ABSTRACT

Recovering the lost voices of women in history has been one of the significant endeavors of feminists. Women writers of the present century also venture to recreate the lives of women long gone and historical fiction is one of the most convenient genres for such representation. Hilary Mantel in her Tudor historical fiction Wolf Hall and Bring Up the Bodies charts the rise and fall of Thomas Cromwell, the Chief Minister of Henry VIII. Apart from featuring an unlikely hero, Cromwell, another striking aspect of the novels is Mantel‟s portrayal of the women characters. Focusing on the lives of the royal women, especially the first three wives of Henry VIII, Mantel highlights the predicament of these women, whose only role was to fulfill their biological duty of producing a male heir, failing which they were not even guaranteed the safety of their lives and much worse, were made victims of history by the discourse of their own bodies.