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THE FORMATION OF THE ARTISTIC STYLE OF VICTORIAN WOMEN WRITERS

Feruza Rasulovna Rashidova

Associate professor at Namangan State University

E-mail: feruza.rashidova.uz@gmail.com

Namangan, Uzbekistan

ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: The article analyzes the main factors influencing the formation of a female writer's style, including sociocultural background, psychological experience, gender identity, and the development of artistic consciousness. Drawing on the works of Charlotte Bronte, Emily Bronte, and George Eliot, the study reveals how the female gaze, empathy, and internal monologue serve as dominant stylistic features shaping women's literary voices. It concludes that a female writer's style arises from the synthesis of emotional perception, social context, and creative reflection, contributing significantly to the evolution of literary psychologism in English fiction.

Introduction. Initially, let's discuss the literature of the nineteenth century, it witnessed the rise of a distinctive feminine voice in English literature, a voice that sought to express the complexities of human consciousness, emotional depth, and moral struggle within a society governed by patriarchal norms. The Victorian era, characterized by moral rigidity and industrial progress, offered both obstacles and inspiration for female creativity. Authors such as Charlotte Bronte, Emily Bronte, and George Eliot became pioneers of artistic psychologism, exploring the human mind and emotion through innovative narrative forms. Their works reflect a synthesis of personal experience, cultural observation, and aesthetic experimentation that redefined the literary tradition of their age.

The formation of their artistic style was deeply influenced by social exclusion and intellectual marginalization, which led many women writers to turn inward, transforming private emotion into artistic authenticity. The domestic sphere - once a site of confinement - became a realm of psychological exploration and moral reflection. [12] Through nuanced depictions of inner life, Charlotte Bronte examined moral self-awareness in *Jane Eyre*, Emily Bronte elevated passion to a metaphysical principle in *Wuthering Heights*, and George Eliot articulated empathy and ethical reasoning in *Middlemarch*. Their shared focus on the relationship between feeling and thought laid the groundwork for later modernist techniques such as introspection and stream-of-consciousness narration.

At the core of their creative development stands gender identity as both a lived and aesthetic force. The prose of these writers transforms female subjectivity into an artistic principle grounded in empathy, self-reflection, and intellectual freedom. Their stylistic distinctiveness arose from the convergence of social context, psychological depth, and moral insight. Through their narratives, women authors redefined the novel as a moral and philosophical form - one that united emotional perception with intellectual analysis. The artistic style of Victorian women writers thus not only transformed English fiction but also anticipated the emergence of psychological realism and the evolution of literary modernity.

Methodology. This research examines the artistic style of Victorian women writers, focusing on how their prose reflects the dynamic interaction of socio-cultural, psychological, and gender-related factors. The object of the study is the artistic style of nineteenth-century women novelists, while the subject involves the mechanisms and conditions that shaped this style - including narrative structure, linguistic form, and philosophical interpretation. The analysis centers on the works of Charlotte Bronte, Emily Bronte, and George Eliot, whose novels exemplify the synthesis of emotion, intellect, and moral reflection that defines women's prose of the Victorian era. Their fiction transforms the inner world into an artistic and philosophical category, revealing how emotion functions as a medium of cognition and ethical awareness [13, 15].

The primary purpose of the research is to identify the fundamental principles underlying the formation of the artistic style of Victorian women writers and to demonstrate how their prose unites emotional perception, moral inquiry, and intellectual depth. Special attention is devoted to psychological introspection and empathy as stylistic and philosophical categories central to the feminine literary voice. The study also aims to assess the contribution of women's fiction to the development of artistic psychologism and the evolution of psychological realism in English literature [8,85]; [2,23]. By analyzing how narrative form and inner dialogue

articulate emotional and ethical experience, the research situates women's artistic style as a critical stage in the intellectual and moral evolution of nineteenth-century English prose.

Methodologically, the research applies an interdisciplinary approach that combines principles of literary theory, feminist criticism, and psychological poetics. The comparative-historical method traces the evolution of women's artistic style within the broader context of English and European cultural history, while textual and stylistic analysis examines narrative perspective, symbolic imagery, and linguistic form as carriers of psychological meaning [14,74]. The psycho-literary methods interpret emotional expression and internal monologue as structures of consciousness, while cultural and gender analysis clarifies the relationship between female identity and creative innovation. These combined methods make it possible to uncover how women's prose became a site of intellectual and ethical experimentation.

The theoretical and methodological framework of the study rests on the works of E. Showalter (1977), S. Gilbert and S. Gubar (1979), N. Armstrong (1987), S. Shuttleworth (1996), and M. Beer (2000), as well as on the ideas of M. M. Bakhtin (1975) and L. S. Vygotsky (1991), who viewed artistic language as a form of dialogic consciousness and creative cognition. The scientific novelty of the research lies in its integrative interpretation of artistic psychologism as both an aesthetic and epistemological phenomenon. Unlike earlier studies that interpreted female literary style primarily as a form of protest, this work proposes a synthetic model in which emotion, intellect, and ethics form a unified artistic system. From my authorial standpoint, the style of Victorian women writers reflects a deliberate reworking of consciousness - a transformation of feeling into reflection, of emotion into moral understanding. Their prose transcends gender boundaries, affirming art as a universal pursuit of truth, empathy, and intellectual freedom.

Results and discussion. The development of artistic style in Victorian women's prose has been the subject of extensive scholarly attention. Feminist critics of the late twentieth century, particularly Elaine Showalter (1977), established the conceptual foundation for viewing women's literature as both an aesthetic and socio-cultural phenomenon. Showalter's idea of a "gynocentric tradition" highlighted the evolution of women's self-consciousness in literature - from imitation of male models to the creation of an autonomous female voice. In this view, the artistic style of women writers such as the Bronte sisters and George Eliot is inseparable from the moral and psychological realities of their lives, where emotion and ethical reflection emerge as essential aesthetic elements.

The artistic individuality of Charlotte Bronte occupies a central position in the development of nineteenth-century women's prose. Her novels represent a synthesis of moral

inquiry, psychological depth, and emotional intensity that transforms the conventional domestic narrative into an instrument of philosophical reflection. In *Jane Eyre* (1847) and *Villette* (1853), Bronte develops a narrative technique that unites introspection, ethical self-analysis, and a profound exploration of consciousness. Through this technique, the author constructs a new model of the moral subject - one whose inner life becomes the primary field of artistic investigation.

As S. Shuttleworth [14, 74] observes, Bronte's psychological realism was closely related to the moral philosophy and psychology of her time. The author's engagement with theories of associationism and moral sense reveals her deep interest in how emotion and intellect interact in the process of moral development. The heroine's inner monologue functions as both a narrative and ethical device, allowing the reader to witness the transformation of consciousness through moral choice. This internal dialogue reflects what L. Vygotsky [15,45] called the "psychological speech of the self," where thought becomes articulated through reflection and emotion becomes a means of cognition.

E. Showalter[13,117] characterizes Bronte's style as a form of "female Bildung," in which the heroine's moral and emotional maturation parallels her intellectual awakening. The confessional tone of *Jane Eyre* thus serves not as self-indulgence but as a moral experiment: the narrator re-evaluates her own experience in order to affirm the possibility of integrity within a repressive social order. The emphasis on first-person perspective and emotional authenticity turns the novel into a moral autobiography, transforming private feeling into a universal human category.

According to the standpoint of feminist aesthetics, S. Gilbert and S. Gubar [8,338] interpret Bronte's narrative as a subtle rebellion against patriarchal discourse. Yet beyond the element of resistance, her prose reveals a more profound aspiration - to reconcile emotion with intellect, passion with conscience. The moral and psychological conflicts that animate Bronte's heroines are not purely social protests but expressions of the search for ethical equilibrium. Her narrative style therefore becomes a philosophical instrument through which personal emotion is translated into moral vision.

Bronte's use of inner speech marks a decisive shift in the representation of consciousness. As M. Beer [4,118] notes, the author anticipates later modernist techniques by depicting thought not as static reflection but as a dynamic movement between perception, feeling, and judgment. The alternating rhythm of introspection and external observation in *Villette* mirrors the process of self-formation - a dialogic interplay between inner voice and social reality. M. M. Bakhtin's [3,324] concept of dialogism provides a useful framework here:

Bronte's narrative unfolds as an internal dialogue between the self and the moral world, creating a polyphonic structure in which the heroine's conscience speaks alongside the author's own philosophical voice.

From our point of view, Charlotte Bronte's artistic style should be understood as an ethical psychology of selfhood. Her characters' moral reflections are not merely thematic elements but the very foundation of her narrative structure. The introspective method she developed turns the act of narration into a process of self-creation. By transforming internal conflict into aesthetic form, Bronte converts personal struggle into a universal experience of spiritual growth. The stylistic fusion of emotional honesty, moral reasoning, and psychological introspection demonstrates that the female author's voice in Victorian literature functioned as a new epistemological force - one that perceived truth through empathy and ethical awareness.

In summary, Bronte's contribution to the evolution of women's artistic style lies in her discovery of inner speech as a moral form. Her prose bridges Romantic emotion and early realist introspection, prefiguring the interior monologue and stream-of-consciousness techniques of later writers. Through the confessional voice of her heroines, she articulates a philosophy of selfhood rooted in sincerity, compassion, and moral autonomy. The artistic psychologism of Charlotte Bronte thus embodies the central paradox of Victorian women's prose - the simultaneous assertion of individuality and universal human moral responsibility.

Among the women writers of the Victorian period, Emily Bronte occupies a unique and enigmatic place. Her only novel, *Wuthering Heights* (1847), stands apart for its uncompromising intensity and philosophical complexity. While many of her contemporaries sought moral balance and social harmony, Emily Bronte turned inward, exploring the metaphysical and emotional dimensions of the human soul. Her prose merges the material and spiritual realms, constructing a symbolic universe where landscape, passion, and psychology become inseparable. The novel thus represents not only a literary phenomenon but also a profound study of inner life - a central concern of artistic psychologism in women's prose.

According to T. Eagleton [6,132], *Wuthering Heights* is not merely a Gothic romance but a philosophical allegory of human existence. The novel's turbulent emotions, social conflicts, and dual structure embody the tension between nature and culture, instinct and morality. Emily Bronte's narrative style dramatizes these contradictions through psychological intensity rather than overt moral commentary. Her characters' inner states are revealed not by analytical narration but through elemental imagery - storms, moors, and seasons - which function as external projections of internal conflict. In this sense, Bronte's landscape becomes a mirror of the soul, a symbolic field where passion and fate coexist.

S. Gilbert and S. Gubar [8,348] interpret this symbiosis of nature and psyche as a specifically feminine form of expression - an alternative to the rational and patriarchal models of narration that dominated Victorian fiction. They argue that Brontë's use of the natural world as a metaphor for consciousness allows her to bypass linguistic and social constraints, giving emotional intensity the force of intellectual revelation. The wildness of the moor, often perceived as chaos, thus becomes a space of spiritual authenticity - a moral testing ground for human emotion and freedom.

From the perspective of psychological realism, S. Shuttleworth[14,112] identifies in Emily Brontë's writing an early manifestation of what she terms the "psychology of passion." Unlike Charlotte Brontë, whose heroines achieve moral integration through self-discipline, Emily's characters experience identity as fragmentation and duality. Heathcliff and Catherine represent opposing yet inseparable forces within one divided consciousness - eros and spirit, rebellion and belonging. Their relationship, expressed through violent emotion and metaphoric intensity, transforms the novel into an allegory of the divided self. The narrative oscillation between Lockwood's rational perspective and Nelly Dean's emotional narration underscores this psychological conflict, generating a complex polyphony that anticipates the inner monologues of later modernist fiction [3,327].

M. Beer [4,128] situates Emily Brontë's work within the broader context of nineteenth-century scientific and metaphysical thought. She notes that Brontë's vision of nature as a living, moral organism reflects both Romantic pantheism and the proto-evolutionary ideas circulating in her intellectual milieu. This natural philosophy informs her stylistic approach: emotion becomes not a private experience but a universal principle of life, expressed through rhythmic, almost musical language. Brontë's syntax - full of repetitions, exclamations, and abrupt transitions - conveys the immediacy of passion, transforming feeling into structure.

As N. Armstrong[2, 95] observes, *Wuthering Heights* also challenges the Victorian ideal of domestic order. The home, instead of serving as a site of moral stability, becomes a theatre of chaos and desire. Yet this inversion should not be read as nihilism: rather, Emily Brontë redefines moral experience as the struggle for inner unity amid contradiction. The novel's symbolic geography - *Wuthering Heights* and *Thrushcross Grange* - represents the dialectic between instinctual vitality and social restraint. Their interplay illustrates the psychological process of individuation long before it was theorized by twentieth-century psychoanalysis.

From our perspective, Emily Brontë's artistic method can best be described as symbolic psychologism, where passion functions as both theme and structure. In contrast to the rational introspection of her sister Charlotte, Emily's narrative transforms emotion into an ontological

principle - a mode of understanding existence itself. The landscape in *Wuthering Heights* does not merely accompany human feeling; it embodies it, fusing outer environment with inner reality. This unity of psyche and nature creates a new aesthetic category - one in which the boundaries between subject and world dissolve. Brontë's style thus anticipates the phenomenological approaches of later literature, where perception, emotion, and reality form a single continuum.

Moreover, I argue that Emily Brontë's prose expresses a specifically feminine metaphysics of experience. Her depiction of passion transcends the sentimental tradition by linking emotional truth with spiritual cognition. Through poetic imagery and symbolic structure, she elevates personal feeling to the level of universal insight. *Wuthering Heights* therefore represents not only an act of creative defiance but also an affirmation of the human capacity to find meaning within emotional chaos. The moral significance of passion in Brontë's novel lies in its purifying force: suffering becomes a path to self-recognition, and love - even destructive love - reveals the eternal duality of spirit and matter.

In summary, Emily Brontë's contribution to the formation of the artistic style of Victorian women writers resides in her transformation of passion into a philosophical and psychological principle. Her symbolic landscapes, emotional dialogues, and lyrical intensity expand the limits of prose realism, bringing literature closer to the poetic and metaphysical dimensions of consciousness. Through the fusion of emotion and intellect, individual and nature, Emily Brontë forged a new aesthetic of depth and authenticity - a cornerstone in the evolution of artistic psychologism and a distinctive voice of feminine transcendence within English literature.

George Eliot occupies a special place in Victorian literature as the writer who transformed the moral and intellectual dimensions of fiction into instruments of psychological inquiry. Her novels reveal a deliberate effort to portray human consciousness not merely as a sequence of thoughts and emotions but as a moral field - a site of ethical reflection and empathy. Through a combination of philosophical depth, narrative realism, and psychological precision, Eliot created a new artistic mode that unites intellect and emotion, reason and sympathy. This synthesis became one of the most enduring legacies of nineteenth-century women's prose and one of the defining forms of artistic psychologism.

As E. Showalter[13,42] remarks, Eliot's prose is built upon a complex interaction between moral analysis and emotional perception. Her aesthetic philosophy, deeply influenced by Auguste Comte's positivism and the moral psychology of David Hume, redefines literature as a means of ethical understanding. In *Middlemarch* (1871-1872), this vision finds its most

complete realization: the novel presents the human mind as a moral organism, capable of growth through sympathy. Eliot's characters - Dorothea Brooke, Tertius Lydgate, and others - embody the struggle to reconcile individual desire with social and ethical responsibility. Their psychological depth arises precisely from this moral tension, where self-knowledge becomes inseparable from compassion.

M. Beer [4,123] interprets Eliot's psychological realism as a continuation of her philosophical engagement with science and evolution. Drawing upon Darwin's concept of interconnection among living beings, Eliot transforms empathy into a moral principle that transcends biological instinct. The narrative technique of free indirect discourse, which merges the author's voice with the consciousness of her characters, enables readers to experience thought as feeling - a process that anticipates modernist explorations of interiority. Through this stylistic innovation, Eliot turns language itself into an instrument of moral cognition.

N. Armstrong [1,211] highlights that Eliot's realism operates within the tension between individual autonomy and social determination. The female characters in her fiction, while confined by social convention, achieve a moral heroism grounded in understanding rather than rebellion. Dorothea's moral awakening, for instance, illustrates that ethical action depends on sympathetic imagination - the ability to perceive the inner life of others. This form of empathy, as Eliot repeatedly demonstrates, is not sentimental indulgence but a disciplined act of cognition - a mode of knowing rooted in compassion.

From the perspective of narrative ethics, T. Dolin [5, 49] and K. Flint [7, 103] view Eliot's fiction as a model of moral pedagogy. Her novels invite the reader to participate in the process of ethical interpretation, constructing an "empathic contract" between narrator and audience. The omniscient narrator functions as a moral mediator rather than an authoritarian voice, guiding the reader toward an understanding of complexity rather than certainty. This dialogic structure aligns with M. M. Bakhtin's [3, 312] notion of polyphony, in which the coexistence of multiple perspectives produces moral insight through dialogue rather than dogma.

Eliot's commitment to psychological verisimilitude also manifests in her portrayal of female subjectivity. E. Langland [9, 97] notes that Eliot's women - Maggie Tulliver in *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) and Dorothea Brooke in *Middlemarch* - are constructed as moral thinkers, whose internal conflicts represent broader philosophical dilemmas of conscience and duty. Their capacity for moral reflection transforms domestic experience into an arena of ethical discovery. This intellectual elevation of the domestic sphere marked a radical departure from earlier sentimental fiction and redefined women's writing as a site of philosophical engagement.

According to our perspective, George Eliot's contribution to the formation of the artistic style of Victorian women writers lies in her synthesis of empathy and intellect. Her novels demonstrate that feeling can serve as a mode of knowledge - a concept that bridges art and philosophy. I view Eliot's psychological realism as a moral epistemology: a way of perceiving truth through the comprehension of others' inner worlds. The integration of sympathy into narrative structure reflects her belief in the ethical function of imagination, where understanding another's consciousness becomes the highest form of moral intelligence.

Moreover, Eliot's style exemplifies the balance between analytic precision and emotional resonance. Unlike Emily Bronte's metaphysical passion or Charlotte Bronte's confessional self-analysis, Eliot's prose achieves equilibrium through restraint and reflection. Her characters' inner lives unfold gradually, with each moral choice revealing deeper levels of self-awareness. This restrained, rational empathy embodies what I consider the intellectual maturity of female prose - the point at which emotion is no longer opposed to reason but becomes its natural extension. Through this synthesis, Eliot establishes the moral psychology that underpins modern literary humanism.

Conclusion. The artistic evolution of Victorian women writers represents one of the most profound intellectual and aesthetic shifts in English literary history. The creative achievements of Charlotte Bronte, Emily Bronte, and George Eliot expanded the thematic, emotional, and psychological dimensions of the nineteenth-century novel. Their works moved beyond domestic sentimentality to engage with complex moral and philosophical questions about human consciousness and ethical growth. Collectively, these writers transformed emotion into a means of thought, empathy into moral understanding, and personal experience into universal reflection - establishing the groundwork for modern psychological realism.

Charlotte Bronte's prose exemplifies how the inner voice of the woman writer became a vehicle for moral reasoning and psychological exploration. Through introspection and ethical self-examination, she elevated private emotion into a philosophical category. In *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*, Bronte articulated a model of the moral self that was both reflective and independent, revealing how sincerity and truth could emerge through inner struggle. Her artistic innovation lies in transforming subjective feeling into an aesthetic principle of moral integrity and intellectual honesty[16].

Emily Bronte, on the other hand, gave emotional experience a metaphysical and symbolic dimension. In *Wuthering Heights*, passion transcends the personal to become the essence of existence itself, binding human nature to the spiritual and cosmic order. Her landscapes and emotional imagery embody what may be called symbolic psychologism - the

fusion of emotion, nature, and spirit into one moral and aesthetic whole. By converting the external world into a mirror of the inner self, Emily Bronte expanded prose realism to encompass the unconscious, anticipating later psychological and existential literature[11].

George Eliot advanced this progression by transforming empathy into the foundation of moral and artistic cognition. In *The Mill on the Floss* and *Middlemarch*, she presented understanding others as both an ethical act and a mode of knowledge. Through free indirect discourse and moral reflection, Eliot redefined realism as an exploration of consciousness, merging rational insight with emotional depth. Her fiction achieved a synthesis of intellect and compassion, establishing a mature form of artistic psychologism grounded in empathy, ethical responsibility, and intellectual balance.

Considered as a whole, these writers embody an evolutionary arc in the formation of women's artistic style. Charlotte Bronte's introspective moral voice, Emily Bronte's symbolic passion, and George Eliot's intellectual empathy collectively transformed the Victorian novel into a space for moral and psychological inquiry. Their works demonstrate that the female literary voice was not merely reactive but deeply integrative - uniting emotion and reason, personal experience and universal truth. From my standpoint, their prose represents a distinct epistemological model - an ethics of feeling that views emotion, refined by intellect, as a source of wisdom. The emergence of this women's artistic style during the Victorian age marks a turning point in literary history, laying the foundation for the twentieth-century psychological novel and defining literature as a moral, aesthetic, and cognitive act - a means of comprehending the depth and dignity of the human soul.

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