

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

The Marriage between Equals: Gender Relations in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*

A Thesis

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**Letter of Recommendation**

This is to certify that Mrs. Madhi Maya Ale has prepared this thesis entitled "The Marriage between Equals: Gender Relations in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*" under my academic guidance, complying with the format as specified by the Research Committee at the Department of English, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara. I, therefore, recommend Mrs. Ale's thesis to be accepted for defense.

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**Approval Letter**

This thesis entitled "The Marriage between Equals: Gender Relations in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*" submitted to the Department of English, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara by Mrs. Madhi Maya Alehas been approved by the undersigned members of the evaluation Research Committee.

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## ABSTRACT

Charlotte Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre* has been approached from different perspectives. This thesis "The Marriage between Equals: Gender Relations in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*" attempts to examine the mutual relationship and interdependence in companionate marriage. The novel's three characters –Jane, Rochester and St. John Rivers –have different views and ideals regarding marriage and family relationship. Mr. Rochester at first and St. John Rivers attempt to have traditional dynastic type of marriage with Jane. The power of masculinity and conventionality is ultimately defeated by Jane as she gets married with Rochester on the basis of mutual relationship.

This research explains the companionate marriage between Jane and Mr. Rochester by tracing the historical, social and cultural background of Victorian times. The male domineering power of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is evident in Mr. Rochester and St. John. The social and historical framework of marriage allows me to examine the characters of this novel from the perspective of woman's consciousness. Marriage with love and mutual bond are elements of companionate marriage, which this research attempts to highlight.

This novel has the pattern of women's consciousness which rejects Victorian conventionalities concerning marriage and domestic life. Charlotte Brontë creates a radical form of marriage between equal partners only when Mr. Rochester realizes his mistakes and accepts marriage as based in mutual relationship.

## Table of Contents

	Page
Letter of Recommendation	ii
Approval Sheet	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
Table of Contents	vi
Chapter One: Jane's Quest for Interdependence in Marriage	1-11
Chapter Two: Victorian Society and Women's Status	11-23
Ideals of Marriage and Women's Oppression	11
Unconventional Writing Spirit of Brontë	15
Jane as the Projection of Brontë's Self	20
Chapter Three: Dynamics of Marriage between Equals	24-52
Rochester's Double Role and Jane's Urge for Mutual Relationship	24
Disclosure of Rochester's Unequal Marriage	34
Reflection of Loveless Marriage in St. John's Proposal	39
Reciprocal Reunion of Jane and Rochester	44
Chapter Four: Companionate Marriage as an Initiative to Familial Intimacy	53-57
Works Cited	58-60