma. The first encounter is a barrier between two kinds of masculinities; the traditional masculinity and the new masculinity presented by these two women novelists in the Victorian period. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen present the traditional masculinity as it was practised in the Victorian society. This masculinity has marginalised women in every field of life. It is catastrophic to both men and women. The solution for this dilemma can be seen in the
masculinity presented in the novels of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. The researcher analyses how these novelists have attacked the traditional masculinity with the help of content analysis.

5-3-1 First Encounter of the Hero and the Heroine:

In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Bronte is so sharp to cut the barrier between the hegemonic masculinity of Rochester and the gentleman masculinity that he acquires since Jane Eyre approaches him near his castle at Thornfield. Jane’s first encounter with Rochester is so significant in the line demarcation between the traditional masculinity of the Victorian society and the new masculinity of Charlotte Bronte. This first encounter brings a change in the power dynamics between man and woman; between Rochester, the archetypal gentleman, and Jane Eyre, the rebellious woman. After her coming to Thornfield, one evening she is alone watching the moon rise. She perceives a horse approaching with a rider. The horse slips on a patch of ice and the rider falls down to the ground. Jane helps Rochester - the rider - to rise. He asks her for help saying:

‘Necessity compels me to make you useful’. He laid a heavy hand on my [Jane] shoulder, and leaning on me with some stress, limped to his horse. Having once caught the bridle, he mastered it directly, and sprang to his saddle; grimacing grimly as he made the effort, for it wrenched his sprain, *Jane Eyre* (p.98).

It is only the necessity that compels him to get her help. The tone of his speech indicates the sense of superiority towards others since he is the master of Thornfield. The word ‘master’ has its connotative meaning with slavery that divides the Victorian society into different classes. The sense of master/slavery relationship is a feature of the traditional masculinity. Rochester’s fall from the back of the horse is symbolic. It is a fall from his traditional Victorian masculinity towards another masculinity produced by the help of Jane Eyre. Jane’s help and his leaning on her shoulder are symbolically significant. She is his saver from all his falls in life. The moment of his encounter with Jane Eyre is a barrier between his past with his ‘moral faults’ and his future with his redemption by the hands of Jane Eyre. The first encounter foreshadows the future relation between him and Jane Eyre. It also foreshadows the relationship between man and woman in the ideal masculinity. The first meeting presents Rochester as weak so it is necessity that compels him to get the help of a woman. Jane is presented as strong offering help for a strange man. At their first encounter, Jane, not Rochester, offers assistance. Jane presumes the role of the man and
guides her would-be lover to a safe place. Charlotte Bronte presents Jane Eyre too strong to suggest that man must be in need of the help of woman.

The first encounter snatches some powers from man and empowers woman which is something new to the Victorians. Moreover, Jane Eyre is given more gender role to play in society. Though, she is rootless in society, Jane offers help to Rochester without caring whom he is. The first encounter between Mr. Rochester and Jane disrupts also the power dynamics as thought by the Victorians – the male is in the position of authority – by reducing the authority of Mr. Rochester, making him equal to Jane. The first meeting is the first step in the construction of the new masculinity in *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte. This first encounter is the mark for other events till the end of the novel. Charlotte Bronte reduces every power Rochester has, and empowers Jane Eyre simultaneously.

Charlotte Bronte, at the first encounter, demolishes the superiority/inferiority factor between man and woman in the traditional masculinity. Rochester, though a wealthy gentleman, is helpless before Jane. Jane Eyre, the heroine, helps to figure out a new masculinity for Rochester who has found no place other than her shoulders to stand with.

Gilbert and Gubar argue that *Jane Eyre* is a story of “enclosure and escape”. It is an escape from the hegemonic masculinity that is related to the past of Rochester as a master to all the people of Thornfield. It is also an enclosure into the ideal masculinity in which man and woman are two equal human beings. The first encounter of Rochester and Jane is a moment of that enclosure and escape.

In *Villette* the first encounter of Paul Emanuel with Lucy Snowe is similarly used to show two types of masculinities; the Victorian traditional masculinity and the desired masculinity of Charlotte Bronte. Paul Emanuel, at the first meeting, is presented as a hegemonic man. Lucy’s first meeting with Paul is when he is called to read her countenance at Madame Beck’s school to test her for the post of a teacher. This point makes Lucy Snowe under the focus of Paul Emanuel. She is helpless, rootless and without a job. At the first encounter, Lucy’s mind is under the surveillance of Paul Emanuel. The English woman is oppressed in England as well as in Europe. Since Lucy Snowe has travelled to France to get a job of teaching English, that is similar to Charlotte Bronte’s visit to Belgium. Charlotte Bronte presents Paul, in *Villette*, as a reader of Lucy Snowe. This reading of Lucy’s female identity is male dominated. Nineteenth century woman’s identity was viewed through the eyes of men. Women struggled to get their own identity by themselves.
The result of the first meeting is that she is strange, passionate, and a little vain, but acceptable to be a teacher at Madame Beck’s school. Charlotte Bronte presents the first encounter between Lucy and Paul, in which her head is checked, as against her privacy. Paul states:

- “I read it”, he pronounced.
- “What did you read in it?”
- Bad or good?

-“Of each kind, without doubt,” pursued the diviner.  *Villette*, p. (78)

The pronoun ‘it’ shows us the inferior treatment of Lucy by Paul, the French teacher. Syntactically, she is the object of the doer of reading. The subjectification of Paul is superior compared to the objectification of Lucy which is inferior. The first encounter presents the real aggressive man penetrating into the inner world of Lucy Snowe who is helpless and weak. Lucy has nothing to do other than to accept being watched by Paul Emanuel in order to get a job out of the domestic sphere given to her counterparts. Reading Lucy’s skull is an aggressive act since there are other techniques to examine her skills as a teacher of English. Compared to Jane Eyre at her first encounter with Rochester, Lucy Snowe is presented as weak and helpless. The state of helplessness is not only the state of Lucy Snowe but also the state of most Victorian women in the society of Charlotte Bronte.

In *Villette*, Charlotte Bronte denounces the hegemonic masculinity at the European level regardless of different cultures, religions, languages, or nations. The French teacher, Paul is hegemonic similar to the English gentleman, Rochester in *Jane Eyre*. Charlotte Bronte visited Belgium and found M. Heger in Brussels to be a hegemonic character in her life. The European man is hegemonic per se.

The first encounter reading of Lucy Snowe leads to several readings including the final reading that leads to equality and the acknowledgement of her woman identity. The first reading leads Paul to read the body of Lucy. This reading is a pure male reading of a woman as merely flesh. This is seen in Lucy’s male role playing to which she resists to undress her dress. This body reading can be seen in the reading of Cleopatra at the gallery of Villette. However, Paul Emanuel finally has read Lucy Snowe correctly since he discovers an affinity between him and Lucy. Paul has denied the traditional masculinity of the first encounter in which his reference to her is no more than “I read it”, *Villette* p. (78). The first reading of her head leads to equal reading of their affinity in which he asks Lucy:

Do you see it, Mademoiselle, when you look in the glass? Do you observe that your forehead is shaped like mine—that your eyes are cut like mine?
Do you hear that you have some of my tones of voice? Do you know that you have many of my looks? I perceive all this, and believe that you were born under my star. *Villette* (p.440)

This affinity is the fruit of his reading since the first meeting. At this moment, Paul is changed into an ideal gentleman forgetting totally his hegemonic masculinity. Finally he discovers physical and mental affinity between him and Lucy. So, the first encounter is the line demarcation of an escape of hegemonic masculinity and enclosure into the ideal gentleman masculinity.

In Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, the first encounter of Darcy with Elizabeth is significant in presenting two kinds of masculinity; the traditional masculinity of Darcy and the gentleman masculinity wished by Elizabeth Bennet. Their first meeting is in the ball at Meryton. In the first encounter, Darcy is a pure Victorian gentleman, full of pride and arrogance. This encounter presents Darcy “to be proud; to be above his company and above being pleased”, *Pride and Prejudice* p. (08). He is presented as the most despised character as a result of his arrogance and pride. He is the archetype of the hegemonic masculinity prevailed during the eighteenth century. Darcy feels that society is beneath him. His treatment of Elizabeth is patriarchal. He feels superior to Elizabeth since she is not enough handsome to tempt him. Moreover, she is a punishment to him if he dances with her. The first meeting is a barrier between two masculinities; the traditional one and the modern one constructed by Jane Austen in which men and women shared equal gender identities.

Elizabeth resists his prudent behaviour at the ball. Her resistance increases especially when he comes and proposes his first proposal. The first proposal is a reflection of the first meeting. The lack of gentlemanlike behaviour at the first encounter is the sound criterion for Elizabeth to judge his masculinity. Masculinity is merely a performance. The first meeting, though unsuccessful, leads to discover one’s identity in the other so far Elizabeth and Darcy are concerned. Darcy’s first impression about Elizabeth is changed because of the ‘fine eyes’ that she has. The physical charm of Darcy enforces Elizabeth to change her first impression about him too.

Darcy, being accused of the lack of masculine behaviour, does his best to avoid the patriarchal masculinity of the first encounter. He changes his behaviour step by step till he recognizes the equal identity of Elizabeth. Darcy changes his behaviour by attempting to minimize or alleviating the marginalization of Elizabeth. He lessens the superiority of the first encounter and comes to an equal social status that Elizabeth recognizes “He is a
I am a gentleman’s daughter so far we are equal”, *Pride and Prejudice* (p.314).

Darcy leaves his feeling of superiority over Elizabeth. Finally, he has a new masculine identity which is equal to the feminine identity of Elizabeth. Ultimately, he offers an explanation for his behaviour of the first encounter in a statement to Elizabeth:

> I have been a selfish being all my life, in practice, though not in principle. As a child I was taught what was right, but I was not taught to correct my temper. I was given good principles, but left to follow them in pride and conceit. *Pride and Prejudice* (p.325)

This confession is the real description of the hegemonic masculinity of the first encounter of Darcy and Elizabeth. These lines pinpoint that Darcy gets nearer to a complete confession of the hegemonic masculine behaviour. He is the product of his family and his society that is male dominated. Jane Austen limelights two kinds of masculinity; the gentleman masculinity is the substitute of the hegemonic masculinity. The first encounter is similar to the line demarcation between day and night in which day is the substitute of night. Finally, Austen brings Darcy and Elizabeth together into a new form of masculine identity equal to feminine identity. At this moment, the big kiss is the fruit of ideal gentleman masculinity.

In *Emma*, Jane Austen presents the traditional, patriarchal and hegemonic masculinity on the one hand. On the other hand, Austen presents the gentleman masculinity since the first meeting between Mr. Knightley and Emma Woodhouse. The first conflict between them is the conflict between the traditional masculinity and gentleman masculinity. The first meeting between Knightley and Emma is about her matching Weston to Miss Taylor and thinking about matching Harriet Smith to Mr. Elton. In *Emma*, Mr. Knightley is gentleman since the beginning of the novel till the end of the novel. He stands for the gentleman masculinity. Here, the gentleman masculinity is seen through the eyes of a man. This is the opposite to the construction of gentleman masculinity in *Jane Eyre*, *Villette* and *Pride and Prejudice*, in which the gentleman masculinity is seen through the eyes of Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe and Elizabeth Bennet.

The first encounter of Emma and Knightley presents the conflict between them over the marriage of Harriet Smith and Robert Martin. Emma is against her marriage to Robert Martin, the farmer. Emma plans to marry Harriet off to Elton. Knightley warns her “let her marry Robert Martin; and she is safe, respectable, and happy forever”, *Emma* (p.41). In this conversation, he proves that he knows Emma well by warning her not to involve Mr. Elton: “and as a friend I shall just hint to you that if Elton is the man, I think it will be all
labour in vain”, *Emma* (p. 42). Mr. Knightley’s approach to masculinity is to do manly according to one’s duty. It is his duty that puts him in favour of Martin to marry Harriet Smith. Mr. Knightley opposes the traditional masculinity conceived by Emma about the gentlemanliness of Elton as a suitable husband for Harriet, not Martin. He opposes the views of Emma of marriage relations based on economic standing and social rank which cannot be found in Robert Martin, the farmer. The good conduct and behaviour of Martin is the basic standard for his masculinity. This masculine behaviour makes him suitable to marry Harriet Smith. The conflict between Mr. Knightley and Emma about the marriage of Harriet Smith in the first encounter is a conflict between the traditional masculinity in which Martin is only a farmer, and the gentleman masculinity in which masculinity is not judged through the economic standing and social rank. Mr. Knightley is against the hegemonic masculinity which marginalizes not only women but also men. Jane Austen opposes the hegemonic masculinity of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which oppresses both men and women. Knightley avers that Martin’s manners have sense, sincerity and gentlemanliness. Mr. Knightley, as his name suggests, is the icon of gentlemanliness since he is aware of his duty towards others not only Martin but also Emma, Harriet and others. The final marriage of Harriet to Martin proves his gentleman thinking. Emma Woodhouse avers that Knightley is a man. She is trying to adopt a kind of masculinity which she does not deserve. It is Knightley who guides her and other people till the end of the novel. So, Jane Austen presents the conflict between Emma and Knightley in their first encounter to present the available masculinities during her time. She reconstructs this masculinity basically on the conduct and good manners of men, not on the social rank or wealth of the society. The sense of the gentleman masculinity is based on the duty of man towards his society. She portrays Mr. Knightley as an exemplar of this gentleman masculinity.

Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte have used the technique of the first encounter to bring into light the pure traditional masculinity of the Victorian period and the newly constructed gentleman masculinity. Charlotte Bronte is harsh since the beginning, whereas Jane Austen is gentle in her treatment of her heroes. Charlotte Bronte has usurped the power of the aristocrat Rochester. He is presented as weak and badly in need of the help of Jane Eyre. Charlotte Bronte is of the opinion that man is in need of woman and vice versa. However, Paul Emanuel is presented as a strong man with the skill of phrenology – reading minds – which leads him to real reading of Lucy Snowe as an equal partner in life. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* is presented as an aristocrat full of pride and arrogance. But Jane
Jane Austen gradually lets him change his arrogant behaviour that he shows toward Elizabeth till he becomes a pure gentleman in his society. Mr. Knightley is presented as a very gentleman since the very beginning till the end. He is the only gentleman who has never undertaken any change. Besides, he is the source of change in others. Jane Austen is of the opinion that Knightley is the best model of gentleman masculinity.

Jane Eyre and Elizabeth Bennet were presented strong and resistant to the patriarchal behaviour of Rochester and Darcy since the first encounter. The only weak heroine in these four selected novels, at the first encounter, is Lucy Snowe. She is weak because of her rootlessness at Villette; with different culture, nation, and language. Charlotte Bronte presents through Lucy Snowe the patriarchy not only in England but also through Europe. Emma is the most different one compared to the other heroines. She is presented since the first encounter as wealthy and not searching for marriage. She is, at the very encounter with Mr. Knightley, very strong arguing him as a man. So, the first encounter has paved the way for Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen to reconstruct new masculinity in which a woman can offer help, argue and resist against the marginalization of men. Since the beginning, Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe, Elizabeth Bennet and Emma are the mouthpieces of her creators.

5-3-2 Presenting Different Types of Masculinities:

Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte present different kinds of men and masculinities in their novels. The most essential thing in such presentation is to limelight their desired masculinity, i.e. the gentleman masculinity in which a man ought to be. In Jane Eyre, Villette, Pride and Prejudice, and Emma, there are several masculinities like the traditional, the gentleman, the religious, and the effeminate masculinity. The researcher analyses each one with reference to men matched with these masculinities as follows:

5-3-2-1Traditional Masculinity or Hegemonic Masculinity:

Traditional masculinity or Hegemonic masculinity is a type of masculinity in which woman is seen as an inferior sex and man is seen as a superior sex. Woman is marginalized in every aspect of life. Moreover, there is a hegemonic view within men as one category; some men in society are oppressed because of their class, work or due to other reasons, which is hegemonic. This traditional hegemonic masculinity is the one perceived in the Victorian period. The traditional hegemonic masculinity can be summed up in Austen’s
saying that “Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove anything”. So, the hegemonic masculinity gives men every advantage of women in society. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen want to eradicate this masculinity. They portray this traditional masculinity in the behaviour of some men as representative of the Victorian era. John Reed in *Jane Eyre*, Dr. John in *Villette*, and Frank Churchill in *Emma* are good exemplars of the traditional masculinity. They are men void of the gentleman behaviour with reference to the treatment of woman.

John Reed’s masculinity is a stark traditional Victorian masculinity. Because of his suppression, Jane Eyre is put into the Red Room which is symbolic of the prison-like Victorian masculinity at Gateshead. Jane Eyre revolts against John Reed’s masculinity addressing him: “You are like a murderer—you are like a slave-driver—you are like the Roman emperors”, *Jane Eyre* (p.08). Besides physical aggression, he wants her to call him ‘master’. This relates to the position of man as a master in the family due to his position as a bread winner. The traditional Victorian masculinity is resembled to the Red Room and Jane Eyre inside this Room stands for the Victorian woman. Jane is made like a ‘mad cat’ inside the Red Room. This madness is because of the male dominance over Jane Eyre. It is similar to the madness of Bertha inside the Attic.

Dr. John in *Villette* is also a traditional man who wants Lucy to make him ever grateful. He minds only his desires and to be always pleased with Lucy. He does not care about Lucy Snowe. He is blind to see Lucy’s passion. He can see nothing about her more than “a being inoffensive shadow”, *Villette* (p.380). Her burial of his letters is a rejection of his traditional masculinity. His judgment of Vashti as a woman not an artist is against recognition of woman identity. Charlotte Bronte makes Lucy Snowe refuse this man and his superiority.

In *Emma*, Frank Churchill is another traditional hegemonic man. This is can be seen hegemonic from his treatment with Emma Woodhouse, Harriet and Jane Fairfax. He is presented as a gallant man who does not care for others. He flirts with Emma without caring for her heart. Secretly, he is in love with Jane Fairfax, nevertheless at the Box Hill, he flirts with Emma before his fiancé. It is Mr. Knightley who knows his real masculinity. Mr. Knightley summarizes his masculinity when he observes that: “He is a disgrace to the name man”, *Emma* (p.280). Woman is not a real partner for him; just a matter of fun in his life.
He feels superior to others; Emma finds resemblance in this issue saying: “destiny which bids fair to connect us with two characters so much superior to our own”, *Emma* (p.315). This is the hegemonic behaviour in his treatment to Jane Fairfax; to flirt with a woman before her as his fiancé. Moreover, Emma is not his real object of fun. He is not bound by duty as Mr. Knightley is. Emma Woodhouse has perceived the outer reality of Frank Churchill but Mr. Knightley has seen his real identity as a gallant man; a true representative of the French masculinity.

Even the heroes of the selected novels are patriarchal in their behaviour except Mr. Knightley who is a gentleman by birth. Rochester has been patriarchal since the beginning till he becomes acquainted with Jane Eyre. His hegemonic treatment to Bertha is a proof of his patriarchy. Unless saved by Jane Eyre, he would have been patriarchal forever. He wants to marry her as a second wife which she can see more than a mistress. Bertha is, before Jane Eyre, a real manifestation of Rochester’s hegemonic masculinity. Thus, she flees from this hegemonic masculinity of Rochester to the Moor House.

Paul Emanuel is similarly hegemonic while asking Lucy to dress like a man in the male role playing scene and while he takes Lucy in the gallery of Villette away from the portrait of Cleopatra to see the four images *La vie d’une femme*[^31]. The four images are some pictures giving an account on the traditional gender roles of women during the Victorian period.[^32] Paul wants to dress her male identity and to let her run into the traditional view of women traditional roles. However, Lucy is too strong to change him to be a gentle man and see his masculine identity mingled within her identity. In such male dressing of Lucy, Charlotte Bronte critiques the masculine identity that literature should have according to Southey, George Lewes and others. Charlotte Bronte in literature was looking for a woman identity in spite of the fact that she wrote under the pseudonym Currer Bell.

Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* is also another patriarchal man. He is purely bound by the traditions of his society. At the beginning, he is hegemonic since he feels to be above all the people of his society. After Mr. Bingley’s suggestion to Darcy to dance with Elizabeth, he announces that she is not enough handsome to tempt him. Even his first proposal is patriarchal because he feels superior to Elizabeth. Darcy further justifies his proposal saying: “Could you expect me to rejoice in your connections?” *Pride and Prejudice* (p.171). This indicates that he feels superior to be connected with Elizabeth due to her lower family connections. Elizabeth’s refusal of the first proposal is because of the
hegemonic masculinity that Darcy has. Darcy lessens the superiority of the first proposal and comes to an equal social status that Elizabeth recognizes “He is a gentleman: I am a gentleman’s daughter so far we are equal”, *Pride and Prejudice* (p.314). Darcy struggles between two masculinities, the traditional one of his society and the gentleman masculinity with his love to Elizabeth.

5-3-2 Gentleman Masculinity:

Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen construct this gentleman masculinity as a model should be implemented in the Victorian society. This masculinity is what men ought to be. However, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen judge the gentleman masculinity according to the needs and desires of women. Rochester, Paul Emanuel, Darcy, and Knightley are the best examples of the gentleman masculinity; and amongst these gentlemen, Knightley is the idealist gentleman. Knightley is the best due to his gentleman behaviour since the very beginning of *Emma*. Rochester, Paul Emanuel and Darcy maintain a hegemonic masculinity till a moment of total change into gentleman masculinity. Mr. Knightley’s gentlemanliness is seen from his relations with others. Mr. Knightley does no harm for others. He is a mentor of Emma and other characters. He is in favour of Harriet Smith, Robert Martin and Miss Bates. He gets furious when Emma insults Miss Bates at the Box Hill. He accepts to stay with Emma in Highbury to be with her father after their marriage. One aspect of his gentlemanliness is his duty towards his society. He is always helping them to manage their lives easily. He tells Emma: “There is one thing, Emma, which a man can do, if he chuses, and that is his duty”, *Emma* (p.95). Mr. Knightley, as gentleman, must maintain a rational and desirable masculinity rather than the aggressive and hegemonic masculinity advocated by the Victorian society. Claudia Johnson finds that

Knightley to be an impressive figure because he is a model of chivalry who performs male duties in neither an anachronistic nor an overly progressive way. He is a new type of English masculinity because he ‘desentimentalizes’ and ‘deheterosexualizes’ virtue making it available to women as well as men. His gentleman masculinity prevails to women and men alike. This is the essence of his masculinity. The heroes of Jane Austen are either gentlemen by birth or by performance. The ideal picture of the gentleman is presented in the character of the heroes of both Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen.

Rochester, Paul Emanuel, and Darcy are gentlemen after a gradual process of change. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen change in them the Victorian hegemonic masculinity.
Rochester and Darcy are gentlemen by birth. The description of their castles indicates that they are of the gentry. Pemberley and Thornfield castles are situated in a good and wealthy manner. Jane Eyre is astonished to see such pleasurable things at his house, so is Elizabeth when she visits his house with Mr. Gardner. Paul is merely a professor of literature. However, being a gentleman by birth is not the ideal one to both Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte. They have constructed these men as new models for the gentleman masculinity.

Rochester has been developed to the wish of Jane Eyre; likewise Darcy has been developed according to the desire of Elizabeth. Rochester acknowledges the secret of Adele, and later, the secret of Bertha. He has left his social pride especially after feeling completely in love with Jane Eyre. To attain a solution for his conflict between the traditional masculinity of his society in which it is not accepted to marry a governess, and the gentleman masculinity that is inside him, Rochester abandons the amorous love relations outside the marriage life. Moreover, Rochester reconciles to God and both Jane and Bertha. He sacrifices himself to save Bertha when she burns his house. Namely, he suffers the loss of his sight and his right hand. Rochester is the only gentleman compared to other heroes of Bronte and Austen who has suffered physically and spiritually to become an ideal gentleman in the Victorian society. After becoming an ideal man, he is so powerful to call Jane Eyre to the Moor House to come back to him. Jane Eyre responds to his supernatural cry “Jane, Jane, Jane” though he is “a thirty-six hour coach ride away”, Jane Eyre (p.496). Finally, she accepts him as an ideal gentleman equal to her. Jane proclaims:

I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom, conventionalities, nor even of mortal flesh—it is my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God's feet, equal,—as we are! Jane Eyre (p.216).

To this appeal of equality, Rochester responds to the flesh and spirit of an equal partner. “As we are!’ repeated Mr. Rochester—‘so’, he added, enclosing me in his arms, gathering me to his breast, pressing his lips on my lips: ‘so, Jane!’”. So, equality is the essential feature of his new gentleman masculinity.

Darcy, similarly has left his pride as a superior man looking down upon others. Elizabeth’s refusal of his first proposal is the turning point towards his journey to the ideal gentleman masculinity. The cause of her refusal is his lack of the gentleman-like behaviour. This is the gentleman-like behaviour that both Austen and Bronte are looking for in a patriarchal society. Darcy with the help of Elizabeth overcomes his lack of gentleman-like behaviour and changes to be the icon of the most desirable masculinity. Darcy changes his
manners to match the manners of Elizabeth Bennet. He annihilates his superiority and comes to an equal social status that Elizabeth acknowledges: “He is a gentleman; I am a gentleman’s daughter so far we are equal”, *Pride and Prejudice* (p.314). This point is similar to Jane Eyre’s above mentioned moment of equality: “my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God's feet, equal,—as we are!”, *Jane Eyre* (p.216). At such a moment both Rochester and Darcy are ideal gentlemen.

Darcy is also gentleman to the other members of his society. He is completely dutiful to his sister; he cares about his property and renters, and is generally an appealing honest member of society. Elizabeth Bennet is astonished when she hears Mrs. Reynolds, the Pemberley housekeeper singing his attributes:

> What praise is more valuable than the praise of an intelligent servant? As a brother, a landlord, a master, she considered how many people’s happiness were in his guardianship!—how much of pleasure or pain was it in his power to bestow!—how much of good or evil must be done by him! Every idea that had been brought forward by the housekeeper was favourable to his character. *Pride and Prejudice* (p.238).

Moreover his payment of Lydia’s dowry to marry Wickham without the knowledge of Elizabeth is another feature of his gentlemanliness towards his society. However, these gentleman-like manners do not soften his feeling of superiority towards the members of his society. It is only Elizabeth Bennet who has made change in him to be an ideal gentleman. She is the catalyst in his development towards the gentleman masculinity.

Paul Emanuel is not a Victorian gentleman; he is French. However, Paul Emanuel is a gentleman in Villette because of his gentleman-like manners towards Lucy Snowe. Though at the beginning he is hegemonic, Paul changes gradually and becomes a gentleman as he falls in love with Lucy. Both of Paul and Lucy are good readers of each other. He is reading her since the very meeting at Madame Beck’s school. He wants to dominate every movement of Lucy, but she is enough strong to resist him. As she continues to resist his attacks, he becomes kinder, more compassionate and gentle till they fall in love with each other. Lucy observes that:

> His tenderness had rendered him ductile in a priest’s hands, his affection, his devotedness, his sincere pious enthusiasm blinded his kind eyes sometimes, made him abandon justice to himself to do the work of craft, and serve the ends of selfishness. *Villette* (p.593).

Though tough and cruel, Paul plays a role in stirring Lucy’s ‘ambitious wishes’. Paul seeks to stimulate Lucy into an active realization of her own powers. Paul has power and
empowers others like Lucy. His masculinity is the best one for Lucy because she finds her
real identity as a woman with him. It is M. Paul’s demand that Lucy acts in the school play
to introduce her powers to the society. It is Paul who pushes her into a masculine gender
role. Paul also is the first who proposes a friendship to Lucy Snowe. Paul suggests that there
is an affinity between the two, saying:

I am a sort of lay Jesuit: but we are alike—there is affinity between us. Do
you see it, Mademoiselle, when you look in the glass? Do you observe that
your forehead is shaped like mine—that your eyes are cut like mine? Do
you hear that you have some of my tones of voice? Do you know that you
have many of my looks? I perceive all this, and believe that you were born
under my star. Villette (p.440)

Paul Emanuel discovers an affinity between him and Lucy. His ability to read her, to see
her, to hear the same tones of her voice brings them closer together. Her ability to read him
makes their relationship mutual. Charlotte Bronte’s use of the word ‘affinity’ denotes a
cultural resemblance between him and Lucy.35

His gentlemanliness is that he stands with Lucy to get a job early after her coming
to Villette. He acknowledges her woman identity in spite of the religious barrier. He assures
her “Remain a Protestant. My little English Puritan, I love Protestantism in you. I own its
severe charm”, Villette (p.593). He recognises her religious identity. It is Paul Emanuel with
whom Lucy has changed from the cold, self-regarding Miss Snowe to the fulfilled spiritual
mate of her teacher. With him, Lucy assured her place in the universe. The hegemonic and
patriarchal Paul becomes the ideal gentleman of ‘Lucy’. Finally, he accepts her beliefs, her
attitudes and her independent identity. He has prepared a house and a school for Lucy. Paul
is the man who has given Lucy her autonomy and freedom. This is the most important factor
in his gentleman masculinity. The affinity that he has discovered in Lucy and his help to
get her a house and a school are the causes for Lucy to accept him as a husband. Lucy gets
her maturity and autonomy when she gets the heart of the gentleman Paul.

Charlotte Bronte, while presenting the gentlemanliness of the French gentleman, Paul
Emanuel, claims that ‘Gentlemanliness’ has no geographical as well as religious barriers.
However, Jane Austen presents a national pride in her comparison of the English
masculinity of Mr. Knightley and the French masculinity of Frank Churchill in Emma.
5-3-2-3 Religious Masculinity:

Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen have portrayed another type of masculinity which is related to religion, the religious masculinity. Religious men in Jane Eyre, Pride and Prejudice and Emma are not gentlemen by behaviour. Even they are not guided by the rules of religion. The heroines of these novels come across these religious men but refuse their marriage proposals. Jane Eyre refuses to marry St. John Rivers, Elizabeth Bennet refuses Mr. Collins’ proposal and Emma Woodhouse also refuses the proposal of Mr. Elton. This is because they cannot find a gentleman-like behaviour in these religious men. Even, Brocklehurst in Jane Eyre stands for the most tyrant character in these four novels of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen.

Brocklehurst, the headmaster of the Orphaned Lowood School, is a threat to gentleman masculinity and to femininity as well. He treats the orphaned girls badly at his school. The masculine behaviour of Brocklehurst dominates every movement of the girls inside the school. Charlotte Bronte presents him as a ‘black pillar’ towering over Jane Eyre. His aggressive behaviour towards orphaned girls does not make him an ideal man or a true gentleman. His actions are not according to his preaches. He pretends to be moral, but in reality he is not. He does not have any trait of the ideal masculinity or gentlemanliness because of his double standards. His wife and daughters dress in fashionable dresses and the girls, under his dominance, are left to plain-looking clothes and left freezing and hungry. This is not the way to be a man and a gentleman. Religion proposes equality for all human beings, males or females. His masculine behaviour should command him to ensure pleasurable conditions for those under his control. Such masculinity of these religious men does not adopt equality. His masculinity is the best example in which men use religion to justify their dominance over women and the poor. The male dominance in this religious masculinity is deeply rooted in God’s power.

St. John Rivers is another religious man who assumes superiority over women through religion. At his first encounter with Jane Eyre, he appears to be an ideal Christian man. He welcomes Jane into his house. He seems to be a charitable man, “willing to aid [her] to the utmost of his power”, Jane Eyre (p.295). He promises her to get a job. However, his relation with Jane Eyre starts to be that of slave-master relation which is not different from the one with Rochester. He proposes to marry Jane Eyre not because of love but because of her courage and less beauty. This will make her a useful helpmate since he has devoted his life to missionary life. Jane Eyre refuses the religious masculinity of St. John
Rivers. This religious masculinity will snatch her heart and the liberty of her mind. Neither Jane nor St. John find each other born for love, which Charlotte Bronte considers essential for the mutual understanding of the relationship between the masculine and the feminine. Love makes no one superior or inferior.

Charlotte Bronte rejects the religious masculinity that suppresses woman’s love and sex into duty. Jane Eyre rejects St. John’s idea of love because she will lose her identity as a woman. Jane firmly tells him “I scorn your idea of love…. I scorn the counterfeit sentiment you offer: yes, St. John, and I scorn you when you offer it”, *Jane Eyre* (p.348). Jane prefers Rochester, the sinner to St. John Rivers, the religious man. This religious masculinity does not recognize the sexual identity of woman. The gender role of woman is a good helpmate for her husband to do his duty. This masculinity is rejected by Jane Eyre as well as Charlotte Bronte because it deviates from God’s word.

Jane Austen’s portrayal of Mr. Collins in *Pride and Prejudice* and Mr. Elton in *Emma* is not different from Charlotte Bronte’s portrayal of Brocklehurst and St. John Rivers. Both of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen are not satisfied of the gender role of the religious man in the Victorian period. Mr. Collins is presented as pompous, arrogant and stupid. He has not any feature of being a gentleman. He is not romantic at all. When he proposes to Elizabeth, he mentions ridiculous reasons for him to marry. He mentions these reasons:

> My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish; secondly, that I am convinced that it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly—which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier, that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honour of calling patroness. *Pride and Prejudice* (p.111).

None of these reasons is reasonable or sensible. Mr. Collins explains it is his religious duty as a parson to marry. Moreover, it is Lady Catherine de Burgh who has recommended that he do so. His religious duty is not abided by God, but by his patroness. His declaration of his proposal is of business style rather than a romantic one. It is a proposal of religious duty rather than a love proposal. It is similar to the proposal of St. John Rivers to Jane Eyre. Duty is the most essential standard for the religious masculinity, whereas love and equality are the most essential one for the gentleman masculinity. The religious masculinity of Mr. Collins suppresses the emotional needs of Elizabeth. Elizabeth Bennet resists this kind of masculinity. At the Netherfield Ball, after dancing with him twice, “the moment of her release was ecstasy”.36
Mr. Elton in Jane Austen’s *Emma* is another religious man. Jane Austen rejects the religious masculinity of Mr. Elton. He is the vicar of Highbury. At the beginning of novel he is helping the poor, but he is changed totally after Emma’s refusal of his proposal. Most characters are suspicious about his religious masculinity. Mr. Knightley warns Emma when she wants to match Elton with Harriet Smith. Mr. Knightley justifies his worries: “He [Elton] knows the value of a good income as well as anybody”, *Emma* (p.42). This line determines the nature of the religious man. Namely, he is a fortune hunter. His interest in Emma is not of love relationship. His impression with Emma is for her fortune rather than her charms. It is a matter of good fortune that this religious man is engrossed in. Emma is astonished to realize that Mr. Elton is in love with her. She says: “Mr. Elton in love with me! What an idea”, *Emma* (p.73). She does not accept him because he is not as gentleman as Mr. Knightley is. His pursuit of Emma and Augusta, later Mrs. Elton, reveals him as a fortune hunter.

The lack of gentlemanliness in the religious men of Austen is the cause of her heroines to rejecting them. After the refusal of his proposal, he is presented as egotistical and cruel. To revenge his refusal, Mr. Elton refuses to dance with Harriet Smith at a ball in purpose with his wife, Mrs. Elton. This behaviour before the audience reflects his lack of gentleman-like behaviour. Mr. Knightley is the true gentleman who replaces him to dance with Harriet to save her face. This is an innate gentlemanliness in Mr. Knightley compared to the ungentlemanly behaviour of Mr. Elton. Mr. Elton is arrogant to dance with Harriet. His wife’s behaviour is similar to his arrogant behaviour.

Jane Austen presents the religious men as not accepted by the society. This is because they behave ungentlemanly. The image of the religious men in Austen’s novels, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma* is spoiled by their arrogant and cruel behaviour. This is the religious masculinity that Austen has’ presented similar to the religious masculinity of Charlotte Bronte. Brocklehurst, St. John Rivers, Mr. Elton and Mr. Collins are religious men but they deviate to act according to God’s word. For St. John Rivers and Mr. Collins a marriage proposal is a religious duty. However, Mr. Elton’s proposal is a matter of fortune. Their personal motives guide their behaviour. Jane Eyre, Emma Woodhouse and Elizabeth Bennet refuse their proposals strongly because they arrogant, deceitful and they lack romance and gentle behaviour. The religious masculinity is not accepted by Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen.
The Effeminate Masculinity:

Another form of masculinity depicted by Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen is the effeminate masculinity. de Hamal in *Villette*, Frank Churchill in *Emma*, and Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice* are the effeminate men presented by Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. The presentation of these characters is intentional to show us that masculinity is not a matter of biological differences. Some characters lose their masculinity because they are prone to womanish features.

De Hamal is presented by Charlotte Bronte as:

Pretty and smooth, and as trim as a doll: so nicely dressed, so nicely curled, so booted and gloved and cravated…What a figure, so trim and natty! What womanish feet and hands! How daintily he held a glass to one of his optics! *Villette* (p.247).

De Hamal is feminine in his size, his dress and his curls. He is effeminate in his character because he behaves in womanish demeanour. He is a woman in man’s disguise. He is the sexual partner of Ginevra Fanshawe. Lucy thinks that he must not be a man “Not a woman of my acquaintance had the stature of that ghost. She was not of a female height. Not to any man I knew could the machination, for a moment, be attributed”, *Villette* (p.566). He is attractive and smooth, but these features make him feminine to Lucy. In such a case, it is Lucy who decides the masculinity. De Hamal’s masculinity is measured through the eyes of Lucy Snowe. Gilbert and Gubar in *The Mad Woman in the Attic* argue that:

De Hamal and Ginevra represent the self-gratifying, sensual, romantic side of Lucy. Posturing before mirrors, the fop and the coquette are vacuous but for the roles they play. Gilbert and Gubar add that Charlotte Bronte shows us how the apparently female image of the nun masks the romantic male plots of de Hamal. Lucy finds nothing masculine in de Hamal. Furthermore, she played his masculine role as a fop in the school play. de Hamal has eloped with Ginevra breaking the norms of gentleman masculinity and even the norms of the traditional masculinity.

Wickham is another effeminate character who is presented as a seemingly perfect gentleman at the first half of *Pride and Prejudice* but in the second half a wicked man as his name suggests. Elizabeth Bennet is fooled by his seemingly gentlemanly behaviour. He is one of the reasons that make her decide the refusal of Darcy’s first proposal. Wickham is immoral and deceptive. Jennine Eamon sees a kind of effeminate masculinity in the militia men like Wickham. She comments that “unlike their more masculine counterparts in the regiments of the line, these sorts of treatise argued, effeminate guardsmen and militiamen
focused on the beauty of their person but lack true bravery of character”. Though Wickham a militia man, he focuses overtly on his beauty to be in company with girls. Most women are cheated by him. Lydia is cheated by him to elope not for love but money. His elopement with Lydia Bennet is similar to de Hamal’s elopement with Ginevra Fanshawe. His intention is not for love or romance; it is for fulfilling financial purposes since he has debts. This accident, though awful, solves the controversy of Elizabeth and Darcy over the ungentlemanly behaviour of Wickham. Darcy does his duty as a man towards Lydia since he pays the amount of money to Wickham. Elizabeth Bennet realizes the gentlemanliness of Darcy through the ungentlemanly and effeminate behaviour of Wickham. She finally comprehends who Wickham is. Mr. Bennet as a father lacks duty towards Lydia after her elopement with Wickham. Wickham is another de Hamal of Villette. Their gender roles destroy the essence of masculinity.

Frank Churchill is also the effeminate man. His effeminate masculinity is French, which is compared to the gentleman English masculinity of Mr. Knightley. Jane Austen has a national pride. Frank Churchill lacks sincerity. Mr. Knightley targets this superficiality when he disputes Emma’s description of Frank as ‘amiable’. This contrast of Frank’s effeminate masculinity with the Knightley’s gentleman masculinity has encouraged some critics to view Mr. Knightley as an exemplar of the English masculinity. Claudia Johnson argues that the plain style of speech and conversation employed by Mr. Knightley “is a matter of national import, constituting the ‘amiable’, the true English style, as opposed of course to the ‘aimable’, the artificial, the courtly, the dissembling, the servile, and (as the tradition goes) the feminized French”. Frank Churchill wishes he be in France. The French masculinity is effeminate as depicted in Emma.

Knightley summarizes the nature of Frank’s masculinity when he observes: “He is a disgrace to the name of man” Emma (p.280). Put it simply, Frank is not a man, not a masculine, at all by any English paradigm. He is feminine. Mr. Knightley remarks about Frank Churchill’s handwriting: “I don’t admire it …. It is too small – wants strength. It is like a woman’s writing” Emma (p.194). Knightley observes that the handwriting of Emma is mightier than that of Churchill. Churchill according to Knightley is gallant only in a debased manner.

Lucy Snowe is cheated by the effeminate masculinity of de Hamal, Elizabeth Bennet is also cheated by the gallant and effeminate masculinity of Wickham, and Emma
Woodhouse is cheated by the effeminate masculinity of Frank Churchill. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen present these heroines as more masculine than these emasculating men. Lucy Snowe is astonished to see how womanish de Hamal’s hands are. This reverses the masculinity construction. In such a case, it is woman who decides the masculinity of men in the Victorian period. The behaviour also determines masculinity. The behaviour of de Hamal, Wickham and Frank Churchill determines their effeminate masculinity. Moreover, Lucy Snowe, Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse are presented mightier than these effeminate men. Masculinity in the hands of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen is not only the product of men.

5-3-3 The Role of the Gaze:

The traditional role of the gaze especially the male gaze is to be the dominant one over women. The male is the gazer and the female is the gazed. The gazer is the subject and the gazed is the object. The gaze plays a major role in Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen’s construction of masculinity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The new construction of masculinity gives power to woman as both a gazer and gazed. Bronte and Austen confront the traditional view of masculinity and newly reconstruct it. Rochester, Paul Emanuel, Darcy are using their gaze as a power instrument with which they objectify women. Mr. Knightley is not using it as a power instrument since he is the gentleman from the beginning to the end of the novel. Emma, instead, uses the gaze to objectify the people around.

According to the Male theory of Laura Mulvey, there is an implicit visual hierarchy since man is in the dominant position as the viewer and woman is in the subordinate position. Mulvey suggests that the active spectator position of a viewer imposes masculinity over the person being gazed. According to Mulvey, the bearer of the look is necessarily masculine: “In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active or male and passive or female”.

Mulvey states that woman is only a passive object for the gaze of the active subject. Women are always the objects of the gaze. They are never the possessor of the gaze. Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen are against this power hierarchy. They reconstruct new
dynamics of power hierarchy in which both man and woman are the gazer or the gazed; a woman can be a gazer or a gazed and vice versa a man is. The gaze has revised the parallel between power, authority, and dominance from one side and powerlessness, submission and subordination from another side. The passivity of a woman cannot be seen in Bronte and Austen’s masculinity. Both novelists weaken the power of the male gaze and empower the female gaze. This is because they find the male gaze patriarchal. At the earlier parts of the selected novels, the female is the gazed and the male is the gazer. Jane Eyre is the object of the ‘flashing and flaming’ eyes of Rochester, Lucy Snowe is also the object of Paul Emanuel’s ‘diving’ eyes into her inner and mental world, and Elizabeth is the object of Darcy’s gaze till the end of the first half. Emma’s gaze is masculine since the beginning objectifying all men around her except Mr. Knightley who resists strongly her objectification. Emma fails to objectify men at the Box Hill when she has over-wept after the blaming of Mr. Knightley over the issue of Miss Bates. The gaze is the symbol of hegemonic masculinity of the Victorian society. Therefore, Charlotte Bronte usurps Rochester’s eyes at the end of the novel making him helpless seeing through the eyes of Jane Eyre. Jane Eyre says:

Literally, I was (what he often called me) the apple of his eye. He saw nature—he saw books through me; and never did I weary of gazing for his behalf, and of putting into words the effect of field, tree, town, river, cloud, sunbeam—of the landscape before us; of the weather round us—and impressing by sound on his ear what light could no longer stamp on his eye. Never did I weary of reading to him: never did I weary of conducting him where he wished to go: of doing for him what he wished to be done. *Jane Eyre* (p.384).

Jane’s gaze becomes the gaze of Rochester and Jane is no more than the ‘Apple of his eye’. Charlotte Bronte has based unity and equality for her new construction of masculinity through the tool of the gaze. No one is dominant or subordinate.

Lucy Snowe in *Villette* suffers a lot from this destructive gaze of males around her. She is objectified by Dr. John, Paul Emanuel and even by the gazes of women like Madame Beck. Watchful eyes are everywhere, and Lucy, who deeply values her privacy, observes that her privacy is constantly invaded. The penetrating gaze enters into her rooms, her personal compartments, the panes of her windows and at times even into her mind as in the case of Paul’s reading of her skull. She describes his eyes before playing the role of a man on the stage: “the door opens …two eyes first vaguely struck upon, and then hungrily dived into me”, *Villette* (p.159). Here, Lucy is offended because of the hungry gaze of Paul.
Women are seen an object of the male hungry gazes. The word ‘hungry’ has a sexual denotation. They are an object as well as a sexual object which is a total humiliation for women. This hungrily gaze of Paul Emanuel is similar to Rochester’s at his bedroom after fire. The fire is a symbol for that sexual gaze; a gaze with fire. Lucy resists to be objectified by the gaze of Paul Emanuel. One day, she has broken his glass at the Pension School. This indicates that she is powerful to resist his powerful gaze. Lucy wants to gaze at him and to be gazed without any difference. Charlotte Bronte makes the gaze of her heroine resistant to be as powerful as Paul Emanuel is.

Charlotte Bronte changes the current of Paul’s gaze from the patriarchal gaze to a love gaze that helps him to read well the needs and desires of Lucy. Paul’s reading of Lucy helps her to get her self-knowledge and woman identity. Charlotte Bronte has changed the diving, hungry and penetrating gaze of Paul Emanuel into a ‘gentle look’ from his eyes. After Lucy has fulfilled her woman identity as an equal to Paul, she reveals: “A cordial word from his lips, or a gentle look from his eyes, would do me good, for all the span of life that remained to me; it would be comfort in the last strait of loneliness”, Villette (p.577). At the beginning, the male gaze is patriarchal, whereas at the end, the gaze becomes lofty and brings woman into a more active relationship to the society as an equal partner.

Austen changes the hegemonic gaze of Darcy to be a gaze of a man full of compassion, love and equality. At the beginning, Darcy in Pride and Prejudice has a patriarchal gaze in which he sees the beauty of Elizabeth but not enough handsome to tempt him. His gaze is full of pride because of wealth and rank in his society. He can see nothing beautiful in Elizabeth except the beautiful expression of her dark eyes. Though Darcy’s gaze is patriarchal, it leads him to the eyes of Elizabeth in which there is an expressive language. This expressive language of her gaze is her power. Elizabeth through gaze discovers the pride of Darcy. Accordingly, she resists the male gaze of the Victorians in his eyes. His gaze is erotic as Charlotte Locus realises that. In the first half of novel, Darcy is the gazer and Elizabeth is the gazed. She is the object of his gaze. The gazer is powerful, whereas the gazed is powerless. In the second half it is vice versa. Darcy is being gazed by Elizabeth, i.e. Darcy is being objectified. Jane Austen does this in order to empower her heroine. The moment of gazing and being gazed is done at his estate, Pemberley. She enjoys the art of gazing at his absence. Elizabeth gazes at his image and imagines him gazing at her. So, it is a moment of being the gazer and the gazed; the subject and the object at the
same time. Elizabeth objectifies with pleasure his Castle and his portrait. Jane Austen lets her heroine practice the art gazing on his estates; then Elizabeth finds Darcy at the door. At this moment no one is powerful, no one is superior and no one is inferior. Jane Austen makes them equal. The same moment is repeated at the scene of the Big Kiss when Elizabeth accepts his marriage proposal at the end.

Emma Woodhouse is the only heroine of the selected novels who adopts the male gaze. Emma behaves like a man since her father lets every affair to her to manage. Rachel S. Grate argues that “Emma believes she can overcome the marginalized role of women in society and adopt the male gaze herself to transform her female objects in appearance and class status”. So, the male gaze used by Rochester, Paul Emanuel, and Darcy is used to marginalize woman. Emma through her gaze objectifies all men around her like Elton, Frank Churchill, Martin and Mr. Knightley. However, Mr. Knightley resists her male gaze and refuses her masculine behaviour firstly as a matchmaker and then her hegemony over other women like Jane Fairfax, Harriet Smith and Miss Bates. Emma is another Darcy of Jane Austen. She is wealthy with social rank. She is with a male gaze. Mr. Knightley finds that Emma represents the phrase “Myself creating what I saw,” using her perception and what she “saw” to “create” and shape the world around her”, Emma (p.224), which is taken from William Cowper’s The Task, Book IV, ‘The Winter Evening’. “Myself creating what I saw” is taken from these lines: “In the red cinders, while with poring eye / I gaz’d, myself creating what I saw”. Emma gazes herself to create the world around her. Jane Austen challenges the gender roles in her society by giving Emma the male gaze. She uses her gaze to do matchmaking of the people around her. However, Emma fails to use her gaze as a source of power since Elton refuses to marry Harriet and all her other plans fail. The gaze of Emma fails as a source of power before Mr. Knightley who opens her eyes about Elton, Harriet Smith, Frank Churchill and Miss Bates.

Finally, Emma rejects her gaze as masculine or powerful. It is Mr. Knightley who helps her to use her gaze as a gazer and gazed. She is the subject as well as the object of the gaze. Mr. Knightley opens her eyes about others and about herself. She is objectified by his gaze especially when he rebukes her about Miss Bates. Her eyes tear up before his eyes feeling repentance and accordingly she objectifies him as her lover whom she accepts him as her husband after a long period of resistance to marriage.
Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe, Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Knightley help Rochester, Paul Emanuel, Darcy and Emma Woodhouse to change their hegemonic gaze which marginalizes others. The masculine gaze is changed into another gaze to see both men and women are equal to each other. Both men and women are the gazer and the gazed. Both are the subject and the object.

Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen use the gaze as significant tool to change the power dynamics between men and women. Men and women are powerfully equivalent; no one is superior to the other. This is the essence of the masculinity of both Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen.

5-3-4 The Role of the heroine in Bronte and Austen’s New Masculinity:

Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen’s heroines are their mouthpieces. The two novelists struggled in a conventional society to reconstruct both traditional masculinity and femininity and to reconstruct new masculinity as well as femininity. Similarly, their heroines play a major role in the new construction of both masculinity and femininity. These novels are autobiographical. The heroine is the novelist per se. Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe, Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse are the cornerstones in the newly formed masculinity by Bronte and Austen. These heroines are presented in patriarchal societies that marginalize woman not as a ‘nobler sex’. Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe represent the harsh life that Charlotte Bronte and her sisters lived. However, Elizabeth and Emma stand for the societal and social hierarchy in which Jane Austen lived. These heroines reject the gender role of the ‘Angel of the house’. No one of them is the angle of the house; even Emma Woodhouse attribute masculine gender roles. These heroines help the heroes to depart their conventional mentality. They do that through their resistance to their hegemonic masculinity. Most of these heroines strongly resist having gender roles given to them by the customs and conventions of the society. Jane Eyre resists being a mistress for Rochester after she knows the truth of Bertha. Lucy Snowe resists having a male identity while she is playing the male role at the fete-day of Madame Beck. Elizabeth refuses Darcy’s proposal since it is full of pride and arrogance. It is only Emma Woodhouse who is living wealthy with a high social status. However, she has misconceptions about her gender roles in society.
Jane Eyre’s role to reconstruct Rochester’s masculinity is undoubtedly significant. Their first meeting represents her role to take him out of his patriarchal masculinity. She becomes the comforter of his life. His fall towards her is symbolic. She has taken him from the circle of the conventional and traditional masculinity into new gentleman masculinity in which he acknowledges the identity of Jane Eyre. Jane Eyre, though of lower origins and impoverished, rejects his hegemonic behaviour and forces him to change into a new gentleman. The strong and rebellious character of Jane Eyre enforces him to treat her as an equal not as an inferior.

Charlotte Bronte presents Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe of low class. Both of them get their autonomy in society through Education. Both work as governesses. The governess gender role is socially inferior in the Victorian period. Rochester, at the beginning, finds Jane Eyre unequal to him. It is the behaviour of Jane Eyre that compels him to recognize her as an equal. At the very meeting, she is the helper to Rochester. However, he finds that it is only necessity that compels him to make use of her. Jane Eyre’s courage to be with him and to help him makes Rochester astonished of such a woman in his society. It is this courage that leads her to autonomy and independence. It is her courage that makes her resist the oppression of John Reed, the selfishness of the religious Brocklehurst and John Rivers.

Charlotte Bronte presents a new version of masculinity through the presentation of both Jane Eyre and Rochester. Jane is the catalyst for Rochester to change and deviate from his Victorian masculinity and his past. Such masculinity, according to Bronte, is based on the equality of the feminine and the masculine. It is also based on the needs and desires of woman. The most important thing in Charlotte Bronte’s new construction of masculinity is the equality of the gender roles of both Rochester and Jane. Jane Eyre struggles for equality. She declares that:

Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex. Jane Eyre (p.93)

Jane Eyre wants to change the stereotypical roles given to women. Women are equal to men; nevertheless they need to use their faculties. Charlotte Bronte challenges her society
and proves her feminine identity. She exercises her faculty. Hazel Mews, in the book *Frail Vessels: Woman’s Role in Women’s Novels from Fanny Burney to George Eliot*, explains that “Just as women need exercise for their faculties and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do, so in the relationship of love two human souls are equal in spite of custom and conventions”. Jane Eyre refuses to be a mistress for Rochester. She has left him to Moor House where she finds her cousin John Rivers who wants her to be a good wife for a missionary. After realizing her amount of money that she has inherited, Jane Eyre comes back to Rochester whom she finally finds him her equal. Charlotte Bronte stresses on the importance of financial independence for Jane Eyre to get her woman independence. As a governess she is not equal to her employee, Rochester.

Charlotte Bronte demolishes the traditional powers of Rochester; his castle and his eyes that are necessary for him to be a master in his society. At the same time, she empowers Jane Eyre step by step. Bronte develops Jane Eyre from weakness to strength. Jane Eyre is changed from a governess to be the savior of Rochester in his bedroom and is changed to be an equal to him in order to marry him at the end. Bronte’s masculinity is typical to R. W. Connell’s masculinity in which a man and woman are taken “simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender and the effects of these practices on bodily experience, personality and culture”. So, Ferndean is that place in which both Jane Eyre and Rochester have practices of equality and both have equal gender roles. Charlotte Bronte proves woman identity through her character Jane Eyre. At the end of *Jane Eyre*, it becomes clear that the female identity is as equal as the male identity if not more. The secret of this equality and autonomy is the resistant behaviour of Jane Eyre which is the true resistant behaviour of Charlotte Bronte.

Lucy Snowe is another tool in the hands of Charlotte Bronte to reconstruct masculinity in the Victorian era. Lucy Snowe struggles to maintain independent woman identity before the male dominated masculinity. Through her dress, Englishness and Protestantism, Lucy maintains an independent female identity. Lucy resists the hegemonic masculinity of Dr. John, and Paul Emanuel. Lucy Snowe enables Charlotte Bronte to figure out a new masculinity in the patriarchal Victorian society. The traditional masculinity that both Dr. John and Paul Emanuel want to impose upon her is rejected by Lucy. Dr. John wants to dominate Lucy and wants her to serve him as a submissive woman. Namely, he wants her to be an ‘Angel of the House’ to whom she resists saying: “He wanted always to give me a role not mine. Nature and I opposed him”, *Villette* (p.381). The gender role of an
‘Angel of the House’ is a basic fundamental of the traditional Victorian masculinity. This gender role gives Lucy Snowe the domestic sphere as submissive partner. Charlotte Bronte acknowledges through Lucy Snowe that this domestic sphere is against her nature; even Nature opposes it per se.

Charlotte Bronte empowers her heroine, Lucy Snowe to resist the masculine identity instead of her feminine identity. This resistance is to the masculine identity given to literature by Robert Southey advising Charlotte Bronte that Literature is the business of men. Through Lucy Snowe, Charlotte Bronte not only reconstructs masculinity, but also she reconstructs femininity. Lucy Snowe refuses the feminine identity which is constructed by men. She wants to have her own independent female identity. On Madame Beck’s fete-day, Lucy has to play a disagreeable part – a man’s – an empty headed fop’s. In this occasion Lucy has to be somebody other than herself in order to please others. This transformation is not easy for Lucy. At first, she refuses to be dressed like a man:

To be dressed like a man, did not please, and would not suit me. I had consented to take a man’s name and part; No. I would keep my own dress, come what might. M. Paul might storm, might rage: I would keep my own dress. *Villette* (p.166).

Lucy Snowe refuses strongly to have another identity rather than her own. Lucy objects to acting or dressing like a man. This incident reveals that a woman is establishing her own independence and identity without cloaking herself in a male role. Charlotte Bronte struggled to uncloak herself under the pseudonym Currer Bell. So, in the new construction of masculinity, Lucy Snowe resists the masculine identity given to woman. She, as her creator, wants to have a female identity constructed by woman herself. Moreover, Lucy refuses to change her religion to which Paul Emanuel assures her to “Remain a Protestant. My little English Puritan, I love Protestantism in you. I own its severe charm. There is something in its ritual I cannot receive myself, but it is the sole creed for Lucy”, *Villette* (p.593).

Charlotte Bronte makes Lucy Snowe participate in the construction of masculinity while observing the effeminate masculinity of de Hamal. Lucy Snowe describes him as “pretty and smooth, and as trim as a doll: so nicely dressed, so nicely curled, so booted and gloved and cravated…What a figure, so trim and natty! What womanish feet and hands! How daintily he held a glass to one of his optics!” *Villette* (p.247). He is feminine in his size, his dress and his curls. de Hamal is effeminate in his character because he behaves in
womanish demeanour. In such a case, it is Lucy who decides the masculinity. de Hamal’s masculinity is measured through the eyes of Lucy Snowe. Gilbert and Gubar in *The Mad Woman in the Attic* argue that:

> de Hamal and Ginevra represent the self-gratifying, sensual, romantic side of Lucy. Posturing before mirrors, the fop and the coquette are vacuous but for the roles they play.

Charlotte Bronte reflects the self-gratifying, sensual and romantic side of Lucy in the character of de Hamal. Lucy Snowe has the ability to see the masculine behaviour in men but men cannot apprehend the feminine behaviour in woman. Instead, they want to cloak her with masculine identity. Biological differences between men and women are not the real standard to measure masculinity and femininity. Masculinity, as well as femininity, is measured through behaviour. It is the behaviour of de Hamal that makes Lucy devalues his masculinity. Accordingly, Lucy Snowe, like Jane Eyre, plays an essential part in Charlotte Bronte’s reconstruction of masculinity. The search for woman equal identity and her persistent resistance of the male hegemony are the best weapon in the hands of Charlotte Bronte and her heroines in the battle of masculinity and femininity in the Victorian society.

Jane Austen has used both Elizabeth Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* and Emma Woodhouse in *Emma* as a tool in the reconstruction of gentleman masculinity. Elizabeth Bennet plays a significant role in the construction of this new masculinity. Jane Austen introduces Elizabeth as the prototype of women during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Elizabeth speaks her mind decidedly. She is unwilling to bend to the rules of the society. She challenges Mr. Collins, Darcy and Lady Catherine de Bourgh as representatives of the society in order to gain her rights and autonomy. Elizabeth challenges the norms of the patriarchal society. Compared to other women like Jane Bennet, Charlotte Lucas, and Miss Bingley, we find Elizabeth Bennet an active and resistant woman to the norms of the nineteenth century traditional masculine. She is not as docile as Jane or as submissive as Charlotte Lucas or as runner after men as Miss Bingley.

Elizabeth’s refusal of Darcy’s first proposal is a rejection of the hegemonic masculinity of the eighteenth and nineteenth century societies in which woman is marginalized as a secondary object. Jane Austen, through her ‘delightful character’, rejects the traditional masculinity of her society. Elizabeth Bennet questions Darcy’s traditional masculinity because it lacks the gentlemanlike behaviour which is, according to Jane
Austen, a necessary component of the new masculinity. The lack of ‘gentlemanlike’ behaviour is the sound criterion for Elizabeth to judge his masculinity which is only a performance. She judges him based on his behaviour rather than his aristocratic standing. Elizabeth is the catalyst of Darcy’s change from the hegemonic masculinity to the gentleman masculinity. Darcy’s change starts after Elizabeth refuses his first proposal. Elizabeth looks for equal gender roles in her society. She wants all the pretensions of the first meeting in the Meryton party that Darcy has, to be removed. Darcy changes his behaviour according to the needs and desires of Elizabeth. Elizabeth Bennet helps Darcy to see his ungentlemanly behaviour; she rejects his pride and justifies her refusal of his earlier behaviour. In a meeting at Rosings, Elizabeth shows him that she rejects his treatment to Wickham, his bias towards her sister Jane with regards to marrying Mr. Bingley and his treatment to the Bennet family. Elizabeth also changes her prejudice about him and reads the new gentleman behaviour in Darcy. Darcy changes his behaviour by attempting to minimize or alleviating the marginalization of Elizabeth. He lessens the superiority of the first proposal and comes to an equal social status that Elizabeth recognizes “He is a gentleman; I am a gentleman’s daughter so far we are equal” *Pride and Prejudice* (p.314).

Darcy leaves his feeling of superiority over Elizabeth. In the second proposal he has a new masculine identity which is equal to the feminine identity of Elizabeth. In the second proposal, he offers an explanation for his behaviour in a statement to Elizabeth:

> I have been a selfish being all my life, in practice, though not in principle. As a child I was taught what was right, but I was not taught to correct my temper. I was given good principles, but left to follow them in pride and conceit. Unfortunately an only son, I was spoilt by my parents, who though all good themselves, allowed, encouraged, almost taught me to be selfish and overbearing, to care for none beyond my own family circle, to think meanly of all the rest of the world, to wish at least to think meanly of their sense and worth compared with my own. Such I was, from eight to eight and twenty. *Pride and Prejudice*, (p.325)

In this text, Darcy confesses the hegemonic masculinity that he was living in at the beginning. It is the society that brings him up such hegemonic upbringing. Darcy acknowledges the crucial role of Elizabeth Bennet in his new masculinity. Darcy argues:

> Such I might still have been but for you, dearest, loveliest Elizabeth! What do I not owe you! You taught me a lesson, hard indeed at first, but most advantageous. By you, I was properly humbled. I came to you without a doubt of my reception. You showed me how insufficient were all my pretensions to please a woman worthy of being pleased. *Pride and Prejudice* (p.325-6)
Elizabeth is his teacher in the new masculine upbringing and the lesson is too much tough because it haunts his masculinity. Ailwood considers Elizabeth the catalyst to change Darcy. However, she is more than a catalyst because the catalyst does not change at the end. This is because Elizabeth undergoes finally great change to find her partner at the end of the novel. Her change is a leading factor to change Darcy’s behaviour. Elizabeth undertakes a change in her prejudice towards Darcy. This is the difference between the heroines of Charlotte Bronte and the heroines of Jane Austen. Charlotte Bronte’s heroines never change their resistant behaviour, whereas Austen’s heroines change their views and behaviour towards Darcy and Mr. Knightley. But the most important shared matter between Austen and Bronte is equality at the end of the novel. The heroines of Charlotte Bronte reflect the resistant character of their creator. Jane Austen’s character was as soft as the character of both Elizabeth and Emma.

Jane Austen’s heroine Emma is different from the other three heroines, Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe and Elizabeth Bennet. This is because she is the subject of change from the traditional masculinity to the gentleman masculinity. Claudia Johnson concentrates on Emma Woodhouse’s appropriation of traditionally masculine qualities, suggesting that “Where Emma is concerned with gender transgression, it is from the masculine, not the feminine side”. Emma’s social state is similar to that of Darcy in Pride and Prejudice, and Rochester in Jane Eyre. She is not seeking marriage as Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe and Elizabeth Bennet are. Even her mentor is the gentleman, Mr. Knightley. She has imbibed a kind of traditional masculinity. She has imbibed this masculinity through her social power over those who are around her, namely through matchmaking of Miss Taylor to Mr. Weston, Mr. Elton to Miss Harriet and so on. Moreover, she is ruling Hartfield since she was twelve. Ruling her society and matchmaking give her power over other society members male or female. Power means masculinity for her.

Jane Austen gives Emma another role in the construction of the new masculinity which is different from the role of Elizabeth Bennet, Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe. Here, Emma claims masculinity itself. She does not want equal gender roles from men; rather she usurps their masculine behaviour. Claudia Johnson further illustrates: “What makes Emma unusual is that she is a woman who possesses and enjoys power, without bothering to demur about it”. She adds: “Emma’s very difference makes her and her novel exceptional”.

Emma Woodhouse, according to Jane Austen, is the producer of masculinity. To heighten Emma Woodhouse’s masculine qualities, Austen portrays the majority of the male
characters as bumbling and effeminate. Jane Austen presents Emma’s masculine behaviour by portraying effeminate men like Mr. Woodhouse, Mr. Elton and Frank Churchill. By comparing conventional women and effeminate males, Austen puts the limelight on the masculinity of Emma Woodhouse. Unlike her father, Emma is able to “supply her visitors with conversation in a much more satisfactory style”, *Emma* (p.14). The contrast of Emma’s masculinity to male effeminacy produces the comedy in the novels’ gender role reversal. Even the handwriting of Mr. Elton and Frank Churchill is weak and effeminate. However, “Emma’s handwriting is the strongest” *Emma* (p.193). Emma’s handwriting stands for her masculinity, whereas Frank Churchill’s handwriting stands for his effeminacy. Her comparison with these effeminate men indicates that masculinity is not only a product of men. It can be a product of women too. This case is similar to Lucy Snowe in *Villette* when she devalues the masculinity of de Hamal describing him as “pretty and smooth…What a figure, so trim and natty! What womanish feet and hands! How daintily he held a glass to one of his optics!” *Villette*, (p.247). Jane Austen is also a maker of new masculinity which is merely a performance.

At the same time, by giving Emma a masculine identity, Jane Austen is presenting the ideal gentleman masculinity in Mr. Knightley. It is Mr. Knightley who restores Emma to her normal gender position. Emma’s role is to present Mr. Knightley as a model for the nineteenth century masculinity. Emma’s power is over all people around her except Mr. Knightley. Mr. Knightley has helped Emma to come to her true position as a woman with equal gender roles to man. He lets her come back to her woman identity.

Thus, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen make use of their heroines in the construction of the new gentleman masculinity. Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe, Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse are the mouthpieces of their creators. That is why it is significant to investigate the role the heroines in *Jane Eyre, Villette, Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma* in the construction of the new masculinity in the Victorian period. These heroines are autobiographical for Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. These heroines make a difference in the change of the men of these novels especially Rochester, Paul Emanuel, Darcy and Mr. Knightley. They guide them to the place of true gentleman masculinity which is designed by Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. In this new gentleman masculinity woman is as equal as man.
5-3-5. The Ending of the selected Novels:

Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen have presented the end of their novels as a fulfilment of their desire, namely their new construction of masculinity from a Victorian woman novelist’s perspective. Ashley Tauchert comments on Jane Austen’s endings:

The endings are thus “feminine wish-fulfillments,” for both Austen and her female readers. This explains their enduring popularity: in satisfying this “universal” desire, they enable women “temporarily to suspend our belief in the inevitability of suffering” that attends social contradiction and separation. Far from escapist, however, Austen’s endings offer glimpses of agencies and social arrangements foreclosed by a realism that takes for granted female exclusion and patriarchal domination. Accordingly, the ending of such woman novelists is feminine wish-fulfilment. They offer, with the help of Austen’s realism and Bronte’s passion, a barrier between women and patriarchal domination. The new masculinity of Austen and Bronte is fulfilled at the end. Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe, Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse have acquired their female autonomy and woman identity at the end. Through their struggle in a patriarchal society, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen gained a brilliant social position in their Victorian society. Similarly, their heroines have gained their female identity. However, it is the new masculinity of Rochester, Paul Emanuel, Darcy and Mr. Knightley which helps them to acquire this social position. Rochester, Paul Emanuel and Darcy have undertaken a gradual change from the old and traditional masculinity to the feminine wish-fulfilment masculinity. This feminine wish-fulfilment masculinity is the one which gives woman equality, independence, and equal gender roles. In this feminine wish-fulfilment masculinity no one is superior or inferior. Both man and woman are with equal roles. At the end of these selected novels, there is a movement from the hegemonic and patriarchal masculinity to new gentleman masculinity in which woman is no longer marginalized or treated as an inferior sex. This final masculinity is not constructed easily. Men of high social status like Rochester, Paul Emanuel and Darcy have undertaken total change in the hands of Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe and Elizabeth Bennet.

From a scholastic point of view as a reaction to the male dominance, both Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen have focused on the needs and desires of Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe, Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse more than the needs of Rochester, Paul Emanuel, Darcy and Mr. Knightley. The ending of the four selected novels are happy endings from women’s perspectives. According to Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen, the heroines get their independence, equality and freedom from male dominance.
However, the endings of Charlotte Bronte’s *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* are fused with a tragic sense in the case of Rochester and Paul Emanuel. Rochester’s sight and right hand are lost. Charlotte Bronte purposefully weakens Rochester in order to empower Jane Eyre. At the end, Rochester is a helpless man without his castle which is burnt by his mad wife, Berth; without his sight and right hand. He is not as powerful as Darcy or Mr. Knightley. The end of *Villette* is to some extent tragic because of the absence of Paul Emanuel, and to some extent happy because Lucy Snowe has spent the happiest days in her life in the last three years at the end. The ending is acceptable to Charlotte Bronte and Lucy. For Lucy she declares “M. Emanuel was away three years. Reader, they were the three happiest years of my life”, *Villette* (p.591). Lucy Snowe explains the happiness of the three years as the outcome of her autonomy, work and freedom. His absence does not mean her happiness. Her happiness is because of masculinity that brings about Lucy’s maturity and autonomy. Nevertheless, it is new gentleman masculinity that makes Lucy get her maturity when she gets the heart of the gentleman Paul.

The endings of Charlotte Bronte are bitter and harsher than those of Jane Austen. Both of them have constructed new gentleman masculinity to suit their feminine needs. Charlotte Bronte is harsher because of the harsh treatment of her society. Moreover, her heroines Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe are rootless in society. The state of rootlessness of Jane Eyre and Lucy is similar to that of Charlotte Bronte. Her relation to the men of her society is not satisfactory even that of her father, Patrick Bronte. Also, her unrequited love with M. Heger has its effect on the ending of her novels, *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*.

Charlotte Bronte has changed the conventional gender roles at the end of *Jane Eyre*. She has changed the power dynamics between Rochester and Jane Eyre in the newly constructed masculinity. After getting financial independence and full emotional maturity, Jane Eyre is no longer subservient to Rochester. Even Rochester becomes totally dependent on Jane Eyre. The most famous line in *Jane Eyre*, “Reader, I married him. A quiet wedding we had: he and I, the parson and clerk, were alone present”, *Jane Eyre* (p.382), summarizes how Charlotte Bronte runs from the conventional masculinity in which the address should be ‘Reader, he married me’ or ‘Reader, we got married’. Now, the governess marries the Victorian gentleman. Charlotte Bronte lets Jane Eyre objectify Rochester. At this moment, Jane is the subject and Rochester is the object. The subject has the power over the object. The subject is the dominant and the object is the subservient. The power relations between
Jane Eyre and Rochester are changed topsy-turvy from those of the beginning. Rochester is no longer in the dominant social status as a partner. Yet, this inequality is determined when Mr. Rochester recaptures one of his eyes; finally Jane and Rochester are able to sustain a relationship of mutual respect and quality.

In *Villette* the ending is also a happy ending on the part of the heroine only. Charlotte’s father, Patrick Bronte asked her for a happy ending to the plot of *Villette*, but “the idea of M. Paul Emanuel’s death at sea was stamped on her imagination. All she could do in compliance with her father’s wishes was to veil the fate in the oracular and discernment of her readers to interpret her meaning”. The loss of Paul Emanuel at the sea is similar to the loss of Rochester’s sight and right hand. The ending of Villette is typical to the ending of Charlotte Bronte. The absence of the man at the end of this novel represents the absence of M. Heger from her at Brussels. Though she had no partner out of real love relation, Charlotte Bronte indicated that she lived the happiest three years in her life. Charlotte Bronte gained her independence through education and through her active participation in literature which was mainly male dominated. Charlotte Bronte proved her woman identity through her struggle. Similarly, Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe gain their independence through their persistent struggle and through the gradual change in the behaviour of their male counterparts.

Generally speaking, the ending of *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* has witnessed a new version of masculinity created by Charlotte Bronte. Charlotte Bronte’s focus is on the redemption of woman’s equality, independence, and freedom mentally and socially. However, she takes woman to another type of ‘hegemonic femininity’ in which Rochester is totally subservient to Jane Eyre. In *Villette*, the absence of Paul Emanuel is a source of her happiness for three years. Yet, man remains the source of this happiness since Paul Emanuel supports Lucy with the money to have her own school and financial independence. Charlotte Bronte, as constructor of masculinity, goes beyond Jane Austen. Jane Austen is softer than Charlotte Bronte so far as the construction of masculinity is concerned. Many marriages have been fulfilled at the end of *Pride and Prejudice* or *Emma*. The society as an institution is much happier at the end in Jane Austen than in Charlotte Bronte. Besides, the hero and the heroine are equally happy with no superiority or inferiority whether physically or socially.
Jane Austen’s ending of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma* is a happy ending since it proves woman identity and equality. Pride and Prejudice is a categorically happy novel, and its felicity is not merely incidental, something that happens at the end of a novel, but is rather at once its premise and its prize.\(^{54}\) The same thing is with the end of Emma. Austen’s ending is happy for both men and women, whereas Charlotte Bronte’s ending is much happier for woman rather man. The be-all and end-all purpose of the two novelists is that they have constructed a new type of masculinity in which women prove and realize themselves. Both Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse gain the gentlemen they desire. Elizabeth finally realises: “He is a gentleman; I am a gentleman's daughter; so far we are equal” *Pride and Prejudice* (314). Elizabeth proves herself to be Darcy’s intellectual equal not inferior to him on any account. Jane Austen finally gives Elizabeth a gentleman whom she fails to get in her life. Jane Austen’s unrequited love with Thomas Langlois Lefroy was a failure. This is because his family refused to let him marry Jane Austen due to her middle class status. What Austen gives Elizabeth is what she wants, a gentleman. Jane Austen’s solution for the nineteenth century dilemma of patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity is equality.

Darcy stands for Thomas Langlois Lefroy in Austen’s life as Rochester or Paul Emanuel stand for M. Heger in Charlotte Bronte’s life. Unrequited love is a shared factor in their lives. Nonetheless, Jane Austen is soft in her treatment of this issue. Darcy and Mr. Knightley have a happy ending without the loss of Rochester’s sight or his hand or the loss of Paul Emanuel at the end of *Villette*. Both Darcy and Elizabeth have enjoyed a happy ending. This happy ending is a festival of the new masculinity in which no one is superior or inferior; both of them undergone a gradual change. Darcy has left his hegemonic masculinity which is the upbringing of the society. Elizabeth changes her first impressions about Darcy. Finally, both of them realize their equality. Darcy changes his hegemonic masculinity into gentleman masculinity. Elizabeth finds that the masculine identity fits her own feminine identity. The happy ending of Darcy and Elizabeth affects happily the ending of other couples like Mr. Bingley and Jane Bennet and the couple Lydia Bennet and Wickham.

In *Emma* Austen makes it a happy ending not because of the change in the character of Mr. Knightley but because of the change in the character of Emma herself. The happy ending of Emma and Mr. Knightley leads the happy ending of other couples like
Martin and Miss Harriet, Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax. Emma’s social status makes another version of Darcy. She is not like the other heroines, Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe and Elizabeth Bennet, who are running after marriage. It is Mr. Knightley who helps her to find her real identity at the end. At the end, she finds herself equal to Mr. Knightley and apt to be his wife. Jane Austen constructs a model for masculinity which cannot be found in the other novels of both Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. No change has been witnessed in his personality from the beginning to the end. In Emma it is Knightley who is the be-all and end-all factor of change in Emma, whereas in Pride and Prejudice, it is Elizabeth Bennet who is the catalyst of change in Darcy.

Thus, at the end of these novels, the reader can realize a new form of masculinity void of the pretension and patriarchy of the Victorian society. This masculinity is not necessarily a product of men. Both men and women are sharing the responsibility to formulating equal gender roles forgetting their traditional social background. The feminine identity is equal to the masculine identity. Woman is no longer the angel of the house. At the end she secures her social sphere in both private sphere as well as public sphere. At the end of Jane Eyre, Villette, Pride and Prejudice and Emma, Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe, Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse achieve their equality, independence, and freedom. The only difference between these women and their creators is that their love is a success and that love of Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen is a failure. In spite of this, the two women novelists put the seed for the new establishment of both masculinity and femininity in the nineteenth century and twentieth century.

5-4 Different Techniques while constructing Masculinity used by Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen:

Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen construct unconventional masculinity in there novels. They share some tools while constructing masculinity, but each novelist has her own individuality. Charlotte Bronte has a harsh style while treating the traditional masculinity compared to Jane Austen. There are some forces in the hands of Charlotte
Bronte which are more destructive like fire and the character of Bertha, the madwoman in
the attic. Such tools are not available in the hands of Jane Austen.

Jane Austen, however, has her individuality in the production of the new
masculinity. The physical beauty is a tool in her hand. Both Darcy and Elizabeth are
handsome. The first line of *Emma* describes the beauty and liveliness in the character of
Emma Woodhouse: “Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable
home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and
had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her”, *Emma*
(p.01). This beauty and liveliness is the source of changing the masculine behaviour of
Elton, Frank Churchill and the gentleman Mr. Knightley. This beauty is not significant for
Charlotte Bronte. Rochester is not handsome according to Jane Eyre when Rochester asks
her. The physical description of Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe states that they are not
handsome. The physical beauty of the two novelists is reflected in their novels. Charlotte
Bronte was not as beautiful as Jane Austen. This is implied in Charlotte Bronte’s rejection
of George Lewes’ attraction of Austen’s literary work. She told him that she could not find
any poetic sense in Miss Austen’s writing. She excused him that it was nothing than the
‘fine eyes’ of Miss Austen. These fine eyes are depicted in the eyes of Elizabeth: “I am
afraid, Mr. Darcy,” observed Miss Bingley, in a half whisper, “that this adventure has rather
affected your admiration of her fine eyes”, *Pride and Prejudice* (p.32). Jane Austen uses
beauty in the eyes of Elizabeth as a catalyst to change Darcy from the traditional masculinity
to the gentleman masculinity in which “one word from Elizabeth will silence [him]
forever”, *Pride and Prejudice* (p.323). Mr. Knightley’s attraction to Emma’s beauty is a
cause for him to be her mentor. Mr. Knightley replies to Mr. Weston: “I have not a fault to
find with her person,” he replied. “I think her all you describe. I love to look at her; and I
will add this praise”, *Emma*, (p.24). So, the physical beauty facilitates to change according
to the desire of the lovers. Leonard J. Davis claims that “Usually beauty is a sign that such
characters are admirable, worthy of imitation and cultural paragons. Their physical beauty
is a sign of their social status”.

Nonetheless, Charlotte Bronte does not pay much attention to beauty as Jane Austen
does in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*. This is because Jane Austen was much more
beautiful than Charlotte Bronte. This is another reason for her jealousy of Austen’s writings.
The physical beauty plays a major role in the construction of masculinity because it is a sign of their social status.

Another crucial difference between Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen is the choice of Emma Woodhouse from the wealthy social class. Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe are from the lower class, merely governesses. Elizabeth Bennet is from the middle class. These heroines are looking for husbands. On the contrary, Emma is wealthy ruling her society and matchmaking others without even thinking of herself. She has power and wealth and dominance over society. Jane Austen suggests through the portrayal of Emma that hegemony is not only masculine as masculinity is not only a production of men. Contrasted to Knightley, she needs the amends of this model of gentleman masculinity. The need for a husband is a must for all women of different social classes. Finally, Emma decides to marry Mr. Knightley with a relationship of equal footing; relations in which the two still “show a tendency to spar” and continue to “obstinately hold on to untenable opinions for the sake of argument”. Emma is not submissive or passive bending to the will Mr. Knightley. Both of them live a life of mutual understanding without feeling superior or inferior. Emma enjoys, with Mr. Knightley, independence and real woman identity. This is the new masculinity that Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte are looking for. Austen’s heroines find their woman identity within the new gentleman masculinity. This is what Jane Austen could not find in her patriarchal society.

Charlotte Bronte is using other tools which are so harsh to snatch her identity violently as it seems in Jane Eyre through Bertha. Bertha or the madwoman in the attic is used as a reflection of the hegemonic and patriarchal masculinity of the Victorian period. She is locked in a room in Rochester’s house for ten years. The madwoman in the attic is no more than the mad cat in the red room, Jane Eyre at the Gateshead. Bertha destroys not only the house of Rochester but she destroys his hegemonic masculinity. Charlotte Bronte presents the character of Bertha to critique the bad treatment of patriarchal man during the Victorian period to woman. She is another option for the hegemonic Rochester if he treats Jane Eyre as an inferior sex. Here “red eyes”, Jane Eyre (p.242) are a clear cut contrast to the fine eyes of Elizabeth Bennet with which Jane Austen masters Darcy completely. Charlotte Bronte through the ‘red eyes’ of Bertha controls Rochester, however, violently. The ‘red eyes’ are no more than the eyes of Charlotte Bronte with which she tackles the issues of traditional masculinity and gentleman masculinity. Bertha is another version of
Jane Eyre unless Rochester continues his hegemonic behaviour. Bertha becomes the icon of the rebellious woman against the hegemonic masculinity of the Victorian man. She becomes a prominent figure of resistance towards patriarchy in the Victorian period in particular and onward periods in general. Bertha’s spirit is ruling Jane Eyre since Jane has the same experience inside the red room at the Gateshead. She is a mirror to Jane Eyre to reflect the worries of her future if she accepts to marry the patriarchal Rochester.

Charlotte Bronte creates a violent character as a weapon lashing the patriarchy of Victorian men. She is of the opinion that women rights cannot be taken easily. There must be an urgent need for many Berthas to gain equality from dominant men. The attic in which Bertha is put is the prison of hegemonic masculinity. Bertha or Jane Eyre or Charlotte Bronte or any woman must do anything to go out of this attic. The gentleman masculinity contradicts with imprisoning women in the attic of dominance and superiority. Burning the bedroom of Rochester leads to the destruction of his house. Destroying the bed, then the house and finally destroying the Rochester’s sight and right hand is not because of Bertha but because of the hegemonic behaviour of Rochester towards her for ten years.

Bertha is Charlotte Bronte destroying the hegemonic masculinity of Victorian men like Robert Southey, George Lewes, and M. Heger who find the male sex as the nobler sex. Charlotte Bronte is another Bertha, destroying the house of literature as only a business of men. Bertha is a form of mad passion in the hands of Charlotte Bronte to prove herself not only a passive partner of man but a partner who is able to reshape masculinity. To sum up this point, Charlotte Bronte has changed Rochester into gentleman masculinity through the language of the red eyes of Bertha, whereas Jane Austen has done the same with Darcy through the expressive language of Elizabeth’s fine eyes. The red eyes stand for Charlotte Bronte’s rebellion against men’s hegemony. The fine eyes stand for Austen’s beauty to resist men’s hegemony.

The most striking point in the construction of masculinity by Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen is the loss of Paul Emanuel at the end of Villette. The other novels end happily in spite of the tragic physical change in the case of Rochester. The idea of Paul Emanuel does not come back to Lucy Snowe which may have been linked to the idea that Bronte’s father made it difficult for her to get a happy marriage. This loss is typical to her loss of a man in her life. Charlotte Bronte lived a life of unrequited love. Paul Emanuel’s absence stands for M. Heger’s absence in Bronte’s life. After she finished Villette, “her father, to
whom she had read some passages, was partly responsible for its enigmatic finale. He could not bear a sad ending, and in the first version M. Paul had died in the shipwreck”. Because of the influence of Bronté’s father, Paul Emmanuel’s fate is left uncertain. Jane Austen, however, does not refer to the absence of the man at the end of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*. In spite of the fact that Jane Austen wrote six novels with happy endings, she never wedded the man she had always wanted. Actually, she did not wed by any stretch of the imagination. However, the loss of Paul Emanuel at the end of *Villette* stands for the loss of the gentleman in the life of Charlotte Bronte. The unhappy ending of the novel proves the similarity. Such unrequited love affair reflects the patriarchal philosophy of men of Bronte’s time. Woman is a secondary thing to man.

Charlotte Bronte suffers in silence and no one can respond to her suffering. Charlotte Bronte neglects the significance of marriage as an institution of society, because she can hardly fulfill her sexual satisfaction and remained spinster till the age of thirty eight. Charlotte Bronte can “leave sunny imaginations hope” but unfortunately it is the dark and cloudy sky of the Victorian society in which patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity are prevailing that era.

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2 Ibid 171.


6 Ibid 219.

7 Ibid 219.


11 *Villette’s* ending can be considered as a happy ending in the sense that Lucy Snowe has fulfilled her independence away from the dominance of men. However, according to the
couple Paul and Lucy it is unhappy ending because the ending is open; the reader does not know whether Paul will come back or not.


13 Gaskell 286.


15 Jane Austen’s literary name ‘Prose Shakespeare’ is firstly used by George Lewes; however some critics attribute it to Macaulay.


22 Gaskell 367.


25 It was known among the feminists that both Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte are the leaders to construct a new movement in literature, i.e. feminism or at least a new perception of femininity. The novel attempt of this study is that Austen and Bronte are also the creators of new masculinity which works hand in hand with that femininity. Some theorists, critics or scholars focus on one concept, but Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte focus on both femininity as well as masculinity.


The four images are pictures of a pious girl, a young mother “hanging disconsolate”, a bride praying, and a widow looking at a grave.

By this gentleman masculinity, the researcher means the masculinity in which these men are gentle not by birth but by behaviour; in which men and women are treated equally. The masculine identity is treated equally with the feminine identity. Every sex is given equal gender roles with the other.

Elizabeth enjoys the art of gazing in his absence because gazing at men at the eighteenth ant nineteenth century was problematic. Gazing at men was immoral. The portrait of Darcy is sufficient for her to practice the art of gazing to be powerful to objectify Darcy while leaving the door of the room of portraits in his castle.
The present thesis utilizes the term *Hegemonic Femininity* for the first time in the domain of Victorian literature since the ending of *Jane Eyre* is not a happy ending for Rochester. Charlotte Bronte makes a difference in the life of Jane Eyre, whereas she makes Rochester dwindle into the hand of Jane Eyre. For this reason, the term *Hegemonic Femininity* is a reaction to that of Hegemonic Masculinity.


