

2011

Kiran Achchami

Quest For Female Individuality in Bronte's *Jane Eyre*

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**

**Quest For Female Individuality in Bronte's *Jane Eyre***

**A Thesis submitted to the Central Department of English, T.U. in partial  
fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Masters of Arts in English**

**By:**

**Kiran Achchami**

**University Campus**

**Kirtipur, Kathmandu**

**March, 2011**

**Tribhuvan University**

**Central Department of English**

**Letter of Recommendation**

Mr. Kiran Achchami has completed his thesis entitled “Quest For Female Individuality in Bronte’s *Jane Eyre*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from August 2010 to Feb 2011. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted to viva voce.

.....

Mr. Shanker Subedi

Supervisor

Tribhuvan University

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

**Letter of Approval**

This thesis entitled “Quest for Female Individuality in Bronte’s *Jane Eyre*”, submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Mr. Kiran Achchami has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

**Members of the Research Committee:**

.....

Internal Examiner

.....

.....

.....

External Examiner

.....

.....

.....

Head

Central Department of English

.....

.....

Date:.....

## **Acknowledgements**

It is my pleasure to express my heartfelt gratitude and indebtedness to Mr. Shankar Subedi, Asst. Lecturer at Central Department of English, Kirtipur as his supervision and frequent encouragement kept on energizing me in course of carrying out this research. I deeply owe my honorable and candid appreciation to Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Head of the Central Department of English, Kirtipur. Along with this, I express my thankfulness to Mr. Pam Bahdaur Gurung, Asst. lecturer of Central Department of English, who helped me in finalization of my proposal writing.

The concrete existence of my dissertation has its root in the inspiration, love, motivation and economic support of my parents Mr. Resham lal Achchami and Mrs. Durga Achchami, as well as my brother Dhiren and sisters Shanti, Sharmila, Alina.

I would prefer to offer my heartfelt thank to my senior brother as well as friend Mr. Krishna Kant Paudel, for providing me constant academic suggestion against all difficulties. I express thanks to friends Dinesh Neupane, Surya Prasad Paneru, Raj Kumar Baniya, Min Bahadur Mahat (Chhetri), Kamal B.K., Nesta Thapa, Prabhat Gurung, Jit Lama, Anup Timilsina, Narayan Timilsina, Madhav Manandhar, Keshab Gurung, Roshan Pariyar, Rabin Gurung, Pramod Budhathoki, Prakash Chandra Shrestha and Nawadip Bhandari for their frequent cooperation in dealing with this task.

At last, but not the least, I would like to thank Mr. Gokarna Prasad Aryal for his help in computerizing the thesis.

Kiran Achchami

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

March 2011

## **Abstract**

This present research work focuses on the celebrated novel *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte. It studies the protagonist's ceaseless effort to find her individuality as being herself a female. During the course of the novel, *Jane Eyre* undergoes a series of changes. During her encounter with the men, different identities are manifested. She is always in search of a stable identity in the nineteenth century Victorian patriarchal society throughout the novel. But it is proved that patriarchy prevails everywhere and females have no individual identity; however, she persists in her effort to obtain her identity and establishes new way of life. Her victory lies in her realization, to gain and maintain one's identity is not wonder in search of one's personality but live by the set of norms and values one identifies and gives importance to.

## Table of Contents

	<b>Page No.</b>
Letter of Approval	
Acknowledgements	
Abstract	
Contents	
I. Feminist Concerns in Charlotte Bronte's Works	1
1.1 Bronte's Early Life and the Works	1
1.2 Critical Views on ' <i>Jane Eyre</i> '	6
1.3 Objective of the Study	8
II. Historical Aspects of Feminism that Longs for Individual Identity	13
2.1 Development of Feminist Criticism	13
III. Quest for Female Individuality in Bronte's <i>Jane Eyre</i>	32
IV. The Victory and Self-Assertion of Female Dominance	47
<b>Works Cited</b>	

## **I. Feminist Concerns in Charlotte Bronte's Works**

### **1.1 Bronte's Early Life and the Works**

Charlotte Bronte was born on 31st March 1816, in the village of Thornton in the west riding of Yorkshire, England. She was the third child in a family that soon consisted of five girls and a boy. Only seven years separated the eldest, Maria, from the youngest, Anne. Her father, Reverend Patrick Bronte came from an impoverished Irish family; he had immigrated to England in the late 1700s and studied at Cambridge University before being ordained as a clergyman in the Church of England. Charlotte's mother, Maria Branwell, was originally from Penzance Cornwall, at the southwest tip of England. In 1820, the family moved to Haworth, an isolated mill town on the edge of the Yorkshire Moors. She was the most important figure in the development of British Literature in the Eighteen Century.

Bronte as a master of British literature brought the British novel into the eighteenth century and the pains and sufferings undergone and the places visited by the family later become vistas for her literary career. Her earlier days of life were not very sound. *Jane Eyre* is subtitled *An Autobiography*. It is however, a novel. Yet critics have discerned a number of autobiographical elements in the book. In the past forty years Charlotte Bronte's reputation has risen rapidly, in her works, she described love more truthfully than common in Victorian Age in England. Feminist criticism has done much to show that she was speaking for the oppressed women of every age.

### **Jane Eyre**

Published in 1847, *Jane Eyre* brought almost instant fame to its obscure author, the daughter of a clergyman in a small mill town in northern England, on the surface, the novel embodies stock situations of the Gothic novel genre such as mystery, horror, and the classic medieval castle setting; many of the incidents border

on melodrama. The story of a young heroine is also in many ways conventional, the rise of a poor orphan girl against overwhelming odds, whose love and determination eventually redeem a tormented hero. Yet, if this all were for *Jane Eyre*, the novel would soon have been forgotten.

In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë did not write a mere romantic potboiler. Her book has serious things to say about a number of important subjects; the relation between men and women, women's equality, the treatment of children and women, religious faith and religious hypocrisy, the realization of selfhood and the nature of love. But again, if its concern were only topical, it would not have outlived the time in which it was written. The book is not a tract anymore than it is a potboiler. It is work of fiction with memorable characters and vivid scenes; written in a compelling, prose style. In appealing to both the head and the heart, *Jane Eyre* triumphs over its flaws and remains a classic of nineteenth century English literature and one of the most popular of all English novels. *Jane Eyre* opens with the narrator the adult Jane Eyre, recalling her childhood experiences growing up as an orphan at Gateshead, the home of her unfriendly aunt Mrs. Reed. *Jane Eyre* is a bildungsroman or a coming-of-age novel, which recounts the first nineteen years of the character of Jane Eyre in the first-person voice.

*Jane Eyre* is an orphan girl, both her mother and father died from a type of fever. Jane goes to live with her cruel Aunt Reed, who only takes her in as the result of a promise to her husband on his deathbed. Mrs. Reed does not treat Jane so very well, and her son often beats and verbally abuses her. Jane grows up for many years unhappy, an overly mature, sad, sallow and un-childlike child. Finally it is too much for Mrs. Reed, Jane is sent to Lowood Institution, a charitable cheap and strictly kept school for clergymen's daughters. Jane attends this school for over eight years; after a



couple of years, the standard of living at the school is improved. Jane makes friendship with Helen Burns and Ms. Temple, a teacher, while she was there. These two individuals greatly affect Jane's personality and character, especially related to personal philosophy, religion, and treatment of others.

Jane spends the last few years at Lowood as a teacher. Miss Temple finally marries and Jane places an advertisement for a position of a governess in the local newspaper. Soon she was contacted by Mrs. Fairfax, to take a position of governess in Millcote, shire. For a young single girl, it was an opportunity so she leaves from Lowood and journeys to Millcote. There she begins as governess for Adele Varens, a young French girl and a ward of the master of Thornfield Hall, Mrs. Rochester. Thornfield Hall is where Jane lives, now. Jane begins to spend much time with Rochester, they grow friendship and shared affection with each other. Jane begins to realize that she is falling in love with Mr. Rochester. Simultaneous to this, it appears that Rochester is courting the hand of Blanche Ingram, in hopes of marrying her. This turns out simply, a ploy to Rochester to make Jane jealous, and increases her love for him.

Jane goes home to attend funeral of her aunt, for several weeks she stays there. She returns to Thornfield Hall, and finds out, Mr. Rochester greatly missing her. During her time at the house, she had noticed the presence of madwomen in the attic presumably, Grace Poole. In the middle of the night, that woman tries to light Mr. Rochester's bed on fire. Jane wakes up and smells the smoke and saves him. This happens before she leaves for her aunt's funeral. When Jane returns, Rochester finally tells her of his love for her and they become engaged. The ceremony approaches and as it came closer and closer, Rochester becomes more and more arrogant. Jane declares that she will still carry on working once they are married. She only wants to

be equal to him. Their relationship becomes off-balance. On the day of marriage, while the ceremony was taking place, the rite is broken up by the entrance of Mrs. Manson and Mr. Briggs.

There, they reveal that Rochester had been previously married. The mad woman in his attic is Bertha Mason, his first wife. The marriage doesn't go through; Jane sees Bertha, feels numb, sad and realizes that she cannot marry Rochester out of Wedlock. For, fear of inequality in their relationship. She develops a great friendship with Diana, Mary and St. John Rives, they were inhabitants of the house. St. John was a pastor. Within good time, St. John arranged Jane a work, as the teacher in a school for peasant girls in that village, Morton, Jane accepts the job. Soon she finds through St. John that she has been left a fortune of twenty thousand pounds by her uncle in Madeira, who had died. She also finds out that St. John, Mary and Diana are her cousins; her uncle is also their uncle, with whom her father had once had terrible quarrel. Thus they were left no inheritance. Jane immediately, divides her fortune equally between the four of them and vacates the school position.

Jane goes to live at Moor's house with her cousins. They lived happily for a while and St. John begins to teach Jane Hindostanee. Jane finds him intelligent and greatly admires him, but nevertheless was inwardly worried of his cold power over her. Finally he asks her to marry him, and go to India with him for the "service of God" as a missionary. Jane was shocked but knows she could never have a warm, loving relationship with St. John as a husband. She tells him so, but he will not be able to take her unless she is married to him as his wife, she refuses him. At that time, she hears sudden spectra of Rochester's voice calling her from the near garden. She takes it as a sign, and the next day leaves Whitcross in a coach to see what has happened to Rochester. Jane arrives in Millcote after a day and half. She reaches there

and sees that Thornfield Hall was a ruin and mess; it was burned down by the fire that Bertha Mason started. During the fire, Bertha killed herself by jumping from the battlements; Rochester was blinded and lost one of his arms from falling timber, while helping servants out of the house. He turned to depression and used to utter in isolation after her disappearance. Now he lives with two servants, John and Mary at Ferndean Manor, thirty miles away. Jane journeys there that night, sees Rochester. He feels her presence being though blind and calls for her and she replies. He almost does not believe it is her, but finally is convinced and thanks the lord for returning Jane to him. He is utterly happy, and so is she and despite his blindness and being a cripple, she accepts his hand in marriage. They married three days later. Jane brings Adele closer to school and makes frequent visits. Mary and Diana Marries and sees her on a regular basis. St. John goes off to India. Jane gives birth to a baby boy from Rochester. The novel ends with Jane telling us that she has been married to Rochester.

For ten years, she is happier than she could ever be, because they loved each other so much, they are each other's better half and were never tired of each other. They are perfectly suited for each other and Jane is happy, spending her life loving and helping Rochester; being his 'prop'.

Bronte presents Jane in a state of satisfaction at the end of the novel despite her bitter passed days. Jane quests for her identity throughout the novel so she moves in different places. On the one hand, the external forces oppress them on the other ... As a result she keeps her journey on and on. Eventually the upward mobility of the protagonist due to the individual freedom is the frequent theme of the Bronte's novel "*Jane Eyre*".

## 1.2 Critical Views on '*Jane Eyre*'

Charlotte Brontë's remarkable novel *Jane Eyre* brought almost instant fame to its obscure author. When it was published in October, 1847, *Jane Eyre* attracted much attention and the novel became an instant commercial success. So high was demand for the book that the publisher issued a second edition within three months, followed by a third edition in April, 1848, the influential novelist, William Makepeace Thackeray was one of *Jane Eyre*'s earliest admirer. He wrote to the publisher, saying that he was exceedingly moved and pleased by the novel. He also asked the publishers to express his admiration to the author. *Jane Eyre* was reviewed in some of Britain's leading newspaper and literary journals. Most early reviewers were enthusiastic. The *Edinburg Review* pronounced it "a book of singular fascination". The critics for the "London Times" newspaper called it "a remarkable production" and noted that the story stands out boldly (Tom 253).

Regarding the novel, Markley, an assistant professor of English at 'Pennsylvania State University' provides a general overview on the many aspects of *Jane Eyre*, portraying the novel as unique, both for its time and even for contemporary literature. It made a huge splash among the Victorian reading public.

Many critics have given their own opinions about its title. Some claims that the title itself is positive and others take it negatively. In 1966, R. B. Martin states,

... *Jane Eyre* was the major Feminist novel "although there is not a hint in the book of any desire for political, legal and educational or even intellectual equality between sexes. Martin supports the idea that, Jane merely wants recognition that both sexes are similar in "heart and spirit". Now, here in the novel is the sentiment more obvious than in

the passage when Jane responds to Rochester's Callous and indirect proposal. (252)

By these above lines, the critics opine their views that there was equality in different aspects where we can see any desire for political, legal and educational equality. So that he supports Jane and clarifies that both sexes are similar in heart and spirit too.

The psychoanalytical insight is found in feminist mode of criticisms, Juliet Mitchell one of the powerful feminist critics, skillfully combines Freudian Psychoanalysis with Feminism in her views on *Jane Eyre*. She finds a bio-graphical element in the novel. She finally argues, "The novel is that creation by the woman of the women, or by the subject who is in the process of becoming women, of women under capitalism. *Jane Eyre*, is in the highest point of auto-criticism of the novel within the novel" (427).

Mitchell opines her view on the *Jane Eyre* that this novel can be seen through the feminist eyes because it is created by the woman, for the women and of the women. She further added that by the subject of women, they themselves got chance to become women and tries to fight against capitalism, so that it is a high point of auto criticism of the novel within the novel.

Similarly another critic, Terry Eagleton, offers his Marxist study of the novel in terms of class conflict. Since this criticism has been written earlier than his literary theory as a pure Marxist, he infers the "crux of *Jane Eyre* to be social through choice posed for Jane, between Rochester and St. John. According to him, the pivotal element of the novel is the decisive catalyst of the tragedy" (209-13).

Eagleton, a Marxist critics, focuses on that, there was a class conflict which occurred in Jane's social conflict and self-awareness through which she got revolution and search of equality and freedom for all the women of that very society. This is the

pivotal element which plays the novel in a social harmony and individuality for the main protagonist.

Thus, the novel can be analyzed from different perspectives such as Marxist, psychoanalytic etc. None of those critics, who talked about *Jane Eyre* above, focuses on the issue, which I want to work out in my research. So, this present study aims to justify its own perspective (feminist perspective) which has not been yet researched.

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

In *Jane Eyre*, Bronte creates a world in which people are defined by desire and love. By viewing this world through the eyes of the protagonist, Jane is continuously being criticized. Jane confides her own fears, and feelings of anger, injustice and pain towards the Reed. She questions, why is she always the object of cruelty, suffering, accusation and condemnation continuously, with John's violence, his sister's selfishness, Mrs. Reed's indifference. During a fight with John she cut her head, she was bleeding but John's abuse was over looked because Jane tried to fight him off of her. She admits:

What a consternation of soul was of mine that dreary afternoon! How all my brain was in tumult and all my heart in insurrection! Yet in what darkness, what dense ignorance, was the mental battle fought! I could not answer the ceaseless inward question – Why I suffer now at the distance of – I will not say how many years, I see it clearly. (12)

Jane is always the object of abuse because; she is completely different from and in discord with everyone else at Gateshead Hall. Neither party loved each other, nor Jane have the necessary personality, traits and physical appearance “ a sanguine, brilliant, careless, exacting, handsome, romping child” to be accepted and tolerated by

the Reeds. Her own perceptive and experienced temperament is not liked or understood, and instead, condemned.

Day two at Lowood Institution commences for Jane. She is placed in the fourth class and expresses bewilderment at the speed of classes and lessons, in her first active day, while sewing; Jane witnesses her new-friend, Helen Burns, being whipped with a rod, by Miss Scatcherd. Helen is often punished for her 'slatternly' ways, lack of attention, or messiness. Jane is horrified and indignant over Helen's unfair treatment, as Helen really was not at fault or slatternly. She speaks to Helen later about the teacher's treatment, and Helen's calm behavior under duress. Jane says that she would desire only to break the rod beneath the teacher's nose,

But I feel this Helen: I must dislike those who, whatever I do to please them, persist in disliking me. I must resist those who punish me unjustly. It is as natural as that I should love those who show me affection or submit to punishment when I fee it is deserved. (50)

Jane is quite ordinary, if not a little lacking in profundity for her age. Jane feels a good affection and connection to Adele for their work together, and a satisfaction in a well adjusted and yet an unharmed path, she is preparing for Adele. She also admits, while traversing the hills and long dim sky-line around Thornfield. Jane, in her own words pushed in the world of male domination where she used to engage different characters who were cruel and by nature they exploited her physically and psychologically. In such ways, Jane tried her best to resist in that society and faced many hindrances around her. She explains in such ways in her words:

I longed for a power of vision which might overpass that limit, which might reach the busy world, towns, regions full of life, I had heard of

but never seen; that I desired more of practical experience that I possessed, more of intercourse with my kind of acquaintance with variety of character, that was here within my reach, I could not help it: the restlessness was in my nature; it agitates me to pain sometimes (95).

Jane speaks of the vision passionate, glowing, full of fire and life, which often rises in her imagination on some of her long ventures in the dark halls of Thornfield Hall; visions and adventures which she desires but has not actually experienced.

While waiting she is able to survey the appearance of the traveler, who she is later to find out is Mr. Rochester. Rather cleverly, Mr. Rochester questioned her unawares of her mission and status, until he finds she is the governess of Thornfield Hall. She aids him to his horse, and after recovery of his whip, he is off and she once again goes on her way with the letter.

St. John tells Jane that she is disposed to be a missionary's wife that it is not personal but mental endowments that she has been given by God; she is made for labour not for love. Jane overcomes too much and argues with him increasingly. She admits that inside his voice and logic there is great pull on her, but that she knows her spirit. She does not feel a great elevation upon his words and offer, no internal knowledge that this should be her chosen vocation; she believes such knowledge should come from inside the individual. Jane thinks and comes to the conclusion that she would and could be a missionary with St. John, but never as his wife. She realizes that it is for God and not in love that he summons her to him for this vocation; he has no husband's heart for her, only a brother's heart. And Jane is sure he would observe all the duties of a husband and cannot live and bear that, every affection would be a sacrifice made on principle, absent of spirit or love.



She tells him, she will go as his sister, but this he will not hear, he sees it as a sacrifice to God. God will only accept a whole gift, consecrated in marriage. Plus, he does not want for a sister, but a wife who will be his helpmate until his death. Jane cannot bear this it is too much, and utters that she will give her heart to God, but that he does not want it. Jane wants to go with him as his equal, which she now realizes, yes she is as his sister, and she could bear this, because her heart and mind would be free. But those objects would not be free bonded in marriage to St. John, it is impossible! But St. John will still want her to accept it, he says that they must and should be married – to take her with him to India, otherwise would arise suspicion in a foreign land, and he is sure he would not regret it later. Jane exclaims: “I scorn your idea of love” “I could not help saying as I rose up and stood before, leaning my back against the rock. ‘I scorn the counterfeit sentiment you offer: yes St. John and I scorn you when you offer it (359).

When questioned, Jane tells Diana and Mary of St. John’s plan. They had hoped he had wanted to marry Jane, but are quite resolved with Jane that his cold and mental attitude is not suitable for a husband towards his wife. But the next night, St. John alone with Jane late again almost he sways over her. She feels the call of God and thinking only of a duty not love, tells St. John that she could marry him if she only knew it was Gods will. This continues until suddenly, Jane hears only in her own ears the spectra of Mr. Rochester’s voice. She stops, she is possessed and hears him calling her name – only shadows exist in the garden, while Jane rushes around sitting room, yelling that she will come. She releases herself from St. John and goes to her room, quite taken to pray. The next morning St. John leaves her a note saying that he will return in a fortnight to await to her decision, he feels she will be clean in her spirit to know her duty by then.

Jane Eyre is, indeed, a orphan girl who has survived and brought up by other and she tempts to get individual freedom as a representative of whole female to gain self-identity and selfhood against the patriarchy of Eighteen Century Victorian Society

Jane represents the ideology of female and tries to dissolve the boundary of patriarchy which, existed in culture of English Society, tries to change what really was happening in that society and she claims her feminine and redraws the boundary, so she longs for individual freedom, prosperous life even at the cost of /human/patriarchy values and relationship. So, furthermore, the concluding part of my research will carry up the brief overview of the whole research. So that , the objective of the present research is to find the precarious condition of women for female individuality and redraws the patriarchal boundaries of the 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century English Society.

This research work has been divided into four chapters. The First Chapter presents an introductory outline of the study, which contains the title clarification, hypothesis elaboration, the introduction to the writer and his works, and the critic's views on author and his writing.

The Second Chapter is meant to develop theoretical modality that is to be applied in this chapter research paper. It provides an introduction to feminist theories which will be explained in the light of the subject of the study in this chapter.

Similarly, The Third Chapter of the research is an analysis of the text at a considerable length on the basis of text to provide the hypothesis of the study.

The Fourth Chapter is the conclusion of the entire study. On the basis of the analysis of the text done in chapter three it will conclude the explanation and arguments put forward in the preceding chapters and shows the examples too.

## **II. Historical Aspects of Feminism that Longs for Individual Identity**

### **2.1 Development of Feminist Criticism**

Before entering into the wide ranging discussion of Feminism, it is necessary to talk what female means as a short root word of feminism. The word 'Female since the initiation of human civilization retains its vividness and conceptions as a biological contrast to male 'sex'. Certainly the natural biological contrast imbues each individual sex with distinctive features, bodily qualities and assertions which are supposed to be vital to sustain the true nature of human evolution and civilization. Despite this biological or physical construction, the sex is created by nature. Some social and cultural differences lie in terms of their behavior, education and the attitude of society towards them (Freedman 125).

Thus, the time changes 'nature based male and female sexual relation into a society based men and women, feminine and masculine relation. It exists as a hierarchal power relation where man dominates women in every social, economical, cultural, and religious milieu of human life. The patriarchy fosters the gender based inequalities that decides man as superior and women as powerless or inferior. One of the leading American feminist Kate Mellette sees: patriarchy as grotesque. So forth here, feminist criticism comes in many forms, and feminist critics have a variety of goals. Some have been interested in discovering the works of women writers overlooked by a masculine dominated culture. Others have revisited books by male authors and reviewed them from a women's point of view to understand how they both reflect and shape the attitude that have held women back. A number of contemporary feminists have turned to topics as various as women in postcolonial societies, women's autobiographical writings, lesbians and literature, womanliness as

masquerade, and the role of film and other popular media in the construction of the feminine gender.

Until a few years ago, however feminist thought tended to be classified not according to the topic but, rather, according to country of origin. This practice reflected the fact that, during the 1970's and early 1980's, French, American and British feminist wrote with, some different perspectives (Gilmore 256).

French Feminists tended to focus their attention on language, analyzing the ways in which meaning is produced. They concluded that language as we commonly think of it is a decidedly male realm. Drawing on the ideas of the psychoanalytic philosopher, Jacques Lacan, the French Critic practice "l'écriture féminine" as a tool to uphold the power of psychological category of the feminists. They dismiss the actual sex of an author as important following deconstructive attack upon the author or the self. The French Feminists see Feminism in its binary oppositions as a male cultural notion left over from the past. They focus on Jacques Lacan's notion of Imaginary, a pre-oedipal stage in which child has not yet differentiated himself or herself from the mother and has accordingly not yet learned language. This oedipal crisis as Lacan claims:

The entrance of the child into a world of symbolic order in which everything is separate, including unconscious and conscious, self and other, words and action. This transition also marks entry into a world ruled by the "Law of the Father," "isms" or rules that confine us (qtd. In Guerin 204).

Lacan calls it the phallogocentric universe. The imaginary is the realm of feminine and is the vital source of language, which is tamed and codified by the Laws of the Father.

The relevance of Freud and Lacan for French Feminism arises from their treatment of language. Lacan describes the unconscious as structured like a language. When we speak language we may identify gaps in what is signified as evidence of the unconscious, the language is a mixture of fixed meanings and metaphors. 'Femininity' is then a language that destabilizes sexual categories. In these literature feminine disrupts the unities, if western discourse is pointing to its silences. French Feminists speak of 'exploding' the sign rather than interpreting signs. French Feminist who follow Lacan, particularly, Helene Cixous purposes an "utopian place, a primeval female space that is free of symbolic order, sex roles, otherness, and the law of the Father and voice of the mother" (204). Cixous pronouncement "sisters, write with the white milk of your mother's" marks the importance of women's body not only as a subject of writing but also the energy and the instrument of writing (Sheldon 151). She contends this place is the source of feminine writing. It is the source to gain access to find a source of immeasurable feminine power. Cixous points the existence of an incipient "Feminine Writings" (*I'écriture feminine*) that has its source in the mother. She says that the stage of mother – child relation is the real world before the child acquires the male-centered verbal language. In her view the pre-linguistic and unconscious potentially manifests it in those written texts, which undermines the fixed signification. These writings subverts the logic and the "closure of our phallogocentric, and open out into a joyous free- play of meanings" (qtd. In Abrams 92-3).

Another major interest in feminism is to reconstitute the ways we deal with literature in order to do justice to the female point of view, concerns, and values. It is to establish a "revisionary re-reading", to bring to light and to counter the covert sexual bias written into a literary work (Abrams 93):

Alternatively, Luce Irigaray posits a “woman’s writing” which evades the male monopoly and the risk of appropriation into the existing system. She tries to establish its generation’s principle in place of monolithic phallus.

Helene Cixous, also posited an essential connection between the woman’s body, whose sexual pleasure has been repressed and denied expression, and women’s writing, “write yourself your body must be head,” Cixous argued; once they learn to write their bodies, women will not only realize their sexuality but enter history and move toward a future based on a ‘feminine’ economy of giving rather than the “masculine” economy of hoarding (Cixous 880). For Luce Irigaray, a women’s sexual pleasure cannot be expressed by the dominant, ordered, “logical,” masculine language. Irigaray explored the connection between women’s sexuality and women’s language through the following analogy:

As women’s jouissance is more multiple than men’s unitary, phallic pleasure so feminine language is more diffusive than its ‘masculine’ counterpart. (‘That is undoubtedly the reason ... her language ... goes off in all direction and ... she is unable to discern the coherence’) – Irigaray writes (The Second Sex 101-103).

Cixous’s and Irigaray’s emphasis on feminine writing as an expression of the female body drew criticism from French feminists. Many argued that as an emphasis on the body either reduces “the feminine” to a biological essence or elevates it in a way that shifts the valuation of masculine and feminine but retains the binary categories. For Christine Faure, Irigaray’s celebration of women’s difference failed to address the issue of masculine dominance, and a Marxist – Feminist Catherine Clement, warned that ‘poetic’ description of what constitutes the feminine will not challenge that dominance in the realm of production. The boys will still make the toys, and decide

who gets to use them. In her effort to redefine women as political rather than as sexual beings, Monique Wittig called for the abolition of the sexual categories that Cixous and Irigaray retained and revalued as they celebrated women's writing.

Some influential French Feminists maintained that, language only seems to give women such a narrow range of choices. There is another possibility, namely that women can develop a feminine language. In various ways, early French Feminists such as Annie Leclerc, Xaviere Gauthier and Marguerite Duras suggested that there is something that may be called *l'écriture Feminine*: women's writing. More recently, Julia Kristeva has said that, feminine language is "Semiotic," not "Symbolic". Rather than rigidly opposing and ranking elements of reality, rather than symbolizing one thing but not another in terms of a third, feminine language is rhythmic and unifying. From the male perspective it seems fluid to the point of being chaotic, that is a fault of the male perspective.

According to Kristeva, feminine language is derived from the pre-oedipal period of fusion between mother and child. Associated with the maternal, feminine language is not only a threat to culture, which is patriarchal, but also a medium through which women may be creative in new ways. But Kristeva paired her central, liberating claim that truly a feminist innovation in all fields requires an understanding of the relation between maternity and feminine creation with a warning. A feminist language that refuses to participate in "masculine" discourse, that places its nature entirely in a feminine, semiotic discourse, risks being politically marginalized by men. That is to say, it risks being relegated to the outskirts of what is considered socially and politically significant.

Kristeva, who associated feminine writing with the female body, was joined in her views by other leading French Feminists. Julia Kristeva describes a mother-

centered realm of expression as the semiotic as opposed to the symbolic law of the father. Like Lacan, “in her mind the prior semiotic realm of the feminine is present in symbolic discourse as absence or contradiction” (Geurin 205). Kristeva opposes phallogocentrism with the images derived from women’s corporeal experiences. She posits “a chora”, or pre-linguistic, pre-oedipal and un-systematized signifying progress, centered on the mother, that she labels “Semiotic” (205). The father controlled, syntactically ordered and logical language known as symbolic represses the semiotic process. This process can break out in a revolutionary way as a ‘heterogeneous’ “destructive causality” that disrupts and disperses the authoritarian subject. It stresses for the world free of the oppressive order and rationality to our standard discourse. It is the product of the “law of the father” that consigns women to a negative and marginal status (qtd. In Abram 93). Kristeva makes the succinct observations that “a mother is a continuous separation a division of the very flesh” (93). In fact, she characterizes future of feminism as one with a Utopian vision where many voices are always speaking, and that each individual can have many voices.

Feminism is a distinctive and concerted approach inaugurated in the late 1960’s. It is a political movement struggled for social, legal and cultural freedom as well as equality for the women. Feminist thinkers regard feminism is somehow different from the mainstream as innovative, inventive and rebellious. Beasley points out that for the feminist writers, the western thought is “male stream” and thus its authority needs to be questioned (3). It means the western civilization is pervasively patriarchal, male-centered and male controlled”. It is from the Hebrew Bible and Greek Philosophic writing to the present, the female tends to be defined by negative references to the male as an “other” or a kind of non-man. By her lack of the



identifying male organ, of male powers, and of the male character traits, they are marginalized in the patriarchy (98).

Hence women themselves are taught in the process of being socialized and to internalize the patriarchal ideology. The issues like masculine and feminine are largely the cultural construct. As Simone De Beauvoir puts it, “one is not born, but rather becomes a woman, it is described as feminine” (993). By this cultural process, the masculine in our culture has come to be identified as active, dominating, adventurous, rational, and creative while the feminine has come to be identified as passive, acquiescent, timid, emotional and conventional. Feminism is a two century long political movement marked by the books such as Mary Wollstonecraft’s “*The Vindication of the Right of Women*”, (1792) Virginia Woolf’s “*A Room of Her Own*” (1929), Simon De Beauvoir’s “*The Second Sex*” (1949) and the like.

An important precursor of the feminism is Virginia Woolf, who has revealed the cultural, economic and educational disabilities within the patriarchal society. A male-dominated society always prevents the women from realizing their productive and creative possibilities. Woolf addresses the question of “why a sister of Shakespeare would not likely to have been able to write anything (817). She also focuses that language use is gendered, so that when a woman turns into novelist and starts writing, she finds no common sentence ready for her use.

Her central argument is that women do not have money and a room of their own. They do not have separate space for writing. Though she never adopts, a feminist stance, she continually examines the problem faced by women writers. Rejecting a feminist consciousness, she hopes to achieve a balance between a “male self-realization” and “female self-annihilation” (822). She admired the seventeenth century writers and eighteenth century novelists like Bronte Sisters, Jane Austen,

George Eliot, etc. they are praiseworthy for their courage to create such good novels despite the less experiences of life, common sitting room and lack of money. She emphasized that the women feel just as men feel. The women need exercise, facilities as much as their brothers do have. According to her, literature is open to everybody. She opines that libraries can be locked but freedom of woman's mind cannot be locked. Woolf has imagined a society in which men and women will come together in purpose and desire.

Another important feminist is Wollstonecraft whose main focus is that "the mind does know sex (394). Adams quotes Claire Tomalin who has remarked "society is wasting its assets, it is retaining women in the role of convenient domestic same and alluring mistress, denies them, encourages them to be docile and attentive to their looks to the exclusion of all else" (394). In "*A Vindication of the Right of the Women*" Wollstonecraft discusses the pernicious impact of the sentimental novel in the lives of women in the Eighteenth Century. These novels present the women as passive beauty and lacking intellectual faculty. While the man is presented as active, intellectual, rational and dominant is decision-making while, the women lack the power of decision-making. Therefore, she chooses a rake, luxury and a brave person. She clearly states that.

Women are solely employed either to prepare themselves to excite love, or actually putting their lessons in practice, they cannot live without love. But when a sense of duty or fear of shame, obliges them to restrain, they (female) obstinately determines to love , they become object woes and fond slaves (397).

Projecting women as mere pleasure object, Wollstonecraft is severely attacking the social construction of prejudicial patriarchy, which trivializes female:

When Simone de Beauvoir proclaimed, in *“The Second Sex”* (1949),s that “one is not born a women, one becomes one” (301). She helped make possible, a panoply of investigation into the ways in which we all are engendered, whether as women or men, not only by literary texts but also through a host of other discourses and practices.

A much more radical criticism has been launched in France by Simon de Beauvoir. She makes wide-ranging critique of the cultural identification of women as merely the negative object, or, “other” (993). She views that men treat themselves as “subject” who is assumed to represent humanity as dealt in “the great collective myths” of women in the work of male writers (993). Beauvoir’s *“The Second Sex”* (1949) is scholarly and passionate plea for the abolition of the myth of the “eternal feminine” (999). This seminal work has become a classic of feminist literature where she establishes the fundamental issues of modern feminism by arguing that man defined human, not woman. She further says that women are not born women. Women are women; it is just a gender concept. But, gender itself is nothing but a social or a cultural construction. Beauvoir attacks the parochial concept of man possessing his freedom and transcendence but, a woman being doomed to immanence. She refuses the notion of a female essence prior to individual existence. She has attacked the patriarchal of women:

To say that woman is a mystery, not that she is silent, but that her language is not understood. She is there but hidden behind veils; she exists beyond these uncertain appearances. What is she? An angel, demon, one inspired, an actress ... but one considers woman in her immanent presence, in inward self, and one can say absolutely anything about her. She falls short of having many qualification (998).

Similarly E. Porter defines feminism as a perspective that seeks to their sex (Beasley 27). Likewise Adrienne Rich, a contemporary American poet, describes feminism as “the place where the most natural, organic way subjective and politics had to come together (Guerin 198).

American Feminist critics of the 1970s and 1980s shared with French critics both an interest in and a cautious distrust of the concept of feminine writing. Annette Kolodny, for instance, worried that the richness and variety of women’s writing will be missed if we see in it only its “feminine mode” or “style”. And yet, Kolodny herself proceeded, in the same way to point out that women have had their own style which includes, reflexive constructions and particular recurring themes.

Interested as they became in the “French” Subject of Feminine Style, American Feminist Critic, began by analyzing literary texts rather than philosophizing abstract about language. Many reviewed the great works by male writers, embarking on a revisionist re-reading of literary tradition. These critics have examined the portrayals of women characters, exposing the patriarchal ideology implicit in such works and showing how clearly this tradition of systematic masculine dominance is inscribed in our literary tradition. Kate Millett, Carolyn Heilbrun and Judith Fetterley, among many others, created this model for American Feminist critique “of male-constructed literary history”.

Elaine Showalter, an American literary critic and founder of Gynocritic, has identified three historical phases of women’s literary development:

The ‘feminine’ phase (1840-80), during which women writers imitated the dominant tradition; the “feminist” phase (1880-1920), during which women advocated minority rights and protested, and the “female” phase (1020 - present), during which dependency on

opposition – that is, an uncovering misogyny in male texts – is being replaced by a rediscovery of women’s texts and women (Guerin 198).s

Showalter describes a woman’s tradition in literature that is an “imaginative continuum [of] certain patterns, themes, problems, and images from generation to generation” (223). She further identifies four model of difference: biological, linguistic, psychoanalytical, and cultural. In the biological model, she claims if the text mirrors the body, this can reduce women merely to bodies. Yet, Showalter praises those poets who praise their bodies with intimate frankness and their confessional tone to rebuke the patriarchal construction. Her linguistic model of difference posits women speaking men’s language as a foreign tongue. It generates a sense of alienation in the women. Therefore she advocates that women do not have own separate “female” language. Her psychoanalytic model identifies gender difference as the basic of the psyche that emphasizes the relation of gender to the artistic process. It stresses feminine difference as a free play of meaning outside the need for closure: Showalter’s most important contribution has been the cultural model that places feminist concerns in social context. It acknowledges class, racial, national and historical differences and determinants among women. But her focus is on offering a collective experience that unites women over time and space as “a binding force” (Guerin 200).

Speaking for the representation of the marginalized female, Showalter invents gynocriticism where women appear as writers. Such criticism “eschews the inevitability of male models and theories and seeks as female model. It is related to feminist research in history, anthropology, psychology and sociology ... all of which have developed hypotheses of female sub-culture including not only the ascribed

status and the internalized constructs of femininity, but also the occupations, interactions and consciousness of women (Abrams 122-27).

It is to develop new models based on the study of the female experiences rather than adopt male models and theories. Such gynocentric criticism concentrates on female creativity, stylistics, themes, images, cares, and literary tradition: such new emphasis has begun with the rediscovery of neglected or forgotten female writers. It has been grown to redefine gender in literary studies.

Currently there are four types of most pervasive feminist criticism: Gender studies, Marxist studies, Psychoanalytic studies, and Minority studies. Feminists have argued that mainstream thought is simply a part of three ongoing processes: excluding, marginalizing and trivializing women and their accounts of social and political life. The bottom of all this subordination is the lack of freedom. Marriage has become one of the bondages that restrict woman from realizing her independent self. Men have defined it as a legal authority over women. Feminists address this issue to instill a sense of human existence that is devoid of sexual biasness. Women are trying to attack male writing as well as they are seeking redefinition of their identity in their writing.

If one of the purposes of gynocriticism was to study well-known women authors, another was to rediscover women's history and culture, particularly women's communities that nurtured female creativity. Still another related purpose was to discover neglected or forgotten women writers and thus to forge an alternative literary tradition, a canon that better represents the female perspective by better representing the literary works that have been written by the women. Showalter, in *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), admirably began to fulfill this purpose, providing a remarkably comprehensive overview of women's writing through three of its phases. She defined

these as the “Feminine, Feminist and Female” phases during which women first imitates a masculine tradition (1840-80), then protested against its standards and values (1880-1920), and finally advocated their own autonomous, female perspective (1920 to the present).

Meanwhile another group of critics including Sandra Gilbert, Susan Gubar, Patrici Meyer Spacks and Showalter herself created a somewhat different model. Whereas Feminist writing “Feminist Critique” analyzed works by men, practitioners of what Showalter used to refer to as “gynocriticism” studied to writings of those women who against all odds, produced what she calls *A Literature of Their Own*. In *The Female Imagination* (1975), Spacks examined the female literary tradition to find out how great women writers across the ages have felt, perceived themselves and imagined reality. Gilbert and Gubar, in *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979), concerned themselves with well-known women writers of the nineteenth century, but they too found that general concerns, images, and themes recurred because, they too found that they wrote about, lived ‘in a culture whose fundamental definition of literary authority were both overly and covertly patriarchal.

The collaboration of the two contemporary feminists Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar had made an extensive study of women writers. Their influential work, *The Mad Woman in the Attic* (1974), explores the pressure of psycho, an “anxiety of authorship” when they talk about the feminist poetics (1234). They assert that their anxiety is more pronounced because the women writers have to struggle against the effect of socialization as a struggle against man’s oppressive reading of the women. They also talk about the social anxieties, physical and mental illness. After all, they posit the problems of women writer in the patriarchal culture and tradition. Gilbert and Gubar assert that:

The woman writer feels herself to be figuratively crippled by the debilitating alternatives [of] her culture and the crippling effects of her conditioning some times seem to 'breed' like sentences of death in a bloody shoes inherits from her literary foremothers, therefore critics see 'infection in sentence breed' (1242).

Gilbert and Gubar sees the diseases and the company, the system of "anorexia, agoraphobia, and claustrophobia (1242). All these illness are the consequences of inscape chains of patriarchy. Finally they state that the literary women have always faced degrading options with female limitation. So they posit that "the women writers seems locked into the discovering double bind: she had to choose between admitting, she was only a woman and protesting that she was as good as a man" (1244). They reject man's oppressive reading of women and demand for a separate feminine paradigm. Gilbert and Gubar point out how the monster/ mad woman figure represents aspects of the author as well as elements of the author's anti-patriarchal wholeness rather than theory of "otherness" that prevails as a definition of identity.

The question of whether feminism weakens or fortifies itself by emphasizing its separateness and by developing unity through separateness was one of several areas of debate within American feminism during the 1970s and early 1980s. While it gradually become customary to refer to an Anglo-American tradition of Feminist Criticism, British Feminists tended to distinguish themselves from what they saw an American overemphasis on texts linking women across boundaries and decades and an under-emphasis on popular art and culture. They regarded their own critical practice as more political than that of North American feminists, whom they sometimes faulted for being uninterested in historical detail. They joined such



American critics as Myra Jehlen in suggesting that a continuing pre-occupation with women writers may bring about history that conditions them.

British Feminists felt that the American opposition to male stereo types that denigrate women often leads to counter- stereotypes of feminine virtue that ignore real difference of race, class, and culture among women. In addition, they argued that American celebrations of individual heroines falsely suggest that powerful individuals may be immune to repressive conditions and may even imply that any individual can go through life unconditioned by the culture and ideology in which she or he lives.

Similarly, the American endeavor to recover women's history – for example, by emphasizing that women developed their own strategies to gain power within their sphere – was seen by British feminists like Judith Newton and Deborah Rosenfelt as an endeavor that “mystifies” male oppression, disguising it as something that has created for women a special world of opportunities. More important from the British standpoint, the “universalizing” and “essentializing” tendencies in both American practice and French theory disguise women's oppression by highlighting sexual difference, suggesting that a dominant system is impervious to political change. By contrast, British feminist theory emphasized an engagement with historical process in order to promote social change.

By now the French, American, and British approaches have so thoroughly critiqued, influenced and assimilated one another that the work of most western practitioners is no longer easily identifiable along national boundary lines. Instead, it tends to be characterized according to the category of women and the major focus in the exploration of gender and gender oppression or, alternatively, whether the interest in sexual difference encompasses an interest in other differences that also defines identity. The latter paradigm encompasses the work of feminists of color, Third World

(preferably called postcolonial) feminists, and lesbian feminists, many of whom have asked whether the universal category of woman constructed by certain French and North American predecessors is appropriate to describe women in minority groups or non-western cultures.

These feminists stress that, while all women are female, they are something else as well (such as African-American, lesbian, Muslim Pakistani). This “something else” is precisely what makes them, their problems, and their goals different from those of other women. As Armit Wilson has pointed out, Asian women living in Britain are expected by their families and communities to preserve Asian cultural traditions; thus, the expression of personal identity through clothing involves a much more serious infraction of cultural values than it does for a western women.

Instead of being divisive and isolating, this evolution of feminists into feminism had fostered a more inclusive global perspective. The era of recovering women’s texts, especially texts by white western women has been succeeded by a new era in which the goal is to recover entire culture of women. Two important figures of this new era are Trinh T. Minhha and Gayatri Spivak. Spivak, in words such as *In Other Worlds, Essay in cultural Politics* (1987) and *outside in the Teaching Machine* (1993), has shown how political independence has complex implications for “subaltern or sub-proletarian women.

The understanding of a woman is not a single, deterministic category but rather as the nexus of diverse experiences had led some white western, ‘majority’ feminists like Jane Tomkins and Nancy K. Miller to advocate and practice “personal” or “autobiographical” criticism. Once reluctant to inject themselves into their analysis for fear of being labeled idiosyncratic, impressionistic, and subjective by men, some feminists are now openly skeptical of the claims to reason, logic and objectivity that

have been made in the past by male critics. With the advent of more personal feminist critical styles has come a powerful new interest in women's autobiographical writings.

Shari Benstock, who has written personal criticism in her book *Textualizing the Feminine* (1991), was one of the first feminists to argue that traditional autobiography is a gendered "Masculinist" genre. It established conventions, feminists have recently pointed out, call for a life-plot that turns on action, triumph through conflict, intellectual self-discovery, and often publicly renown. The body, reproduction of children and intimate interpersonal relationships are generally well in the background and often absent. Arguing that the lively experiences of women and men differ, women's lives, for instance, are often characterized by interruption and deferral. Leigh Gilmore has developed a theory of women's self-presentation in her book *Auto-biographies: A Feminist Theory of Self-Representation* (1993).

Autobiographies and personal criticism are only two of a number of recent developments in contemporary feminists criticism other alluded in the first paragraph of this introduction. Lesbian studies, performance or "masquerade" theory and studies by film and various other 'technologies' in shaping gender today. Overlap with contemporary gender criticism whose practitioners investigate categories of gender (masculinity as well as femininity) and sexuality (gay male sexuality as well as lesbianism) and in so far as they inform not only the writing of literary texts but also the ways in which they are read. In speaking of the overlap between feminist and gender criticism began as feminist criticism; it could never have developed as it has without the precedents set by feminist theorists.

In such way, Sandra Gilbert begins by focusing on the imprisoning "red-room" in which the child *Jane Eyre* considers whether to escape the Reed family

house “through flight” or “through starvation”. This choice, Gilbert argues, occurs throughout *Jane Eyre* and was not uncommon for heroines of the nineteenth century literature by women. Such heroines, however also faced “a third, even more terrifying alternative: escape through madness”. It is to this alternative that the child *Jane Eyre* momentarily succumbs.

Although Jane’s madness proves to be temporary, the rage that fuels, is not Jane’s difficulties. Gilbert’s argue arise from her “constitutional ire”; her quest for equality and selfhood requires and, in turn, makes possible the gradual moderation of an incendiary rage. Jane’s ire comes under control as her relationship with Mr. Rochester progresses into equality, as she discovers “his need for her solace, strength and parity” (Seldom 405). That equality however is “threatened by Rochester’s superior “sexual knowledge” and of course by Bertha, the “literal impediment to his marriage with Jane”, these threats cause Jane “to re-experience the dangerous sense of doubleness that began in the red-room” (Seldom 435).

Bertha, Gilbert claims, is Jane’s truest and darkest double experience and that double: the angry aspect of the orphan child, the ferocious secrets of self that Jane has been trying to repress ever since her days in Gateshead. Gilbert even refers to Bertha as Jane’s criminal self and repeatedly links the madwoman with Jane’s female rage. Bertha, of course, eventually sets fire to Thornfield Hall, destroying herself in the process and causing Rochester injuries. Jane has by that time fled Thornfield, wandered starving for several days, and stumbled upon her “true family” at Marsh End Radical as they are, these changes prove propitious, freeing Jane from the “raging specter of Bertha” and from the “self-pitying specter of the orphan child”- in short, from her past she comes to attain the equality with Rochester upon which her eventual marriage is founded(.

One that convincingly represents and validates the rage felt by women in a masculine culture. It may be seen as example of what used to be called, gynocriticism. But, for more than a feminist account of literature, by and about women. Gilbert draws upon and shows the relevance of fairy tales that reflect and reinforce patriarchal values. She also explains Jane's experiences –and rage- in terms of the class – based economic and social roles and positions that constrained Victorian women, specifically mentioning the “angel in the house” role (exemplified by Miss Temple and Helen Burns) and the position of governess (which made a young woman less than a family member but more than a servant). In short, Gilbert elucidates the broad cultural milieu in which the young woman like *Jane Eyre* had lived, in which a young woman Charlotte Bronte did live – and – wrote *Jane Eyre*.

So forth, the whole theorist and critics on feminists point of views come together to gain a power of autonomy for the women. In sum the present text *Jane Eyre* presenting Jane a female protagonist faced many ups and downs and longs for attainment of freedom and individuality throughout the novel. Eventually she presents her identity not for ones but for the whole female equality and freedom in the Eighteenth Century English Society and established a new way of life for women from that, they dig out the main crux of this research, the research hereby insists all the efforts from the text and will apply the concerned theorist above and finally results comes out.

### **III. Quest for Female Individuality in Bronte's *Jane Eyre***

Being a female, Jane struggled against gender discrimination and violence. She was badly treated whenever she went on the basis of gender biasness. As a female, she was pushed everywhere, the males are oppressors and she was oppressed so that, Jane fought for gender inequality and crossed the limitation created by the males in the society. She longed for her freedom through the great emancipation.

The novel begins in Gateshead Hall, where a ten year old orphan named Jane Eyre is living with her mother's brother's family. The brother, surnamed Reed, dies shortly after adopting Jane. His wife, Mrs. Sarah Reed and their three children neglect and abuse Jane, for they represent Mr. Reed's preference for the little orphan in bullying Jane, who retaliates with unwanted violence. Jane is blamed for the ensuing fight and Mrs. Reed locks her in the room Mr. Reed had died. Still locked in that night, Jane sees a light and panics, thinking that her uncle's ghost has come. A particularly important theme in the novel is patriarchy and Jane's efforts to assert her own identity within male society. Three of the main male characters, Brocklehurst, Rochester and St. John try to keep Jane in a subordinate position and prevent her from expressing own thoughts and feelings. Jane escapes Brocklehurst, rejects St. John and she later marries Rochester. Once she is sure that there is a marriage between equals. Through Jane, Bronte refutes Victorian stereotypes about women articulating what was for her time a radical feminist philosophy.

Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men does; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do. It is a thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary.

Jane Eyre opens with such an explosion which gives us a concrete situation through which to test the notion of self-assertion and especially to consider under what condition self-assertion is both productive and worthy of our trust. Brontë's novel also invites us to see the critical view on the condition of Jane. Three pages into the novel, the fourteen-year-old John Reed enters the room and without provocation searches for his cousin Jane Eyre four years his junior. He eventually has no good purpose in mind. As if like Jane, who is hiding behind folds of scarlet drapery.

After Jane is forced to hand over her book and go stand by the door, Jane throws at her the very book she had been reading, opening a wound on her head. Jane loses her differences as terror turns to anger. Her imagination runs way with her, but when Jane shows the terrible adult roles he could fulfill, she also helps us recognize that self assertion has a social as well as psychological force to it. "Wicked and Cruel" boy, Jane says and then shows him his adult self; "you are like murderer – you are like slave driver – you are like the Roman Emperor" p (6). Only a psychological but a social aberrance which it would be dangerous for her or other to resist. Indeed, one of the lessons Jane learns is that self-assertion always has a social as well as psychological force. The dominant society cannot be dismissed exactly, but alternatives society or communities within a society, can be sought and through grace and hard work, sometimes found-with Miss Temple and Helen Burns in Part I, with Mrs. Fairfax and Adele in Part II, Jane's declaration that she will have sisters and brothers. They are as important to her, she says, as her new-found economic independent. The importance to Jane of female friendship, especially, invites us to construe self-assertion in relation to community.

The outburst against her cousin John marks a beginning of seriousness in her life-narratives in which Jane faces the question of self-assertion. Looking at these

narratives, we should not isolate individual decision as if they were a series of “spots in time”. The narrative works, instead, is the describe a continuity of life out of which such decision could be made or since “decision” suggests more control than we often have, a continuity of life, within which such actions seems plausible. At the beginning of the book, Jane’s position as orphans seems obviously to place her outside of any tradition or society.

"I was a discord in Gateshead-hall; I was like nobody there: I had nothing in harmony with Mrs. Reed or her children, or her chosen vassalage. If they did not love me, in fact as little did I love them they were not bound to regard with affection a thing that could not sympathize with one amongst them, a heterogeneous thing, opposed to them in temperament, in capacity, in properties" (p.9).

And that is just the point: in order to resist domination by Gateshead-Hall not just to be outcast or scapegoat, Jane must find a different tradition and different society to live by. She must construct a different memory and learn a new anticipation. For the self-assertion that freedom or hope, as Josiah Royce made clear in the problem of Christianity. That means it does not make its way, as Jane learns, apart from one community or another. In placing self-assertion within a context of the continuity and sociality of life, Jane Eyre raises questions that are still an important part of our life in late modernity. I for one, it raises the question whether there isn’t a tradition of self-assertion. A “tradition of self-assertion” sounds like it may requires some unpacking before we consider whether such a tradition might exist in early, middle and late modernity. (Hugh 1820)

Since a bridge is rarely thrown between the terms “tradition” and “self-assertion”, let us begin with the individual terms first to see how accessible they will be to each other. In tradition social theorist Edward Shills helps us think about



tradition in terms of both practices and beliefs, and he gives helpful attention to the patterns they form and the images used to describe them. Shills defined tradition as “the frequent recurrence ... of similar ... practices, institutions and works” and their “normative transmission” (Clement, p. 345).

Such transmission, he thought, depend upon patterns of images of action and upon the beliefs “requiring recommending, regularity, permitting or prohibiting the reenactment of those patterns” (12). For Shills tradition was not the re-enactment of states of sentiment or mind, nor of physical actions or social relationships, so much as it was the pattern which guided their re-enactment (31). Those patterns, according to Shills were not static but open to change: Event to adhere to the previously established patterns, it is necessary to contrive new ones because the situation of actions, to which earlier patterns handed down by tradition were adequate, undergoes changes of greater or lesser magnitudes”. With Shills in mind let us take for our working definition of tradition the recurrent patterns of images of practices, and the beliefs that impinge upon them.

When we turn our attention from beginning to the end of the term in “a tradition of self-assertion; we first seem stymied by theoretical debates about the existence or non-existence of self. But these debates may be acquired if we follow Hans Blumbnberg’s definition of self-assertion as an existential program”. (Clement, p. 518)

Blumenber’s definition makes no claim about of for an essential self but restricts itself to an existential program “according to which man posits his existence in a historical situation and indicates to himself how he is going to deal with the reality surrounding him and what use he will make of the possibilities that are open to him”. (Clement, p. 523)

With the help of Shills and Blumenberg, let us define the “tradition self-assertion” as recognizable patterns or images of and beliefs about, that ways men and women have poised their existence to themselves and other in a historical situation. This position of an existence has pragmatic and future element to it (Clement p. 545). A notation of how to deal with the surrounding reality as well as what to make of the possibilities for the future. A brief sketch of self-assertion in the modern tradition will help us isolate some typical patterns, images and belief before turning to the way Jane Eyre might give us new insight into the tradition.

After Jane had been humiliated by Brockehurst, made to stand on a stool for breaking her slate and made to endure everyone’s gaze while the superintendent warned them of her wrong-doing Jane begins her recovery in that evening’s meeting with Helen and Miss Temple. Their meeting is frame in terms of reminiscent of a communion service. The passage begins, having invited Helen and me to approach the table, and placed before each of us a cup of tea with one delicious but thin morsel of toast. The formality of the language of invitation and approach, and the deliberateness ascribed to the sharing of food.

Resistance had become a major theme in the last quarter of a century: resistance to nationalism, resistance to the notion of an essential or stable self, resistance to theory. Our thinking about the tradition enters such a context and so it seems natural to ask how to resist the inertia of tradition’s forward roll. It seems less natural to ask how we use tradition’s resources or stand upon to its questions. In the modern world, as we have seen self-assertion has regularly been constructed as opposed to tradition. But our reading of Jane Eyre suggests that this opposition, more complicated than we usually imagine. First, the self-assertion which can resist or reshape tradition depends upon community. Second effective self-assertion requires

discovery of those resources within the tradition that let us resist it or lets us resist those parts of it which has taken a harmful turn. The need of community and the recognition of internal resources for changes.

Jane introduces us to the interior of the red-room a spare chamber with a large, looming mahogany bed, red decorations, drapes and the chill of the white drawn windows, a wide mirror. It was in this room, nine years ago Mr. Reed died, he was her mother's brother and was carried away by the undertaker, as well. Crossing the mirror, she sees her own image, and is spooked by her white skin, by how much a spirit or phantom she looks. Jane confides her own fears, and feelings of anger, in justice and pain toward the Reeds. She questions why she is always the object of cruelty, suffering, accusation and condemnation continuously with John's violence his sisters selfishness, Ms. Reed's indifference. She is still bleeding, but John's abuse was overlooked because Jane tried to fight him of her. She admits:

What a consternation of soul was mine that dreary afternoon! How all my brain was in turmoil and all my heart in insurrection! Yet in what dense ignorance, was the mental battle fought! I could not answer the ceaseless inward question why I thus suffered; now at the distance of, I will not say how many years, I see it clearly. (9)

Jane is always the object of abuse because she is completely different from and in discord with everyone else at Gateshead Hall. Neither party love each other and Jane does not have the necessary personality traits and physical appearance, a Sanguin's brilliant, careless, exacting, handsome, romping child, to be accepted and tolerated by the Reeds, her own perceptive and experienced temperament is and instead, condemned. Jane becomes cold and depressed in the red-room. Seeing a

while light move above the mirror and across the ceiling, she thinks it is a ghost or the dead spirit of Mr. Reed haunting the room, troubled from the grave.

She screams, and Bessie comes upstairs to see if she is ill. Jane tells the ghost and begs to be let into the nursery, but Mrs. Reed enters the room and throws Jane back in, for another hour, as punishment for her insurrection. Jane tortured, crying and hysterical goes into a fit, passing out.

Jane retires upstairs to speak to Bessie. She is just as forthright with Bessie, which is surprising to the nurse, who expresses deep affection for Jane. Jane kisses Bessie. Bessie says that this afternoon she and Jane will have tea and cake, while the Reeds are out, in honor of Jane's leaving.

On the cold morning of January 19<sup>th</sup>, Jane leaves Gateshead, saying goodbye to Bessie with tears, in a carriage to journey fifty miles alone. After a long journey of over a hundred miles, the carriage stops. It was Will into the night and Jane awakens from sleep and exits the carriage to meet a woman. They enter a door in a will, and than a warm hearth-kitchen in one of the houses. A woman enters the room, Miss Temple, and speaks to Jane for a few minutes about her education, name, parents and if she wants food,

Jane goes with another woman, Mill Miller, whom Jane describes as more ruddy and ordinary, Jane is led into a long room filled with the other pupil of Lowood Institution, no more than eighty, in brown frocks and long Holland pinafores, in their hour of study. They have a small meal. Jane goes to bed next to Miss Miller in the dormitory. Jane rises early, in the morning due to the sound of bell before dawn; all the girls assemble into the schoolroom and form classes in a hurried tumult. Classes begin as teachers enter the room and assume the seat before four tables, semicircles of girls. Jane is placed with the lowest and youngest group.

The girls and teachers are dissatisfied with the appearance of Miss Maria Temple, the superintendent of Lowood. Miss Temple announces a special lunch of bread and cheese because of the terrible porridge – on her responsibility. The girls retire to the garden, where Jane finally sees the sign that says she is at Lowood Institution, a charity school for orphans. She meets a girl who is reading, whom she asks questions about the institution and teachers. Later this girl is punished by having to stand alone during lessons, by Miss Scatcherd; Jane is intrigued by the girl's dignity.

Day two at Lowood Institution commences for Jane. She is placed in the fourth class, and expresses bewilderment at the speed of classes and lessons in her first active day. While sewing, Jane witnesses her new friend Helen Burns. Helen Burns begins whipped with a rod, by Helen is often punished for her 'slatternly' ways, lack of attention or messiness. Jane is horrified and indignant over Helen's unfair treatment, as Helen really was not at fault or slatternly. She speaks to Helen later about the teacher's treatment and Helen's calm behavior under duress, Jane says: "But I feel this Helen: I must dislike those who, whatever I do to please them, persist in disliking me. I must resist those who punish me unjustly. It is as natural as that I should love those who show me affection, or submit to punishment when I feel it is deserved" (47).

Helen explains to Jane that Miss Scatcherd is not cruel, but simply dislikes Helen's unruly habits and faults. She explains that sometimes it is one's responsibility to endure certain types of punishment. Jane thinks that she must resist all the ways of that society's people who mistreat her in the name of female. So, she simply wants to show the disagreement of gender biasness and inequality of that very society.

Jane surveys the features of those she attends to at Thornfield Hall, with contentedness. Mrs. Fairfax is pleasant to associate with and Jane feels much in control of the tutelage of Adele; she is perfectly docile and acceptable student, if not containing within her character, no particularly unique superior or inferior talents. She is quite ordinary if not a little lacking in profundity for her age. Jane feels a good enough affection and connection to Adele for their works together, and a satisfaction in well-adjusted yet never harmful path she is preparing for Adele. She also admits, while traversing the hills and long dim sky-line around Thornfield. She states:

I longed for a power of vision which might overpass that limit, which might reach the busy world, towns, regions full of life I had heard of but never seen: that I desired more of practical experience than I possessed, more of intercourse with my kind, of acquaintance with variety of character than was here within my reach... I could not help it, the restlessness was in my nature, it agitated me to pain sometimes. (95).

Jane speaks of the visions, passionate, glowing full of fire and life, which often rises in her imagination on some of her long ventures in the dark halls of Thornfield Hall, visions and adventures which she desires but has not actually experienced. Mr. Rochester does indeed enjoy Jane's sharp intellect, her rationale, and her teasing if not also sarcastic tongue.

Jane never heard more fearful words spoken, as the two men objected to their marriage yet she feels decidedly cold, collected and numb. Mr. Rochester questions the men, and it is revealed that he has been indeed married before, and is married presently to Bertha Mason. The marriage took place in the young age of Rochester, in Jamaica. Mr. Mason steps forward to attest as a witness that his sister Bertha, is

still alive and living in Mr. Rochester's attic: the mad woman. It is in fact Rochester's first wife who inhabits the third floor of Thornfield, taken care of by Grace Poole, for many years. Mr. Rochester becomes increasingly agitated until the truth is spoken, when he admits the existence of Bertha and Jane's innocence in the past at Thornfield, to see the real Bertha. Rochester asks them to judge whether he was wrong to desire even a bigamous marriage as he considers Bertha no longer human enough to be his wife. Bertha is a monstrous image, the men are even wary of her Jane describes her:

In the deep shade, at the further end of the room, a figure ran backward and forward, what it was, whatever beast or human being one could not tell ... wild as a man, hid its head and face ... the hyena rose up, and stood tall on its hind feet (257).

Bertha longs for Rochester, biting his throat, it takes all three men to wrestle her down and tie her hands behind the chair. Jane finds out that it is because of the letter she wrote to her uncle, who lives in Madeira, that Mr. Mason and her uncle learnt of the upcoming bigamous marriage. Jane is too numb and shocked to truly react at all. She leaves all the men and retires to her room, silent and unemotional. A transformation has occurred inside herself regarding her future and her own identity. She soon falls asleep.

Jane awakens again later in the afternoon, faint with hunger and still numb from emotion. She has no single understanding of the past day's event, save that she knows she must leave Thornfield, painfully extricate herself from Rochester forevermore. She must aid herself not fall into another's will without her own independence. She leaves her chamber to find Rochester, at a vigil outside her door. They go downstairs, and after Jane has eaten and drunk, they discuss their future, a bit stilted and in an emotional manner. Jane finds herself holding back, so as to show she

is not involved. Rochester asks Jane's forgiveness, which she gives immediately completely, such is his sincerity and her love for him.

But the forgiveness is not shown, only at her heart's core. Jane has decided that she will and must not live with Mr. Rochester out of wedlock, even though he urges her to this discussion, that his marriage status makes no differences for their relationship. Despite his violent passion, his tears, his fierceness, she is sure for she knows how Rochester would eventually not respect her, would only see her as not different than his dependent on him financially as the transaction of money for that. In one final attempt Rochester cries that she will be his only salvation and his redeemer, he wonders, how he will suffer, with her gone.

Jane admits that she feels no vengeance upon seeing Mrs. Reed; in fact she feels only reconciliation toward the woman's past actions and misuse of her. Mrs. Reed finally comes to believe that Jane is truly Jane; she tells Jane that she wishes to have her stay at Gateshead until she is physically and mentally capable of discussing some important subject which weighs heavily on her mind. Jane is not surprised and does inform us later that Eliza has become the superior of the convent where she was noviate, endowing it with her money and Georgiana has married a worn out man of money. Jane leaves for Thornfield Hall sure that her time there will be short, due to the marriage of Rochester and Lady Blanche Ingram. She has heard from Mrs. Fairfax that the grand party ended and Mr. Rochester left for the England three weeks ago and is to be expected back in a fortnight. She arrives in Millecote, leaving her box and takes the long walk to Thornfield, on foot by herself. Jane is sure she will be separated from Rochester and a new inner agony creeps inside on her walk home. Jane sees Rochester sitting on the style, writing as she approaches Thornfield.



Jane is greeted happily by everyone at Thornfield, and feels a great calm in returning especially in Mr. Rochester's warm welcome. He calls her often to his presence, as she says, she never felt that she had loved so well as now no meetings between Blanche Ingram and Rochester occur either Mr. Rochester begins a dialogue with Jane about how she must soon leave Thornfield, because he is to be married. He tells her how he has cottage in Ireland all the while Jane feeling ill and utterly sickened by the idea of going to Ireland and leaving Thornfield. Jane says it directly, she speaks how the sea will be a barrier between herself and Mr. Rochester, "how wealth caste custom intervned between me and what I naturally and inevitably loved". (221)

Jane, upon the topic of Rochester's bridge coming up again, says she must go but Rochester exclaims that she must stay, Jane passionately extorts that she cannot go on while her own feeling are torn to shreds, and she is nothing to Rochester, in communion and spirit; she insists that despite the fact that she is "small" plain obscure, she has just as much soul as he does, she is just as much his equal and longs freedom and equality form the male domination and she tried her best effort to fight against that patriarchy's suppression and tried to resist against all the exposition.

Jane, the female protagonist moves and had relationship with different people. Wherever she goes, she struggles with the existing society's norms and values whatever the society dictates she is compelled to follow but gradually she comes to search for her own existence and starts to protest and avoids the patriarchy which was prevailing in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century English Society. She goes in various places and finds domination, exploitation, suppression in term of gender inequality, so that Jane awakens again later in the afternoon, faint with hunger and still numb from emotion. She has no single understanding of the past days event. She knows she must leave

Thornfield, painfully extricate herself from Rochester forevermore. She must aid herself not fall into another's will, without her own independence.

Jane the main protagonist has decided that she will and must not live with Mr. Rochester out of Wedlock, even though he urges her to this difference for their relationship. She starts to search for respect equality and equal status in the society and challenges the male though she is married. Despite the Rochester's violent passion, his tears, his fierceness, she is sure for she knows how Rochester would eventually not respect her, would only see her as not different than his past feelings. She understands that in this situation she would be dependent on him financially. She could not respect herself within. But in one final attempt, Rochester cries that she will be his only salvation, his redeemptor; how he will suffer with her gone.

Jane, fought to rupture the hierarchy of that 18<sup>th</sup> Century English Society. The society gave the female a, low position and proved that they (females) are weak, emotive, sensitive, caretaker, home guard, sensual etc. but Jane broke the (primordial) archetypal images and proved herself a genuine female in that society. She even could not accept to Mr. Rochester and kicked him off and create a new world of her own.

When she starts to seek her own identity then Mr. Rochester provokes his demand of assistance in his life and surrender in front of Jane. Mr. Rochester reveals that he believes Jane not in body but in mind, in spirit and possesses more qualities. She can perform as man so that he is convinced she has the qualities that are needed to help others and he is sure this is her calling "He says:

I have made study of you for ten months. I have proved you in that time by Sundry tests; and what have I seen and elicited? In the village, I found that you could perform well, punctually uprightly labour

uncongenial to your habits and inclinations. I saw you could perform it with capacity and fact. (p455)

When Mr. Rochester becomes to realize himself that Jane as being a female, she could do anything as men can do. He says Jane's power to overcome all the difficulty fighting against the patriarchy where male always dominate female. He says that she could perform well and can show her intelligence and capabilities and redraw the patriarchy from female point of view, in fact he accepts the female presence in the society and family too and female power come to exist and search for identity.

St. John tells Jane that she is disposed to be a missionary's wife that it is not personal but mental endowments that she has been given by God, she is made for labour not for love. Jane has overcome too much and argues with him increasingly. Jane thinks finally and comes to the conclusion that she would and could be a missionary with St. John, but never as his wife.

Jane realizes she must look out for herself and live according to the values she has placed as significant in her life. Rochester finally becomes human for her and no longer an idol for the only locale of equality, she says:

As for me, I daily wished more to please him: but to do so, I felt daily more and more that I must disown half of my nature, stifle half my faculties, wrest my tastes from their original bent... He wanted to train me to an elevation I could never reach ... to give my changeable green eyes to sea-blue tint and solemn luster of his own (350).

Jane's mobility in different places that she could attempt to find out her odd identity. She also fought and try to assimilate and break down prestige of male-dominated society. Whenever she goes, is exploited and dominated in term of gender construction, for example. Female, wife , little lady etc. In the name of female, she is

compelled to go in various places to find new identity and individuality of all the females. Being a female she becomes the means of pleasure, and called second level of human beings. Male tries their best to train them (females). Here, she refused such type of eyes and changes the position of female surrounding in the whole British Society.

Jane, the main protagonist bravely resists all the domination by Gateshead Hall and tried to find distinct status-quo in those societies to live and create a sense of womanhood. Jane thinks that she must resist all the ways of that society's people who mistreat her in the name of female. So she wants to establish and redraw the gender-biasness and inequality. By defending her all sorts of hindrances she used to establish her own distinct and peculiar identity, position and status as well. Jane, the female protagonist faced many struggles with the existing society's norms and values whatever the society had dictated but she joined and confronted everywhere she went and try to entice her femininity as an individual personality to avoid the patriarchy which was prevailing in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century English Society.

#### **IV. The Victory and Self-Assertion of Female Dominance**

In general understanding, we can say it is an individuals' freedom of action within the social group and in relation to other individuals. Different social, cultural, authoritative and many other man made factors may hinder the freedom of an individual. Even more, women may be double exploited. First; by the common hindrance and second; by men's perspectives and behaviors of 'second sex', a submissive and complementary to them towards women. Women therefore have to battle with more obstacles for their perfect individuality. Their first effort should be in equating themselves to the males eliminating all kind of gender inequalities and discriminations in the society and establishing their own sphere analogous to that of men. Then only comes the concern of a complete liberation of their 'selves'.

*Jane Eyre* a representative masterpiece about the revolution for women's/female individuality, exposes a stunning account of a young Jane's sexual and psychological self-discovery and violation of social, sexual and spiritual limitation for her absolute emancipation. Jane, the heroine, a real British Lady of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, is allowed to disrupt the sacred institutions of marriage and contemporary British womanhood and to disregard moral concepts without repenting.

The society where Jane exists; women were for the pleasure and assistance of men, their role is complementary to that of men and they should fulfill their feminine thirst. It considers them 'different' from men and warns not to compete with them but to depend on them for everything, especially for their identities, the social definition of who they are. It has rewarded them for the limited role of wife, mother and mistress, all of which are pleasing and beneficial to men. One who does not seek her identity through men, is a threat to its social values but this what Jane does by abandoning her marital, maternal and familial roles.

If women are, the way they are, because society has made them that way, they can only change their life significantly by changing society. She therefore, takes many radical actions not only for destroying the set social values but also for establishing alternative values for women of their own. She rejects the traditional feminine role of 'mother-women' and reconstructs an alternative, oppositional role of a 'free-woman' which demands a female life with personal emotions, individuality and self-identity. In the effort of adopting her redefined identity, Jane discards the religious practices that suffocated her 'self' by violating her freedom; breaks the marital chain that binds 'her' wings of individuality.

As a new woman Jane declares herself no longer one of her husband's possession and nobody has any right to force her doing things. Since now she can give herself where she chooses. Jane proposes Mr. Rochester to be everything to teach other to fulfill her prolonged desire for his company she even has an adulterous affair with Rochester to exercise her rights to choice for sensual satisfaction.

A poor, orphan girl, Jane is struggling for spiritual and physical survival and came to begin her life as physically and psychologically oppressed young girl. A male character like Mr. Rochester threatens and obstacles in many ways to her and says not to tell it to anybody. She only kills the old self to recreate a free from the doubts and fears imparted by the patriarchal hegemony, and erases her subjectivity. She also leads Mr. Rochester towards creation and involved in various ways toward independence. She emerges from silence imposed upon her the patriarchal society to a distinct voice.

In the patriarchal society marriage is one of the complexities which sometimes minimizes the effect of a self-identity of female. In the novel '*Jane Eyre*' Bronte presents the situation in which female characters search their individuality and identity, but are beaten down and kept aside by the patriarchal society. It is the 18<sup>th</sup> Century English Society and its tyrannical behavior that made the female identity submerged and subordinated. '*Jane Eyre*' represents a women's search for identity. Jane, the woman protagonist of the novel who is victimized physically and mentally by the male characters and through her consistent effort female individuality and identity is regained.

## Works Cited

- Abrams, M.H. *A glossary of Literary Terms*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Bangalore: Prism Books, 1993.
- Adams, Hazard, ed. *Critical Theory Since Plato*. Florida: Hartcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc., 1992.
- Adams, Hazard. *Critical Theory Since Plato*. 9<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: Harcourt Bruce Joianovich College Publishers, 1971.
- Beasley, Chris. *What is Feminism?* Sydney: SAGE 1999.
- Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. London: Everyman, 1995.
- Benstock, Shari. *Textualizing the Feminine*, 1991.
- Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. London: Smith and Elder Co., Cornhill, 1847.
- Cixous, Helene. *The laugh of the Medusa*. Ed. Keith Cohen. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1976, 875-94.
- Clement, Catherine. *Feminist Readings*. Ed. Betsy wing Minneapolis: Minnesota, 1986.
- Freedman, Jane. *Feminism*. New Delhi: Viva Books, 2002.
- Gilbert M. Sandra and Susan Gubar. *Critical Theory Since Plato*. Ed. Hazard Adams. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1992, 1160-1775.
- Gilmore, Leigh. *Autobiographies: A Feminist Theory of Self-Representation*, 1994.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Critical Theory Since Plato*. Ed. Hazard Adams. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1992, p.1.
- Lacan, Jacques. *Critical Theory Since Plato*. Ed. Hazard Adams. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1992.
- McLeod, Hugh. *Religion and Society in England 1850-1914*. London: MacMillan 1996.



- Ruth, Sheila. *Issues in Feminism*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980.
- Ruthven, K.K. *Feminist Literary Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984.
- Seldom, Raymond. *A Reading Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*. London: Harvester Whealsheat, 1998.
- Showalter, Elaine, "The Feminist Critical Revolution." Introduction. *The New Feminist Criticism* 3-17.
- "Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness." *The New Feminist Criticism* 243-68.
- "Towards a Feminist Poetics." Adams 1224-33.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "In Other Words?" *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*. Eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman. New York: Columbia UP, 1994.
- The New Feminist Criticism*. Ed. Elaine Showalter. New York: Pantheon Books, 1985.
- Winnifrith, Tom. *The Bronte and Their Background*. London: MacMillan, 1973.
- Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*. Ed. Carol H. Poston. New York: Norton Press, 1975: 395-99.
- Woolf, Virginia. Ed. Hazard Adams. *Critical Theory Since Plato: A Room of One's Own*. New York: Harcourt Press, 1992.