

Être femme et écrivain au XIX^e siècle : un statut encore incertain

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Abstract: Reading is dangerous act for a woman – just remember the fate of Emma Bovary. Writing is even worse. Being a woman and a writer in the 19th century is completely undesirable, because femininity and celebrity are two incompatible concepts. The fate of women writers was, at that time, still uncertain. Indeed, reading, and even more, writing, was for them “the forbidden fruit”. Because of their position of subordination in relation to man, very often they had to keep quiet. Silence means total acceptance, keeping your head down, not having the right to speak in political assemblies and elsewhere in any meeting place. Women were driven from the great places where public life took place: the Stock Exchange, the Bank, the Parliament, the big business markets, clubs, cafes, and even libraries. Now, becoming a writer means speaking, “talking to each other” because literature means expressing oneself. This is why becoming a writer was a challenge that few women dared to take up in the 19th century. Indeed, silence, irony, disdain are the terms used most often to describe the situation of the “young born”. This particular situation women found themselves in, has led us to ask ourselves some questions to which we have answered through this article, namely: can the destinies of 19th century female writers have anything in common? Does the social position of rejection and submission lead to certain types of detectable attitudes in writing? Is there a social phenomenon that has generated the preference of women-writers for certain literary genres?

Keywords: Duplication, hidden writing, private room, the young born, writing-woman.