

ABSTRACT

The term “Pre-Raphaelite” refers to both art and literature. It was originated in relation to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, an influential group of mid-nineteenth-century avant-garde artists associated with Ruskin who had great effect upon British, American, and European art.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was founded in autumn 1848. It was a group of young English artists and writers of the Victorian period. The leaders of the group were John Everett Millais, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and William Holman Hunt. The Pre-Raphaelite movement tries to produce art and literature by covering three areas of subject matter: Christian doctrine and medieval life, scenes from contemporary life, often expressing moral values founded on religious belief, and characters from literature, particularly Shakespeare’s Ophelia in *Hamlet* and nineteenth century poets as Keats, Tennyson, and Coventry Patmore.

Concerning women, the Pre-Raphaelite movement gave the chance to women to participate in a wide range of activities, pursue their own interests, and develop friendships. They encouraged women, since in the artistic world, women were free from the restricting conventions imposed on them in their time; therefore, a sort of sisterhood appeared led by D.G.Rossetti's younger sister, Christina Rossetti, and others.

The theme of “fallen woman” is one of the numerous subjects such as illiteracy, poverty, and the law which dominate the Pre-Raphaelite works. The Pre-Raphaelites are concerned with such matters to represent the reality of the Victorian era and the conditions of women at that time.

The Victorian age was the age of industrialization and mechanism. It was the era of dramatic changes that brought England to its highest point of development. But this rapid and unregulated industrialization brought a host of social and economic ills like unemployment, child labor, prostitution, illiteracy, starvation, and social and economic injustice.

In this period of industrialization, women's roles were denied. They had no right to vote or hold political office since they were considered second class citizens. But gradually, and as illustrated in John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*, women began to win custody of minor children and the ownership of property in marriage, and to continue their education at university. Some of them were allowed to work at factories but they suffered from hard conditions, and many turned to prostitution to survive. Women fell down because of the economic poverty, social disgrace and lack of education; for instance, some women were expelled from their homes or deserted by their families, so they resorted to prostitution to keep themselves alive. Some women considered prostitution an escape from typical professions. Immigration was another reason behind the fall of women. When they immigrated, or were brought forcibly, without money from the countryside to the cities, they found prostitution the only way to earn their living. Generally, fallen women were mistreated socially and condemned morally.

In literature, the fallen woman is represented as a victim of her society. Thomas Hood's "The Bridge of Sigh" and Dickens's novel, *Oliver Twist*, try to show the fallen woman and prostitution as a phenomenon associated with the mechanization and industrialization of modern times.

The aim of this thesis is to examine certain works of the Pre-Raphaelite movement to see how they depict and redefine the image of the fallen women as a victim of the Victorian age, society, and man. The study focuses on the issue of the fallen woman, especially in prostitution, to show that it is a crystallization of certain reasons as man's exploitation of women, the economic system, and the rapid industrialization. The Pre-Raphaelites are daring in this matter because they find that the fallen woman has no place in the real world; she is the only person to be blamed for her fall regardless of the role of man and the circumstances behind her ruined life.

The study falls into three chapters and a conclusion.

Chapter One is an introduction that sheds light on the Pre-Raphaelite movement, its definition, origin, influence and principles. And since it is a mid-Victorian movement, it traces certain social, economic, and moral conditions that lead to women's fall at that time. It also sheds light on certain Pre-Raphaelite paintings to show the Pre-Raphaelites' deep interest in the issue of the fallen women as it permeates their art pieces and their literary works. It also shows that the Pre-Raphaelite movement started in painting and then moved to literature. Representative paintings are foregrounded such as Richard Redgrave's *Outcast*, Ford Maddox Brown's *Take Your Son, Sir*, Holman Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience*, and George Fredric Watt's *Found Drowned*.

Chapter Two deals with the image of the fallen woman in Pre-Raphaelite poetry as illustrated in D.G.Rossetti's "Jenny", "Mary Magdalene at the Door of Simon the Pharisee", "Found" and "A Last Confession", and in Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market", "Cousin Kate", "Light Love" and "A Triad".

Chapter Three examines the image of the fallen woman in the Pre-Raphaelite novels of Elizabeth Gaskell's *Ruth* and Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret*.

The conclusion rounds up the whole study.