

Chapter One: General Introduction

1.1. Background to the Study

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* is a Victorian novel that was written in 1847. *Jane Eyre* is considered of importance for it helps in explaining the life of Victorian women, their estate and rights that the novel came to shed light on. In other words, the novel came to connect a reading to the position of women in society during the Victorian era. Moreover, the story of *Jane Eyre* shows how the events that the heroine comes across in her life help her confront or rebel against the Victorian view of "femininity". During Queen Victoria's reign, British society was undergoing slow but significant change. The country was ruled by a woman, yet women were treated in a different way than men and had few opportunities. That is to say, girls were not allowed to go to school, and if it was the case; boys and girls were taught separately. On the one hand, Children of poor families were taught in local schools and wouldn't progress beyond learning basic skills. On the other hand, children of the upper-middle class were taught in exclusive public schools.

It is worth mentioning that Victorian society was a class-conscious society in which people were treated according to the social class they belonged to. This class system pervaded all aspects of life: education, work, marriage, etc. For instance, women were not allowed to progress in education as men, and they did not have access to universities. In addition, poor women were not allowed to fall in love with wealthy men. In the context of these Victorian daily-life facts, Charlotte Brontë came up with her novel *Jane Eyre* in order to explore those Victorian values and introduce them in a different way.

The clear and apparent thing in *Jane Eyre* is that it is a novel which tells a love story; however, the way in which it is told is unusual. In fact, it is true that this novel treats one of

the Victorian controversial issues, which is the marriage of a man and a young lady of different classes. Meanwhile, this story of love is told in a strange uncanny manner.

1.2. Review of Literature:

Introducing any of Charlotte Brontë's works is a delicate and demanding task. As far as *Jane Eyre* is concerned, many critical studies had been conducted on the topic of the novel. On the one hand, many critics such as Harold Bloom affirm that the novel *Jane Eyre* is an unconventional Victorian novel which came to rebel against the customs of the Victorian society.

In this respect, Harold Bloom claims that Charlotte Brontë manifests an unusual aggressiveness which is something readers may not expect when reading a novel ("Bloom's Guides" 7). This rather critical view is agreed upon by the part of the feminist critics Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar who argue that Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* is considered as a shock to Victorian reviewers for it was simply a "rebellious feminism". In other words, the novel represents a rebellion against all sorts of customs, standards of society ("Bloom's Modern Critical Interpretations" 4). Moreover, the critic Sally Shuttleworth highlighted that *Jane Eyre* is "a very un-Victorian text" for it deals with social and psychological issues of the nineteenth century ("Bloom's Modern Critical Interpretations" 16).

In addition to these rather historical critiques, there are other reviews which dealt with the topic of the novel and may focus much more on the psychological dimension that Charlotte Brontë wanted to depict via *Jane Eyre*. For instance, Juhasz criticized *Jane Eyre* and stated that "Charlotte Brontë tries to write a fantasy; to give herself and her heroine the father love that she herself had sought all her life" (119). From a feminist perspective, Virginia Woolf stated in her *A Room of One's Own* that a woman "must have a room of her own" (06). Thereafter, feminist critics like Virginia Woolf appeals to the importance of

women writings as a way to express their thoughts, feelings, communicate, and so claim for their rights.

From a different angle, enumerable studies dealt with the literary movement that Charlotte Brontë approaches in her novel *Jane Eyre*. Apparently, the novel is considered as a romantic novel for it deals with a love story of a governess who falls in love with her master. However, one should not forget that *Jane Eyre* is an autobiography which reviewers came to affirm its correspondence to Charlotte Brontë's real life to a great extent. In essence, Romanticism and Realism are believed to be opposite to each other. On the one hand, Beers claims that Romanticism is "the world of the imagination and of dream" (7). On the other hand, Realism "purports to be an authentic account of the actual experiences of individuals" (Watt 27). All in all, we can say that Romanticism and Realism are two seemingly opposed approaches that may never come to go hand in hand at a given time.

The choice of this theme is based on the importance of the issue which this research project tries to explore. The problematic itself is something odd in the world of literature. Most importantly, the coexistence of Romanticism and Realism in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* is one aspect which other researchers did not tackle. For instance, many critics wrote various critical reviews on the novel. Some of those critical reviews include *Jane, Blanche, and Bertha* by Anita Levy; *Jane's Otherness* by John G. Peters; and *Significance of Pictures* by Lawrence J. Starzyk.

Precisely, some critics have dealt with the same issue I intend to solve by the end of this research. To illustrate, Eugenia C. DeLamotte addresses Charlotte Brontë's "conflation of realism and romance" (193). That is to say, she assumes that in mixing between the two modes, Brontë asserts "the identity of the ordinary women's lives and ... the problem of the self and its boundaries specifically in the context of the modes of transcendence available to women" (193). Agreeing on the same view, Robyn R. Warhol argues that "the two genres are not so much in competition as in continuous oscillation with each other, serving to double

each other” (858). Notably, the stated above views claim for the coexistence of the two literary movements, i.e. Romanticism and Realism in *Jane Eyre*.

Besides these supporting critiques, I haven't come across any academic research in the field of literature that is conducted to answer the problematic I propose in my research project. Consequently, I think that my research is going to fill the gap which lies in other researchers' works since they missed out the controversy in the coexistence of Romanticism and Realism in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*.

Accordingly, I endeavour through the analysis of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* to explore the coexistence of Romanticism and Realism in this literary work. Mainly, I intend to show how that the seemingly opposed literary movements, i.e., Romanticism and Realism succeeded to converge and create the uniqueness of such Victorian novel as *Jane Eyre*.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

This research explores the seemingly paradoxical idea that some elements of Realism and other elements of Romanticism meet together in a literary work like Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* where in fact the two literary movements come to never agree since Realism came as a rebellious movement against Romanticism. Consequently, the problematic we intend to state in this research is about the Romantic and Realistic elements that succeed to converge together in Charlotte Brontë's novel, *Jane Eyre*.

1.4. Research Question

The major research question in this research is as follows: How do elements of Romanticism and Realism contribute to the literary value of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*? A number of subsidiary questions stem from the above research question:

1. What are the elements of Romanticism in *Jane Eyre*? What is their literary significance?
2. What are the elements of Realism in *Jane Eyre*? What is their literary significance?

3. How do they relate to each other?

1.5. Hypothesis

Although Romanticism and Realism are fundamentally different in terms of their principles, this did not prevent Charlotte Brontë from using them to complement each other by fulfilling different literary functions.

1.6. Aim of the Research

The aim of the proposed research is to explore and examine the Romantic and Realistic elements in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and to show how the two opposed literary movements can succeed to converge.

1.7. Scope of the Research

In the course of our research, the study will cover all the elements that correspond to the literary features in *Jane Eyre* such as setting, point of view, themes, and style.

1.8. Methodology

Data will be collected through an extensive library research and internet including books, articles, dissertations, etc. Throughout this research, we will adopt the descriptive and analytical procedures under which we shall analyze and explore some of the elements that pertain to Romanticism and Realism in order to see how they converge and how they are reflected in the novel *Jane Eyre*.

1.9. Structure of the Research

The research will be divided into five chapters. The first chapter will be in a form of general introduction. As a theoretical framework, the second chapter will deal with the

Victorian literature and its aspects. The third chapter will explore some Romantic elements in *Jane Eyre*. The fourth chapter will explore some Realistic elements in *Jane Eyre* as well.

Finally, the fifth chapter is a general conclusion in which we will discuss the overall findings and find out how elements of Romanticism and Realism coexist in a single literary work, and we will end up with a future perspective and recommendations.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

2.1. Introduction

Understanding the various genres of literature is an important part of studying language arts. Studying the literature of one nation requires from the learner to be knowledgeable about the different periods and movements that the literature of this nation has gone through. To illustrate, Britain is affected by the literary movements in the European continent, in one way or another, for it is very close to the continent. Since the very first periods in British history, Britain knew almost all the different genres of literature throughout different historical periods. For instance, the Victorian Age is the most flourished period in British history. Reigned by Queen Victoria, Britain had experienced prosperity which it had never been through in other eras. For that reason, Queen Victoria's era was called "the Golden Age" for it was accompanied with successful achievements in all domains: economic, cultural, social, etc.

On the one hand, social change during the Victorian Age was one of the main aspects which characterized this era. To portray the social life, Victorian literary men came to use realism that suits the description of the real, daily life of the Victorians. Not only male writers contributed in picturizing Victorian life, women as well had a hand in that though they were not encouraged to write and publish their literary works. For example, Charlotte Brontë challenged those unfair conditions that Victorian society imposed upon women. As a result, she wrote many pieces of literature which treat the current issues in a realistic way. Although Charlotte Brontë was a Victorian writer, and Realism was the pervading literary movement, she did not totally relinquish Romanticism in her work *Jane Eyre*. Hence, this novel could neither be considered as a pure Romance, nor a complete Realistic literary work.

2.2. The Victorian Novel

The Victorian era was famous for the flourishing of the novel which tackled all aspects of life and varied into different types. Thus, we may find: “domestic novels, historical novels, political novels, mystery and crime novels, sociological novels, romantic novels, religious novels, psychological novels, and perhaps some others” (Trivedi 548). Through this time, the novel flourished to the extent that it achieved the same importance of Shakespearean plays during the Elizabethan era. To cite some examples, we may refer to such well known novelists like: Sir Walter Scott, Emily Brontë, Anne Brontë, Charlotte Brontë, Anthony Trollope, George Eliot, Oscar Wilde, and Charles Dickens (Miller par. 7). As far as the Victorian Age is concerned, we can say that the novel achieved unprecedented success and popular stature for it came to be used as a vehicle of social criticism. In addition, it was a time when the novel became the most widely read and the challenging expression of progressive thought.

Being more didactic in terms of purpose, the Victorian novel came then to appeal to the intellect. Hence, it aimed at making society aware throughout the analytical pictures it gives to its characters (Trivedi 548). To illustrate, we may refer to some major novelists such as: Charles Dickens, Charlotte Brontë, George Elliot, Mrs. Gaskell, and others who, throughout their writings, showed their duty to portray the fate of common people and depict the social conditions of that era. When talking about such a Victorian novelist as Charles Dickens, there is something that arouses our attention on the quality of his writings.

The moral aim of Dickens’ novels overlapped with their literal merit for he did not believe in the theory of ‘art for art’s sake’. As the representative figure of Victorian novelists, Charles Dickens was aware of his duty towards the readership, and accordingly his writings were to instruct people and give them a hand to be aware of what is going on around them. (Trevidi 556-557). Therefore, the works of a popular and prolific Victorian novelist like Dickens were combined with social criticism and comedy to create a tone that identifies the

Victorian world as “David Lodge has remarked that ‘novels burn facts as engines burn fuel’” (qtd. in James 3). That is to say, the stories novels tell are only facts and these novels come just to state those facts, in one way or another, throughout adding the flavour of literature.

The Victorian novel was largely directed to middle-class readership treating their concerns. However, it was not easy for anyone to have access to Dickens’ works, and if it was done, it was through illegal copies. (James 4). Moreover, it is logical that realism came to suit the Victorian novel for it was the avenue through which novelists paved their way to the portrayal of reality as possible as they could to readers. In this context, the novelist George Eliot stated that

Reviewing Volume III of Ruskin’s *Modern Painters* for the Westminster in 1856: The truth of infinite value that he teaches is realism- the doctrine that all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of nature, and not by imagination on the mists of feeling, in place of definite, substantial reality... (qtd. in Haight XXXIX).

Since realism centralized the Victorian novel, the latter came to transcend and reflect the various concepts of the world for the Victorian reader.

Accordingly, it could be understood that the novel in the Victorian era was very important for it came just to provide a portrait of the nineteenth-century England and describe the real and daily life of common people and how they were treated. Though those facts were told in a fictitious way, the novels found their way to the readers' minds and were appreciated due to the talented manner with which they were written, which makes the reader feel when given a novel as if he were witnessing a real life situation or going through an authentic experience.

2.2.1. Feminism

The term “Feminism” is considered a modern one. The origins of this term is still a controversial issue, yet the term ‘feminist’ appears to be used for the first time “in 1871 in a

French medical text to describe a cessation in development of the sexual organs and characteristics in male patients, who were perceived as thus suffering from ‘feminization’ of their bodies ...” (qtd in. Freedman 2). Later, the French writer Alexandre Dumas *fils*, republican and antifeminist, published a pamphlet in 1872 entitled *l’homme-femme* in which he used the term “feminism” commenting on the subject of adultery in order to describe a masculine behaviour of women (Freedman 2). That is to say, a clear distinction between the two sexes was made according to biological factors.

Historically speaking, feminism sets its origins back to the late eighteenth century which marked the struggle for women’s rights that started with Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of the Right of Women* (1792) and the American suffragist Margaret Fuller’s *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845) (Cuddon 316). Accordingly, feminism came to challenge the traditional male ideas about women and change the negative view men had on women; they regard women as weak, emotional, and passive. Because of that denial, women have been seeking to describe their experience in all kinds of literature, especially the novel.

In essence, the feminist movement had gone through two distinctive waves. The first wave could be traced back to the late nineteenth century when female writers were fed up by the humiliation and underestimation of women that was based on the gender, and decided to fight in order to improve the situation of women in society and be equal to men (Knellwolf, and Christopher Noris 194). Following, the second wave of feminism came to shed the light on specific issues like violence against women and children in addition the sexual abuse. As far as literature is concerned, “The feminist approach to the study of literature pursued several goals: a revisionist engagement with history and literary history, a revision of aesthetic standards and a radical critique of the representation of gender and gender roles as part of a larger critique of cultural self-definition” (196-197). Therefore, women struggled for their rights on all spheres because of the bitter conditions they lived in, in addition to the harsh and rigged customs imposed on them by society just for they are women.

During the late 1960s, new concepts that are relevant to the distinction between the two sexes appeared. In fact, scholars argued that there is a difference between the two notions i.e. “gender” and “sex”. The latter means the biological difference created naturally through the: “genes”, “chromosomes”, “organs”, and “hormones” a given person has. The former refers to the social construction that sets the difference between male and female individuals (Ely and Irene Padavic 1125). Historically speaking, the early nineteenth century Victorians formed an idea about the distinction between the two sexes that was based on the biological factors, yet with the continuing progress in science new ideas and conceptions about the notion of sex and gender developed (Guy 468). In other words, we can say that despite the fact that women were underestimated and unwelcome in the world of literature, they made the challenge to prove their ability in dealing with writing.

After the arguments made about the use of the term “feminism”, movements complaining about the inequality between women and men appeared simultaneously in the United States and Europe. Moreover, the term “feminism” was used again in the 1960s during the emergence of the “feminist literary criticism” and the Civil Rights campaigns (Plain and Susan Sellers 2). Accordingly, a debate was conducted about feminism and the production of: “(a) the notion of the expressed difference in writing, (b) a radical desire to recognize that women’s writing has equal importance as male representations of women and the notion of “écriture feminine” surrenders to a traditional marginalization of women’s voices” (Cuddon 315-316). As far as British novelists are concerned, initiators like Charlotte Brontë and Mrs. Gaskell wrote literary texts which showed their early treatment of women concerns (Plain and Susan Sellers 8). For example, in an era when few women were able to support themselves, the feminist novel reached its climax through the works of Jane Austen, Charlotte and Emily Brontë, and George Eliot (Encyclopedia of Feminist Literature xi). That is to say, female writers engaged in the world of literature intentionally to prove that they were qualified and endowed with the same intellectual capacities male writers had. Thus, they were able to

produce pieces of writing of the same literary value.

In his book *Literary Women*, Ellen Moers stated that “‘literature is the only intellectual field to which women, over a long stretch of time, have made an indispensable contribution’” (qtd. in Miles 2). In other words, women found their refuge in the novel which marked their presence and really proved that women are equal to men and accordingly they succeeded in producing examples of the finest works of literature.

The phrase “women writers” pushes us to think about “women novelists”. Writings by women were dismissed and ignored for some reason they were produced by female writers. According to the maltreatment they got, women writers started to look for male pen names for they were aware that by doing so they would get larger acceptance because the readership thought them male authors. Regardless of the clear distinction that was made between male and female writers in the 19th century, the phrase “women writers” succeeded to join itself to the enormous world of literature (Miles 2, 6, 7). Agreeing with the latter view, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar claims that “only by seeking a female precursor who, far from representing a threatening force to be denied or killed, proves by example that a revolt against patriarchal authority is possible (49)”. Indeed, women were blamed for things that were out of their control such as their gender. They endeavoured to prove their legitimacy and abolish the feelings of alienation and inadequacy that society created inside of women.

In order to explore the contribution of women in literature, one should mention the British writer and critic Virginia Woolf, who witnessed both the Victorian and modern age. Regardless of her first reviews for the *Times Literary Supplement* with which she began her career, Virginia contributed to literature with various novels such as: *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927), and *A Room of One's Own* (1929) (Gamble 327). Due to these literary contributions, Woolf was considered as the founder of feminist literary criticism, in which she appeals to the consideration of women and the evaluation of their writings (Plain and Susan Sellers 68). In essence, Virginia Woolf was an important figure who had concerned

herself to manifest women issues and kept on campaigning for the right of women to be viewed in a rational and acceptable way in a society which refused their identity just because of irrational explanations of scientific findings, or simply social beliefs.

2.2.2. A Short Biography of the Novelist

Charlotte Brontë was born on April 21, 1816 in Thornton, Yorkshire. She was one of the six children of the Reverend Patrick Brontë and Maria Branwell Brontë. Charlotte lost her mother at the age of five, and later her two elder sisters Maria and Elizabeth died in 1825 suffering from tuberculosis. Fortunately, Charlotte and her remaining siblings, Emily, Anne, and Branwell, survived. However, their only brother died at the age of thirty (Bloom's Guides 9). Charlotte and her sister Emily attended the Clergy daughters' School, a place of harsh conditions, but soon after the death of Elizabeth and Maria they left it and stayed at home (Ruggieri 4). At home, the four siblings read books from their father's well furnished library. The children had access to books like: Sir Walter Scott's novels, the poetry of Lord Byron, and the Arabian Nights. Having access to such famous and great pieces of literature may reflect the powerful literary style in which Charlotte wrote her works.

From 1831 through 1838, Charlotte attended Roe Head School. Firstly, she was a pupil and until she became a teacher she remained there. Later, Charlotte worked as a governess for three years in Yorkshire. In 1842, the two sisters, Charlotte and Emily, moved to work in the *Pensionat Hegar* in Brussels where Emily taught music while Charlotte English (Bloom's Guides 9). The aim of the sisters was to establish their own school once they get home, yet their dream was not realized (Weisser "Charlotte Brontë"). In October, Charlotte and Emily went home because of the death of their aunt who took care of them after the death of their mother. In the following year, Charlotte returned to Brussels but alone. Her second stay there was hard because she was in love with professor Hegar. After a year,

Charlotte went home for Mr. Hegar's wife was jealous and thus he became too cold to her (Bloom's Guides 9). The continuous painful moments Charlotte had gone through did not prevent her from fighting to improve herself, and create the identity she had ever dreamt of.

In 1846, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne published their collection of poems using the pseudonyms: Currer (Charlotte), Elis (Emily), and Acton (Anne) Bell. In the same year, Charlotte finished her first novel *The Professor*, which was not accepted for publication, Emily wrote *Wuthering heights*, and Anne *Agnes Grey*; however, Charlotte began working on *Jane Eyre* in the same year, and in 1847 the three novels were published (Bloom's Guides 10; Weisser 9). Precisely, by October 16th *Jane Eyre* was accepted to be published and was found a great and fascinating. At first, only some copies were distributed to private literary men and until early December copies of the novel started to be available to the public in a larger number (Gaskell "To Messrs. Smith and Elder, August 24th"). Unfortunately, Branwell and Emily died in the following year, and in 1849 Anne died too. After this successive death of the family members, Charlotte found herself and her father the only survivors of the Brontës. Nevertheless, Charlotte did not give up and consequently her third novel *Shirley* was published in 1849 (Bloom's Guides 10; Ruggieri 4). In other words, Charlotte challenged all the hard circumstances she was going through, and continued to write which helped her to be one of the well known novelists in her era.

After the publication of her *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte became famous for her novel which was widely read. Accordingly, she went to London where she met the novelist William Makepeace Thackeray, author of *Vanity Fair*; Elizabeth Gaskell, novelist and Charlotte's first biographer; and G.H. Lewes, who was George Eliot's close friend. In 1854, Charlotte married her father's curate Arthur Bell Nicholls, but she died after nine months later suffering from tuberculosis. She died on March 31, 1855 and was buried in the family vault in the Church of St. Michael and All Angels in west Yorkshire (Weisser "Charlotte Brontë"; Bloom's Guides

10). It is worth reading about the different life stages of Charlotte Brontë may give us a hint about the reason why she wrote her masterpiece or as it is considered by most critics an “autobiography” of the author herself.

2.2. Romanticism

The exploration of Romanticism as a literary term would lead us to think about “romance”. The word “romance” was used for the first time in Britain in the 1600s meaning a narrative in which a heroic knight rescues a stuck lady. In 1775, Dr. John described “Romantick” as “resembling the tales or romances; wild . . . improbable; false . . . ; fanciful; full of wild scenery” (qtd. in Maunder vi). Later, the term “romance” shifted to other meanings far away from chivalric connotations. For instance, in the 19th century the label Romanticism was applied to a definite literary movement which was concerned with beauty and strong feelings opposing the norms of the preceding age, i.e. Neoclassicism (Maunder vi). In other words, Romanticism elevated the role of spirit, soul, instinct and emotion, while Neoclassicism advocated a scientific approach to most human endeavours and dilemmas.

Emerged as a reaction against Rationalism, Romanticism came to throw light on ordinary, “quotidian” feelings and daily life stuff to render them into imaginary. To illustrate, in his preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth stated that “ordinary things [were worth writing about] and should be presented to the mind in an unusual way” (qtd. in Smith par. 5). Accordingly, Romanticism was a project that sought transcendence, through constant observation and attention to the seemingly unimportant details of daily life.

It is worth mentioning that the aim of Romanticism is to push people to trust themselves and listen to the voice inside them. Romantics, by their turn find their refuge in nature since they claim its importance as a source of their inspiration and the source from where all of us can learn various lessons (smith par. 7). That is to say, romantics find their

refuge in nature where they believe it is the only source which would answer all their questions.

Furthermore, Romanticism is a movement in the history of culture which was characterized by its aesthetic style. It is a revolt against the rationalism of the philosophy of the Enlightenment, and the term “romantic” in itself is difficult to be defined as “the French commentator Louis- Sébastien Mercier (1740- 1814) wrote on the term ‘romantic’ ‘you can feel it but cannot define it’” (qtd. in Henry 11). When talking about romanticism, we may refer to the last quarter of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century in Europe in which romanticism became the dominant literary movement. This movement was mainly concerned with its opposition to the conventions of the previous literary movement, i.e. “neoclassicism”. As far as Britain is concerned, the Romantic period referred to the years running between 1798 when “Lyrical Ballads”, written by Coleridge and Wordsworth, were published, and 1832 when Sir Walter Scott died (Cuddon 771). In other words, we can say that Romanticism deals with feelings and that’s what makes it really hard to define it.

The word “Romantic (ism)” meant different things in different historical periods. Originally, the word was derived from Latin in the Middle Ages. The Latin words “*enromancier*”, “*romancar*”, “*romanz*” were a translation of the original texts into the vernacular to mean “*romanz*”, “*roman*”, “*romanzo*” and “*romance*”. Thereafter, a “*roman*” or “*romant*” came to refer to a work of imagination. During the 17th century in France and Britain, “romance” got a different meaning; it came to mean something sad, bizarre, and exaggerated. Later, the meaning of the word “romance” differed from one country to another. For instance, in France, “romance” meant “*Romanesque*”, i.e. derogatory, and “*romantique*”, tender, sentimental, and sad. In fact, the word “romance” was anglicized in the 18th century while keeping the aforementioned meanings. In Germany, in the 17th century, the word “*romantisch*” was used in a derogatory sense, but in the middle of the 18th century it acquired the sense of “gentle” and “melancholy” (Cuddon 768). In addition to the

different meanings that the term “romanticism” has had throughout time in England, in Germany, “romanticism” appeared clearly as a movement with stated aims that German romantics worked together to realize; however, in England the early realistic novelists like Coleridge, Scott, and Keats didn’t cooperate to form a united group under this literary movement (Beers 55). As far as the origin of the word is concerned, we should refer to Friedrich Schlegel for he is regarded as the person who established the term “*romantisch*”. However, Friedrich did not give a precise meaning to “romantic” and only stated that it denoted to imagination (Cuddon 768). Most importantly, Germany is the country where Romanticism as a literary movement appeared for the first time, and later expanded throughout the whole continent, and finally reached America.

Quite early in the 18th century, a definite shift towards sensitivity and feeling took place, especially in relation to the natural order and nature. As a consequence, many literary works appeared dealing with romantic issues such as Thomson’s *Seasons* (1726- 30), Blair’s *The Grave* (1743), and Yong’s *Night Thoughts* (1742-5); most of these literary works display sadness and grief, especially *Night Thoughts*. Besides their attention to nature, romantics in the 18th century dealt with other concerns including:

- (a) an increasing interest in Nature, and in natural, primitive and uncivilized way of life; (b) a growing interest in scenery, especially its more untamed and disorderly manifestations; (c) an association of human moods with the ‘moods’ of Nature - and thus a subjective feeling for it and interpretation of it;
- (d) a considerable emphasis on natural religion; (e) emphasis on the need for spontaneity in thought and action and in the expression of thought; (f) increasing importance attached to natural genius and the power of the imagination; (g) a tendency to exalt the individual and his needs and emphasis on the need for a fier and more personal expression; (h) the cult of the Nobel savage (Cuddon 769- 770).

One should add that throughout history, the meaning of the word “romance” continued to find its way far away from nature as an only source of inspiration. “Romance” shifted to other dimensions in which it was used to portray different feelings of love and fear as well as bravery and gothic.

2.3. Realism

The term realism has two main meanings. The first meaning refers to the literary movement which spread in Europe in the nineteenth century by Balzac in France, George Eliot in England, and William Dean Howells in America. The second meaning is that realism picturizes the human everyday life with all its aspects via all sorts of art, including literature (Abrams 152). While romanticism deals with life in an imaginative way, i.e. more “picturesque”, more “adventurous”, and more “heroic”, realism deals with exact representation of the real world. As an example, Casanova and Winston Churchill were real people, yet their histories came to have an unreal dimension, i.e. non-realistic pieces of literature would be produced once their stories are written.

Accordingly, a typical realist is the one who knows really how to reflect reality through his/her writings and so ordinary readers can understand them for they are simply nothing but a reflective mirror of their life. Aiming to reach this goal, the realist author selects carefully his: protagonist (he/she can be an ordinary citizen); scenes and characters, usually from the middle class or the working class people who live an ordinary life in all its aspects: childhood, adolescence, love, marriage, parenthood, fidelity, and death. Moreover, through this writings, it could be noticed that these people lead a kind of sadistic miserable life, yet it may appear brighter through that talented touch of the writer which may add more brightness and happiness.

Furthermore, being realistic doesn't mean to choose an authentic issue, but importantly it is linked to the manner used to render the real life situations plausible to

readers. To achieve such a goal, the realist needs to use his mental capacities and be able to portray reality and presents it in a coded literary language which the reader has to decode to get the implicit meaning. Accordingly, the produced fictional work seems to be a realistic regardless of the literary conventions the author may use when reporting different scenes of real life (Abrams 152- 153). It's clear that the realist should be engaged and aware of the current events taking place in his environment. In addition, the realist novelist has to be truthful to the data that inspires in order to report reality faithfully (Cuddon 730- 731). That is to say, realist authors get closer to the social life of ordinary people in order to portray their lives as faithful as they could.

Historically speaking, Realism started in the 1830s; numerous theories were conducted to study the realistic aspects in literary works and the occasions where this term is used. For example, we may use the term “realism” when referring to a literary work that is faithful in portraying reality as it is. During the second half of the 19th century, realism was the dominant trend in European literature. In the second half of the 19th century, the theory came to practice which resulted in a great number of literary works that held a different view of the so-called “*condition humaine*”. For instance, the works of Dickens and Balzac demonstrate the shape of realistic literary work (Cuddon 730). For example, once we read Dickens’ *Great Expectations* we come up with the idea that the characters are “life-like”. In this context, the reason why Dickens’ works are vital and widely read is that he excels in giving life to his characters. Such manner aims at portraying real life issues of the era, yet focusing on the goal of criticizing, entertaining, and reforming (Grellet and Marie-Hélène Valentin 218). That is to say, we feel that they are “real” simply because that act in the same way they would if they were put in situations such as those they were in through the story of the novels.

Moreover, in a realistic literary work a character should appear complex to add “dimension” to his/her presence, so he/she appears full of life and realistic. The complexity in

the character lies in their attitudes and qualities that should be unexpected and contradictory to a certain extent, yet these characteristics would melt together to form a single plausible character (Bennett 62). In other words, the great power of Dickens' writings is realized through the dominance of the social themes which are consequently accompanied with the readership acceptance and appreciation.

It is noteworthy to note that realism occurs in two main contexts. The first is socialist realism whose theory was invented by Anatoli Lunacharsky (1875- 1933). According to this theory, plays report faithfully the life of common people (Cuddon 732). The second context is psychological realism. In this context, Henry James (1846- 1916) is considered as the father of the realistic psychological novel. In his novels, James depicts the psyches of his characters putting them in hard situations ("Realism and Henry James" pars. 3-4). Throughout the psychological novel, Henry James treats the lives of ordinary people in an attempt to reflect reality.

2.4. Summary

As far as Victorian literature is concerned, the novel marked its presence by tackling various issues and subject matters, mainly social ones. To portray the social sphere of Victorian citizens, novelists chose Realism as it really suits the nature of the subjects they intended to write about for they were looking to depict the reality of the Victorian life as it was. However, some writings of the age did not relinquish to use Romanticism which was the case of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, as our main concern, who gathered between aspects of the two literary movements.

Aiming at writing recognition, women called for the equal appreciation of their literary production with men's. Women found in the novel the only refuge to express themselves, their feelings, and their thoughts because they were excluded from the masculine world. As a consequence, the notion of "feminism" appeared in the light of the denial of women and their underestimate. Feminism highlights, as far as literature is concerned, the

equality between male and female writers for both are endowed with the same mental capacities, and accordingly they can produce pieces of writing of the same literary value. Virginia Woolf is a remarkable figure in the issue of feminism for she extensively contributed to literature and mainly the recognition of women writings and criticism of literary works produced by male writers in which they exclude women characters such as Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851) and Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719).

In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë presents a story of a Victorian lady who tries to find her way in the middle of the unfair rules and customs of her society. Throughout the novel, the heroine tries to prove her independence and freedom and her ability to support herself without any male's assistance.

Chapter Three:

Some Romantic Elements in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*

3.1. Introduction

Telling a love story of a young lady who falls in love with her master, *Jane Eyre* is thought to be a pure romance. To some extent this point of view is true for the novel presents different aspects which pertain to Romanticism such as the gothic, symbolism, etc.

Romanticism is marked by various aspects such as the elements of nature, sentiments, melancholy, etc; however, in this chapter I intend to highlight only some elements that pertain to Romanticism. Thus, I will analyze the element of "Gothic" and how it is reflected in the description of the setting and the macabre, and the element of symbolism in *Jane Eyre*.

3.2. Gothic

Gothic is linked to frightening stories which are special by their mystery. In such stories people try to discover the unknown that mostly falls at night. Originally, scary stories can be traced back to the Middle Ages which was marked by barbarian and criminal deeds. In the 18th century, some literary works like Charles Perrault's *Beauty and the Beast*, Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* were marked by the use of peculiarity (Encyclopedia of Gothic Literature xiii). For the first time, the Gothic novel appeared in 1764 through Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*. Also, Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* and *Clarissa* 1689–1761 were two Gothic novels which were written in a form of letters. Gothic novels deal with odd and strange places in which mystery is the prevailing aspect (Bloom's Guides 12).

Women writers, by their turn, used the Gothic in their writings and Charlotte Brontë's is one great example of those literary works (Encyclopedia of Gothic Literature xiv). The authors of Gothic novels use various elements and devices to create frightful and thrilling moods. The

Victorian novelist Charlotte Brontë has chosen to draw the story of her heroine Jane Eyre in an unexpected way where she supplies bizarre and mysterious characters and places.

In addition to the fear and secrets they carry, Gothic novels are characterized by different aspects such as the gloomy and mysterious castles or houses where the heroine is presented as a young lady who is afraid of her master who dwells a scary castle. In addition, stories of one-sided love and parted lovers are part and parcel in Gothic novels. Stating another aspect, we can refer to the theme of parenthood and inheritance where a given character, mainly the hero or heroine, discovers his/her real parents, and/or inherit a good deal of money which help in improving his/her status (Bloom's 12). That is to say, Gothic novels are defined by the use of supernatural elements, and desolate locations to generate gloomy or chilly moods. Throughout these devices, the reader keeps on following the successive events to investigate the hidden reality which will be discovered by the end of the story.

As far as *Jane Eyre* is concerned, Charlotte Brontë is perhaps the most respected author of Gothic romance. The fact that the author is a female writer, this would lead us to talk about "female gothic". The latter term was coined by the feminist critic Ellen Mores to refer specifically to the female writers' literary production which was of importance in society and helped in recognizing the role of women. Accordingly, Mores claimed that female gothic is characterized by "the gendered behaviour and attitudes of the heroine and hero, the importance of the female protagonist's virginity and sexuality, and the impact of social, racial, and economic status on the action" (Encyclopedia of Gothic Literature 115). Female writers tend to reflect their lives in works they produce. "It is in the Gothic novel that women writers could first accuse the 'real world' of falsehood and deep disorder ... " (qtd. in Encyclopedia of Gothic Literature 116). So, it is via the Gothic novel women express their anger towards the world and speak up their minds freely.

Unlike female Gothic that tends to present the heroines as weak, miserable and

suffering from the loss of either one parent or the two of them, male Gothic came to victimize and describe the heroines in a graphic cruel manner. In other words, male Gothic is a kind of “wantonness”, while female Gothic is much more concerned with the description of “domination” of men over women in a society that denies women and considers them weak and dependent creatures. William Child Green’s *The Pool of Blood* (1826) is an example of male Gothic; Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) is another example of female Gothic (Encyclopedia of Gothic Literature 115-116). Female writers are affected by their lives; they are marginalized and neglected in a “patriarchal” society that gives complete legitimacy to men. Throughout these writings, women seek their recognition and aim to popularize the notion of their independence and autonomy as Charlotte Brontë presents her heroine Jane Eyre.

3.2.1. The Setting

The setting refers to the time and place mentioned in a given literary work. The setting plays an important role in Gothic novels where the author describes places of darkness and mystery. In *Jane Eyre*, the Gothic is present in various settings represented in: Gateshead Hall, Lowood School, Thornfield Hall, Moor House, and Ferndean. Gateshead Hall, the red-room, Lowood School, and Thornfield Hall are perhaps the most significant three settings in the novel. Being a Romantic Gothic novel, *Jane Eyre*’s plot takes place in different fearful and frightening settings represented in old houses like Gateshead Hall, and haunted houses like Thornfield hall which is mysterious.

A close study to how Brontë sets the scenes in her novel, according to specific place and time, is important in understanding better the story and interpreting it. In essence, Charlotte Brontë by giving a detailed description of the setting in the novel does not only generate different moods and atmospheres, but gives the reader insights into the characters as well. Kelley Griffith stated that we should pay attention to four elements when talking about

the setting in fiction: The place; where the actions in the work occur, the time; when the events take place, the social environment and finally, the atmosphere (61). Accordingly, the setting is really of great importance, and in *Jane Eyre* Charlotte Brontë excelled in depicting the various locations her heroine moves through in the journey of her life. Indeed, she presents the setting in an interesting expressive manner.

3.2.1.1. Gateshead Hall

Gateshead hall is the home of Jane's aunt, Mrs. Reed, with whom the orphaned girl is living at the beginning of the novel. As the novel opens, there is a reference to the setting. To illustrate, Brontë states that "[t]here was no possibility of taking a walk that day". At Gateshead Hall, Brontë focuses more on portraying the psychological atmosphere. Jane is always dismissed from joining her aunt and cousins just because she doesn't acquire "[a] sociable and childlike disposition, a more attractive and sprightly manner". The latter quotation explains the way Jane is treated; she is treated with such unkind cruel manner by her aunt Mrs. Reed and her children, mainly John.

Charlotte Brontë describes the atmosphere and the rough weather from the very first scene in the novel where she says "[she] never liked long walks, especially chilly afternoons ... coming home in the raw twilight, with nipped fingers and toes, and a heart saddened by the chidings of Bessie". This quotation is an example of the time as one element in the description of the setting; here the novelist gives us details about the whole atmosphere and how the weather looks like in that day.

Most importantly, describing the setting helps in understanding more the characters. For instance, as the Reeds are "clustered round their mama in the drawing-room ... by the fireside". We understand that Jane was dismissed from the happy life her aunt and her children are enjoying at Gateshead Hall. Jane, in fact, is all the time lonely deprived from being with her cousins who dislike her and hate her to be by their side as she states "[her], she

had dispensed from joining the group” (Brontë 9). Indeed, we notice that really the detailed description the novelist provides us with not only help us in getting a clear idea about the time and space when and where those incidents take place, but much more it helps in understanding the characters and their attitudes. John Reed is four years older than Jane, for she is only ten. He punishes her frequently as she states “not two or three times in the week, nor once or twice in a day, but continually” (12) and always insults her saying that she is poor and dependent and calls her rat.

Things get worse for Jane when she strikes John and Mrs. Reed ordered Bessie and Abbot to “take her away to the red-room, and lock her in there” (13)¹. Jane is not appreciated by the Reeds and the servants at Gateshead Hall, except Bessie. Miss Abbot describes Jane as “less than a servant” when she strikes her “young master” (14). The reason why her aunt and cousins dislike her is that Jane is sincere and not a liar or a deceitful as Mrs. Reed describes her attitude to Mr. Brocklehurst asking him to admit her to Lowood school that he owns. In this context, Jane tells Mrs. Reed before she is sent to Lowood school that

[she is] not deceitful: if [she] were, [she] should say [she loves her]; but [she] declare[s] [she does] not love [her]: [she] dislike[s] [her] the worst of anybody in the world except John Reed: and this book about the Liar, [she] give{s} it to [her] girl, Georgiana, for it is she who tells lies, and not [her] (38).

All in all, Gateshead Hall represents a residence of short time for Jane where she encounters rude and unfair treatment from the part of her aunt Mrs. Reed and her cousins specially John who insults and punishes her all the time without any good reasons.

3.2.1.2. The Red-room

The red-room is the room where Jane is locked in at Gateshead Hall after she strikes

¹ Bessie is the nurse at Gateshead, Abbot is the maid at Gateshead.

John Reed. In the novel, the red-room is a bedchamber which has not been used since Mr. Reed's death nine years earlier. Jane is sent to the red-room after she quarreled and strikes John Reed. In the novel, Jane describes the chamber by giving exact details about the place itself and the time during which she is locked up there. Once more, the setting plays its role in creating a special feeling about the red-room and its significance in the novel.

Being locked in the red-room, Jane states that it is "a spare chamber, very seldom slept in: [she] might say never ... A bed supported on massive pillars of mahogany, hung with curtains of deep red damask ... the carpet [is] red ... this room [is] chill, because it seldom [has] a fire ... it [is] in this chamber he breathed his last". This description of the red-room gives us an impression about the deep sorrow and grief Jane has in such frightening chamber. In addition, as readers we can understand the feeling of loneliness Jane encounters in Gateshead Hall.

Moreover, the scary thing about the red-room is not only that it is uninhabited, but it becomes more terrifying for Jane when she starts to think that the spirit of her uncle, Mr. Reed, would come and fetch her. At first, Jane starts to recount how Mrs. Reed and her children treat her and asks herself about the reason "why [is she] always suffering, always browbeaten, always accused, forever condemned?" Later, when she keeps on looking into the "white bed" and the "gleaming mirror" (16) she gets the idea that the spirit of Mr. Reed would appear in front of her as she claims "[she] thought Mr. Reed's spirit ... might quit its abode ... and rise before [her] in this chamber" (18). In the red-room, Charlotte Brontë depicts the supernatural and Gothic atmosphere as Jane writes: "Superstition [is] with [her] at that moment" (16). Fear was at its height when at first Jane thinks that the light in the red-room is "a ray from the room"; however, she finds herself imagining "something ... near [her]" Even with that scary moments Jane passed in the red-room, Mrs. Reed refused to forgive her thinking that she is "a precocious actress" not listening to her painful scream "Oh, aunt! Have pity! Forgive me" (19) crying she cannot hold her stay in the red-room any more,

but all is in vain till she falls unconscious.

In short, the red-room is the unpleasant location Jane has been locked up in during her childhood in Gateshead Hall. This scary haunted chamber is another reason for Jane to hate Mrs. Reed more for she locked her up there unjustly. As readers, the description Charlotte Brontë gives to the red-room makes us feel the status of the heroine in that frightening place and imagine it as a real place. As far as the novel is concerned, Brontë tells the story of the heroine at Gateshead Hall throughout the first four chapters, and in the second chapter she portrays the scene of the red-room.

3.2.1.3. Lowood School

Lowood is the charity school to which Jane is sent after Mrs. Reed asks Mr. Brocklehurst to admit her into this charity school he runs. Jane spends eight years at Lowood; the first six years a student, and the last two as a teacher. After her terrible experience at Gateshead Hall, Jane moves to Lowood which is another place of harsh conditions and for it is ruled by the “hypocrite” and “selfish” Mr. Brocklehurst who pretends working under Christianity rules (Bloom’s Guides 21). The night Jane leaves Gateshead Hall moving to Lowood was a cold somber night as Jane states that “[r]ain, wind, and darkness [fill] the air; there was no candle, but the uncertain light from the hearth showed” (45). At Lowood, Jane encounters a rough condition as she describes as “in ten minutes the single light [is] extinguished; amidst silence and complete darkness” (47). Lowood is a dark place where, as she arrives, she sees “a congregation of girls of every age, from nine or ten to twenty. Seen by the dim light of the dips, their number to [her] appeared countless, though not in reality exceeding eighty” (46). The quality of food is not appreciated by most of the girls. It is “[d]isgusting! The porridge is burnt again! ... burnt porridge is almost as bad as rotten potatoes” (48), but they eat their meals for they are obliged since there is no other option.

Mr. Brocklehurst hates Jane and he treats her badly because Mrs. Reed has poisoned

his mind saying that Jane is a deceitful girl. Not only he is cruel and hard hearted man with Jane, but he tries to convince the girls in Lowood that she is a bad girl and he tells them that “it becomes my duty to warn you that this girl ... is a little castaway-not a member of the flock ... avoid her, exclude her from your sports... [t]eachers, you must watch her ... punish her body to save her soul ... this girl is - a liar!” (68). The words of Mr. Brocklehurst explains how really he is unlike what we expect him to be; a good gentle man who runs such institution to help orphaned children, girls in the case of Lowood, and work according to the Christian instruction. However, the quotation stated above shows more about his real identity. It tells us that he is a hypocrite who tries to hide behind the name of the fake charity school he owns.

Moreover, Jane endures a cold weather at Lowood in which most girls are suffering especially when they have to go to the church every Sunday as Jane tells that “ [d]uring January, February, and part of March, the deep snows ... within these limits [they have] to pass an hour every day in the open air ... [their] clothing [is] insufficient to protect [them] from the severe cold; [they have] no boots, the snow [get] into [their] shoes and [melt] there; [their] ungloved hands [become] numbed and covered with chilblains, as [are their] feet.”. Even after the bitter task of walking “two miles” (62) to reach the church, girls don’t get any warmth of fire especially the little girls because the ones older than them surround it as soon as they get back to the school.

A special dark scene during Jane’s stay in Lowood is when typhus is spread. Most of the girls are infected: “forty-five out of the eighty girls lay ill at one time” and, as Jane says, “disease had thus become an inhabitant of Lowood, and death its frequent visitor” (78). Helen Burns, who is Jane’s close friend at Lowood, is one of the infected girls. At the night of her death, Jane creeps from her bedroom towards Miss Temple’s room. Describing this night, Jane says that “the light of the unclouded summer moon, entering here and there at passage

windows, [enables her] to find it without difficulty¹. An odour of camphor and burnt vinegar [warns her] when [she comes] near the fever-room” (81). As she reaches Miss Temple’s room, Jane notices that “[a] light shone through the key hole, and from under the door; a profound stillness pervaded the vicinity” (82) and fortunately she finds the door opened a little, thus she enters to see Helen before she dies. Jane puts herself next to Helen who puts her arm around Jane. Jane, by her turn surrounds Helen with both arms and so the two girls sleep together. This explains that besides the loneliness and coldness Jane encounters at Lowood, she finds warmth, safety, and love as well next to Helen who is faithful, sincere and kind to Jane until the last moments in her life.

3.2.1.4. Thornfield Hall

Thornfield Hall is the following location Jane moves to after she decides to work as a governess. Jane advertizes for a position as a governess in the newspaper, and soon Mrs. Fairfax contacts her to be a governess for a little single girl. It is when she gets to Thornfield Hall, Jane discovers as she questions Mr. Fairfax that Adèle Varens is not Mrs. Fairfax’s daughter nor Mrs. Fairfax is the owner of Thornfield Hall. Excited by her moving to Thornfield to work as a governess, Jane describes that as “[a] phase of my life was closing to-night, a new one opening to-morrow” (91). As she gets there, Jane finds her way to Mrs. Fairfax through “a square hall with high doors all round” until she meets her sitting in “[a] snug, small room; around table by a cheerful fire; an arm-chair, high-backed and old fashioned” (97). After her conversation with Jane, Mrs. Fairfax shows Jane the way to her room which in the eyes of Jane looks “a bright little place... as the sun shone in between the gay blue chintz window curtains, showing papered walls and carpeted floor” (99). The situation seems pleasant as “it was a fine autumn morning” (100). Everything is alright and

¹ Miss Temple is the superintendent of Lowood School.

ordinary during the first months of her stay at Thornfield.

On one afternoon in January, Jane goes to Hay in order to post a letter for Mrs. Fairfax¹. In her way to Hay, Jane walks in a weather where “[t]he ground [is] hard, the air [is] still, [her] road [is] lonely: [she] walk[s] fast till [she] get[s] warm” (112). In her half way to Hay, she stops for a rest despite of the cold weather until a man riding his horse passes by followed with a “black and white” dog. Suddenly, the man and his horse fall down after they “slipped on the sheet of ice” (114); Jane approaches and tries to give a hand.

Night is about to fall and “the moon [is] waxing bright” (115), thus after the man rides his horse and his dog follows him, Jane continues her way and posts the letter. Accordingly, she arrives almost at night to Thornfield, where she claims she “[does] not like re-entering [it]” because of the silence pervades there, yet she finally finds herself moving inward “to cross the silent hall, to ascend the darksome staircase, to seek [her] own lonely little room” (117). Later, Jane learns that the man whom she helped for “his ankle is sprained” (119) is Mr. Rochester.

On one night while she is about to sleep, Jane hears a laugh which frightens her and stimulates her to see the secret behind that laugh. Arriving to the third staircase, she hears the door “open and close” and decides to tell Mrs. Fairfax, but she stops in the middle of her way for she finds that “[the] door of Mr. Rochester’s, and the smoke rushed in a cloud from thence” (149). The responsible for that is unknown for Jane and Mr. Rochester asks her not to tell anyone in Thornfield Hall. Mystery appears again in Thornfield Hall. This time, at night and when Jane has not slept yet, she hears a sharp cry “‘Help! Help! Help!’ three times rapidly”. She rises as well as the guests who call Mr. Rochester to come and explain the reason behind that weird loud cry.

As she gets out of her room, Jane distinguishes “[a] chamber-door open[s]: someone

¹ A village two miles away from Thornfield.

[runs], or rushe[s], along the gallery. Another step stamp[s] on the flooring above and something [falls] and there [is] silence” (205). Mr. Rochester, trying to calm down his guests, said that just a servant has a nightmare and there is no reason to be afraid. Later, he asks Jane to follow him into a room where “[the] door [is] open; a light shone out of the room within: [she] hear[s] thence a snarling, snatching sound, almost like a dog quarrelling” (208). Jane is locked up with the injured Mr. Mason “in the third story, fastened into one of its cells; night around [her] a pale and bloody spectacle under [her] eyes and hands; a murderess hardly separated from [her] only by a single door” (209). In the mist of all these strange and frightening incidents, Jane will discover the secret of all the mysterious accidents at Thornfield Hall. On the day of the marriage ceremony, Jane discovers that Mr. Rochester is already married when Mr. Briggs claims that “[the] marriage cannot go on: I declare the existence of an impediment ... [i]t simply consists in the existence of a previous marriage. Mr. Rochester has a wife now living” (288). This wife is Bertha, the sister of Mr. John Mason; she is the mad woman responsible for all the cries and the burning of Mr. Rochester’s bed-room, and to whom he is married for fifteen years.

Followed by the three gentle men; Mr. Briggs, Mr. Mason, and the clergyman, Mr. Rochester and Jane return to Thornfield Hall. They enter and “[pass] on and [ascend] the stairs ... [they mount] the first staircase, [pass] up the gallery, [proceed] to the third story: the low, black door, [opens] ... [i]n a room without a window, there burn[s] a fire, guarded by a high and strong fender, the lamp suspend[s] from the ceiling by a chain”. This is the room where the mad Bertha “bit and stubbed” her brother (291). She is a so fierce cruel big woman with red eyes. Accordingly, Jane flees Thornfield in a July night after she has a vision in which her mother asks her to “flee temptation” and she does so responding to the voice she hears (316). Jane has no destination, yet she continues walking in the “dim dawn” through the roads and fields out of Millcote to the nowhere. One year later, Jane leaves the Moor House, after hearing a mysterious voice of Mr. Rochester calling her ““Jane! Jane! Jane!”” (414), on

a Tuesday afternoon at “three o’clock p.m.” to arrive at Thornfield Hall on “the succeeding Thursday morning” (417)¹. As she gets there, Jane says that Thornfield Hall has become a “blackened ruin” (419). Now, Thornfield Hall’s “lawn, grounds [are] trodden and waste ... no roof, no battlements, no chimneys – all [have] crashed in ... [a]nd there [is] the silence of death about it, the solitude of a lonesome wild” (420). Using these expressions and words that express how Thornfield Hall is burnt down, Brontë succeeds in visualizing the different settings in Thornfield Hall as well as the time.

3.2.1.5. Moor House

The Moor House is the house where Jane ends up after she flees Thornfield Hall. The house is also called by some people “Marsh End” while others call it “Moor House” (338) as the servant Hannah tells Jane when she enquires about the name of the house. According to the names given to this place, we may deduce that Marsh End refers to the location that is situated at the end of the marshes. However, Moor House could represent the house which is situated in the moors or the wilderness. Moreover, the analysis of the significance of this location may give us an insight into the situation to which it precisely refers. In other words, the label is directly linked to the setting, and we observe that Moor House is a more significant name than Marsh End for the former indicates that the house is situated in the moors, while the latter makes the allusion to the location, i.e. at the end the marshes.

Describing the Moor House, Charlotte states that the parlour is “small” and “very plainly furnished”, but it is “comfortable” because it is “clean and neat”. The room is also decorated with some “antique portraits” and it is simply “well worn and saved”. In the light of this description, we can get an idea about the financial and economic situation of the Rivers. They are neither rich people nor poor ones; it is the reason why they could not offer

¹ Millcote is the village where Thornfield is situated

themselves new chairs instead of the “old-fashioned” (341) ones, or have new furniture to replace the old one.

Unlike the description of Thornfield Hall which is accompanied with fire, the novelist uses ice and coldness as a dominant atmosphere in Moor House as it is in Lowood School. According to this description, we can suggest that fire at Thornfield may represent the warm feelings and passion she has for Mr. Rochester, yet coldness at Lowood Institution and Moor House refers to her cold feeling towards St. John who himself states that he is a man of “hard and cold” (388) character. In addition, we learn that Jane is a spirit-fired character just like Mr. Rochester unlike St. John who is an icy-spirit one. To illustrate, in a conversation between him and Jane, St. John tells that he is “cold” and Jane responds saying that she is “hot, and fire dissolves ice” (379). This explains that there is no match between her character and the character of St. John who doesn’t love her the way she wants.

3.2.1.6. Ferndean

Ferndean is the place where Mr. Rochester moves to after Thornfield Hall is burnt down as a result of a fire that his mad wife Bertha starts. More precisely, he settles in a manor-house which Brontë portrays as a house of “considerable antiquity, moderate size, and no architectural pretensions, deep buried in a wood”. Additionally, the novelist has chosen a special climate and time, i.e. “evening”, that is characterized by “sad sky, cold gale, and continued, small, penetrating rain”. To reach the house, Jane has to pass through a way, even though short, that is surrounded by a “so thick and dark ... timber of the gloomy wood” till she finds the manor-house whose surroundings have “no flowers, no garden-beds; only broad gravel walk girdling a grass plot” and the house’s “windows [are] latticed and narrow, [and] the front door [is] narrow too” (425). An examination of the illustrated description provided by Charlotte Brontë helps us to understand the condition Mr. Rochester is living, mainly his

psychological status, after Jane has fled Thornfield Hall; he becomes sure that he would never see her again. That is to say, he is so solitary and desperate and so miserable.

Once more, the novelist gives a hint to fire. As Jane enters the room, she finds Mr. Rochester sitting in a “gloomy” room where “a neglected handful of fire burn[s] low in the grate” (427). Accordingly, we can deduce that the weak fire refers to the passion Mr. Rochester has for Jane which has become very weak as she leaves him which reflects an emotional injury, thus he is disappointed and hopeless not as he used to be in his old days at Thornfield Hall.

3.2.2. Macabre

Literary speaking, macabre is generally linked to the different scenes of death within a literary work. In Jane Eyre there are mainly three scenes; Helen Burns’ death, Mrs. Reed’s, and Bertha Mason’s.

First, Helen dies in quietness and warmth because she is sure that she “shall escape great sufferings” for she is “dying young” (83). However, Jane is warm next to Helen for she is her best and close friend at Lowood School. Second, Mrs. Reed still holds that unkindness towards Jane even she is in her last moments; she “dislike[s her] too fixedly and thoroughly ever to lend a hand in lifting [her] to prosperity ... to be adopted by [her] uncle, and placed in a state of ease and comfort [is] what [she] could not endure” (237). Mrs. Reed dies refusing to reconcile to Jane, and Jane does not drop a single tear neither her daughter Eliza who with Jane look at her stretched body. Finally, Bertha Mason is “smashed on the pavement” (423); she kills herself by jumping from the battlements.

3.3. Individualism

Individualism is one of the important elements that pertain to Romanticism. The use of individualism in Romantic literary works is concerned with the focus on one character's progress. In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë portrays her heroine's struggle to prove her independence. The Romantic heroine Jane challenges the social norms and values of her time; she is an educated woman who seeks liberty and equality.

Jane flees Thornfield Hall for she refuses to be Mr. Rochester's mistress. She chooses to find her own way even though she has no exact place to go to fighting her passion and feelings she has to Mr. Rochester saying "[t]hat man had nearly made me his mistress: I must be ice and rock to him" (297). She demonstrates her inner strength; the strength that would put her in conditions of hunger, poverty and even death. This illustrates how the heroine refuses to be enslaved by her master; also the quotation may refer to Charlotte Brontë's feminist tendency as she presents Jane's individuality by preventing her to be one of Mr. Rochester's possessions. Hence, Jane asserts that what counts more for her is her individuality otherwise she is not going to be "Jane Eyre any longer" (258) for her only aim is to be "an independent woman"(429). Following, the heroine refuses to marry St. John which demonstrates her clear refusal to be under male suppression.

Written in the first-person narrative point of view, Jane, the author focuses on giving the speech only to her heroine to tell the various incidents in the course of her life in a detailed descriptive way which makes the story more vivid. It is worth mentioning that Jane even in her marriage to Mr. Rochester does not surrender her own principles. She turns back searching for him because she wants so. By accepting to be his wife, Jane does not consider that as a sacrifice since she finally gains a loving marriage in which she finds an absolute and ultimate independence and emotional equality.

3.4. Symbolism

In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë uses numerous symbols to refer to various concepts. For instance, we may refer to some of them such as Gateshead Hall, the red-room, fire, and ice.

Gateshead, for example, may symbolize a jail where Jane feels lonely, isolated, and imprisoned for she is all the time left alone and dismissed from the Reeds meetings. Following, the red-room may represent loneliness and fear to Jane because she is locked up in this scary cold chamber. In addition, the colour red here alludes to the loss of control; Jane loses her control over fear in the red-room and becomes unable not to imagine unreal things. In addition, fire in the novel may symbolize warmth and love. To illustrate, Mrs. Reed and her three children are gathered “by the fire side” (9) enjoying their happy life. Also, Mrs. Fairfax is sitting by “a cheerful fire” (97) when Jane first arrives to Thornfield; Brontë uses the fire side to refer to the peace and the warmth pervades Thornfield at the very first months during her stay there. Moreover, she is sitting by the “genial fire” (334) when the Rivers find her on their door. Moreover, ice is a symbol of fear, loneliness and death. The red-room and Lowood institution are cold places; the former is “chill” (15) which represents fear and thrill to Jane, while the latter is “frozen” (55) that represents loneliness and isolation. Coldness symbolizes death too; Helen’s “forehead” and “cheek[s]” (82) are cold when she is about to die and Mrs. Reed too; her hands are “ice-cold” (238) in her last moments.

3.5. Summary

In conclusion, we have to acknowledge that we haven’t been through other elements of Romanticism like poetry, the use of the French language, nature, etc because of the limited

scope of this work as well as the short time given. Importantly, putting her novel into a romantic atmosphere, Charlotte Brontë excels in visualizing the different scenes and setting within the story. Furthermore, she uses the Gothic as a device to express on woman's dark and dull life, and illustrates multiple symbols through which she alludes to different concepts and notions.

Charlotte's writing style is generally educated, complex, and full of emotions. Most of her sentences contain numerous adjectives and sensual images. Her unique style is powerful and strong and enables the reader to follow the different events and incidents within the story of the novel. Moreover, the novelist treats a variety of themes such as love, religion etc that were recurrent motifs ones in Victorian society.

Chapter Four: Analysis of Some Realistic Elements in *Jane Eyre*

4.1. Introduction

Jane Eyre can be considered as a realistic novel for it gives a detailed description of the setting and characters. Furthermore, in the novel Charlotte Brontë tries to evoke some of the themes that pervaded Victorian society at that time. As far as women issues are concerned, *Jane Eyre* came to shed light on the status of women at that time, how they were treated in a class-conscious society. Before the publication of *Jane Eyre*, women were simple and genuine under the expectations of society. After this novel was published, a new concept emerged among women. The opinion presented by Charlotte Brontë via her heroine Jane Eyre was spread and became predominant. The character of Jane Eyre is portrayed as independent, strong, and radical in the sense of marriage. That is to say, the novel went against the prior conservative social expectations and beliefs for women since it evokes the theme of women's morality, the theme which started to become common later in Victorian literature. *Jane Eyre* is a good example in which the author breaks the social structure and norms that prevent poor women to get involved with wealthy men.

4.2. Class-Consciousness

British people are strongly affected by the social differences. The social classes came then to organize society according to its different categories and classes. Generally, a social class refers to a personal social status in terms of his/ her historical background, education, job, and income (John, and Pierre Lurbe 20). A variety of social classes is made and each social class represents a distinctive way and mode of life.

Historically, the term "class" was used for the first time during Cromwell's Protectorate deriving from the Latin word "classis" to refer to two meanings. The first

meaning refers to the classes generated from the Roman population, while the second refer to the process of gathering weapons. In the seventeenth century, the term “rank” or “station” came into use as a reference to one’s social status (20-21). Along with these meanings, is used to refer to social category under which a number of people gather for they share the same historical and social background.

During the Victorian era, social classes were concerned with the change that influenced the different facets of life. Thus, the social classes were reformed and a new category of the middle class emerged to be classified in between the two old ones; upper class, and lower class. The number of populace belonging to the middle class was increasing due to the huge number employed during the Industrial Revolution. Furthermore, the upper class was not any more linked only those aristocrats who inherited their social rank, yet it consisted of the noble and rich commercial people (Miller Par 2). The term “class” came to a real use during the 1790s. In 1797, the term “middle class” was mentioned for the first time in the *Monthly Magazine*; meanwhile the phrase “working class” started to be used from 1813 through the writings of the socialist Robert Owen. From 1830 and onward, the phrase “working class” was used at a great amount. In essence, British people have a special perception of class. According to them, someone is judged by many factors according to which they can categorize his/ her social class. For instance, British people can distinguish one’s social class from his/ her way of dressing, manners, and language. The latter is an essential element in defining the geographical region the speaker belongs to (John, and Pierre Lurbe 21, 23). To illustrate, George Bernard Shaw claimed that “an Englishman’s way of speaking absolutely classifies him. The moment he talks he makes another Englishman despise him” (qtd. in John, and Pierre Lurbe 23). Agreeing on that, George Orwell argued that “the great majority of the people can still be placed in an instant by their manners, clothes and general appearance” (qtd. in John, and Pierre Lurbe 24). Accordingly, we can

conclude that the British society is a class-based society which regards the social class as a measurement to identify one's regional and social distinctions.

As far as Victorian society is concerned, the Victorian period was accompanied with radical changes which initiative writers just like Charlotte Brontë decided to explore. In her novel *Jane Eyre*, Brontë treats themes linked to the social life of Victorians such as the social class notion that formed an obstacle for people's interactions. Similarly, the novel came to highlight other issues that pervaded the Victorian society at that time, and mainly women's education and working conditions.

In essence, the early nineteenth century middle-class women were believed to be completely incomparable to men in the complete sense. Thereafter, men's and women's tasks are distinguished. On the one hand, the Victorian man task was to provide his wife, mother, daughters, and sisters with the necessities of life for he is naturally regarded stronger. On the other hand, women's concerns were only related to the household. They were expected to take care of their children and maintain a comfortable home. In other words, Victorian women were regarded as "moral guardian of society" (Wilhelm 4). That is to say, Victorian women's main concern was to look after their families, do the different house works, and create the peaceful atmosphere indoors.

During the nineteenth century, clear distinctions were made between the social classes, and accordingly people were obliged to stick to the social class they were born into. In the case of *Jane Eyre*, the heroine belongs neither to the lower class nor to the upper one. Early from her childhood as an orphan at Gateshead hall to her youth at Thornfield Hall as a governess, Jane holds a position in which she was in between the two social classes. Throughout this social status, Charlotte Brontë enabled the character Jane to interact and deal with people belong to different social classes; from the working class like servants such as Bessie, and from the upper class like aristocrats such as Mr. Rochester.

Jane Eyre is a novel which criticises the importance of the strict social class hierarchy in Victorian England. In this respect, the novel highlights the significance of class consciousness. The derogative attitudes regarding social class first occur when Jane suffers horrible mistreatment from John Reed who violently torments Jane and constantly reminds her that she is an orphan and a dependent of the Reed family telling her that “[she has] no business to take [their] books; [she is] a dependent ... [she has] no money; [her] father left [her] none ... (12). The latter words of John Reed force into Jane’s mind that to be without a class is to be without worth. He is her master for he is wealthier, and thus he is her superior.

Lowood Institution is a regimented environment where Jane suffers oppression from Mr. Brocklehurst, who publicly humiliates Jane in front of the whole school. Brontë may intend to express the unfair dominance of the upper classes. She uses critical language to describe Mrs. Reed in relation to Jane to highlight the social difference between them. Mr. Brocklehurst refers to Mrs. Reed using compliments such as “charitable, kindness” as she belongs to the upper class, and to Jane as “dreadful, bad” just because she belongs to lower class (69).

Jane's experiences at Thornfield reinforce the notion of social differences between classes. After she learns that Mrs. Fairfax is not the owner of Thornfield hall but the housekeeper, Jane is happy, which means that they are equal for both are dependent in this residence. Mrs. Fairfax discusses the difference between herself, as an upper-servant, and the other servants in the house; for example, she says that Leah and John are “only servants, and one can't converse with them on terms of equality; one must keep them at due distance for fear of losing one's authority” (98). Consequently, as a governess, Jane is in the same category as Mrs. Fairfax. She is neither a member of the family nor a member of the serving classes.

Brontë challenges the restrictions of the social class system in England and creates problematic situations and events in the novel to highlight the social pressures of conformity inflicted during this time. She is cleverly pushing the boundaries created both for women and the lower classes by creating a stereotypical character that is in opposition to the norm.

Being introduced to Blanche Ingram, Jane starts to question her own class and self worth. Jane realizes the harsh truth which holds her back; she is incomparable to Blanche who is everything Jane is not. She is wealthy and beautiful, yet Jane is none of these. This indicates a clear perspective on the reality of social classes and their significance.

The social status Brontë offers to her heroine enables readers to view and comprehend the Victorian social life on a wide expanse. In addition to this, she concentrates on evoking the issue of the boundaries made between the social classes and its consequences. For example, throughout the novel we learn that Jane and Rochester belong to different social classes, she is a poor young lady while he is a wealthy man, which creates an emotional boundary.

Thereafter, Brontë breaks these strict norms that Victorian society was based on and presents Jane as a woman who breaks through class prejudices and becomes able to show independence and qualities. The main purpose behind this careful choice of the social class that Brontë has made is, perhaps, to prove that one's personal virtues are much more important than his/ her social class. As an example, Rochester falls in love with Jane not for the social class she belongs to, but for the special character she has. She is a young lady who is able to control her reason over her passion. Jane's character really touches the issue of class which affected greatly the Victorian society.

4.3. Women in Victorian Society

As we have discussed in the previous section, nineteenth century British people were strongly influenced by gender roles. On the part of women, they suffered from condescending treatments. According to Victorian values, gentlewomen ought to be married, which was an inescapable reality. As wives, Victorian gentlewomen should be capable to sing, play an instrument and speak a little French or Italian. However, they were not allowed to be engaged in intellectual subjects (Thomas sec 2). In nineteenth century England, girls of the upper class were raised for the purpose of one goal: to marry. Marriage at that time was often viewed as a business prospect. Women were concerned with all that is linked to the household, while the men naturally provided financial security. Consequently, women who could not win a husband had very few respectable ways of supporting themselves.

As far as the middle class is concerned, middle-class girls in the first half of the century had access only to a limited education. Middle-class girls were not sent to school, but at home, they were taught by their parents. Consequently, women of this social class had limited chances of employment. Women could work as governesses, school teachers, or ladies' companions. Holding these positions, middle-class women got salaries that could cover the bare minimum of their needs. Most importantly, governesses were exposed to social denial in addition to the possibility of losing their respect (Taylor pars 4-5). That is to say, governesses are generally exposed to the temptation of their male masters who perceive women whom they employ as one of their own possessions.

On the other hand, woman could not hold property in her name, even if she inherited that property from her family it was still in sole possession of her husband. If a married couple had been separated for a period of time the woman had no rights to see her own

children, and if the result was a divorce, then the woman had no chance of acceptance in society again.

A clear difference was made between women of different social classes. For instance, wealthy wives main concern was to: read, sew, receive guests, letter writings etc; however, the life of poor women was on the other extreme. Servants, for example, ate the food left in the wealthy house they work in, and the mills they were offered did not contain the entire necessary nutritious element (Thomas sec 2). Victorian class-based society was the source of women's denial especially poor ones who were almost cut by society for no reason, but just for they were poor.

Being our main concern, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* presents Jane as a young governess who struggles fiercely the social rigid norms to prove her independence and recognition. She stands firmly in the face of all men she meets during her life who regard women unequal to them. As a matter of fact, we can refer to Mr. Brocklehurst, Rochester, and St. John who all intend to treat women as their own possessions and look to master them.

The novel portrays how women are treated by men. On the one hand, Bertha, for instance, even though she is insane, Brontë tries to depicts the idea how she is controlled and repressed by Mr. Rochester. On the other hand, Jane refuses to be under the mercy of men who may distort her identity and enslave her. Ultimately, Brontë ends up her novel with an equal marriage, which the heroine has been ever searching, to picturize the struggle of Jane for power between the sexes, and gender equality.

Throughout the novel, this is portrayed via detailed descriptions that the novelist provides. On the one hand, Blanche Ingram who belongs to a wealthy family comes to "sing and play" (Brontë 158). She is "magnificently dressed ... brilliant as her jewels ... dressed in pure white; she [wears] an amber-coloured flower, too, in her hair" (159). That is to say,

Blanche is a girl who belongs to a rich family. This is easily recognized from the nature of her dressing. She puts on extravagant jewels, and the finest accessories in addition to the luxurious dress which is referred to as “pure white” that may mean that it is a new one. Moreover, this confirms that Blanche Ingram is a wealthy girl. On the other hand, Jane as a governess has “[a] trunk – the same [she has] brought with [her] eight years ago from Gateshead ... bonnet [and] gloves” (91) and she always puts on a “shawl ... and slippers” (316). Accordingly, we may learn that Jane is a poor young lady according to her way of dressing; she wears casual clothes, and she is not able even to offer herself new clothes instead of the old ones. In the light of the external appearance Charlotte Brontë explores in the novel, we learn really to which social class both Blanche Ingram and Jane Eyre belong to. This portrays the different modes of life both social classes have.

To conclude, Brontë’s choice in portraying Jane’s and Blanche’s physical appearance in such image has an important goal. We understand that even though Blanche Ingram is a beautiful rich lady, she has a haughty shallow personality. Unlike Blanche, Jane is intelligent, keen and possesses a strong sense of responsibility; nevertheless, she is a plain small girl. This alludes to the significance of the character’s inner virtue, but not the physical appearance.

4.4. Materialism in Victorian Society

The nineteenth century is considered an age of power in Britain. After the industrial revolution, the British production reached its height which enabled Britain to be one of the most developed countries in the world. The number of people belonging to the middle class increased due to the industrialisation that the nineteenth century brought. People started to move to towns seeking work at factories (McDowall 131). The industrial revolution brought with it a dramatic change. Before the industrial revolution, most of people used to live in the

countryside where they till the land or work as craftsmen. They mainly do everything by hand; however, with the industrial revolution everything changed. Many people were obliged to leave their villages and go to work at the new factories. Thereafter, Britain had a dominant position in industry thanks to the exploitation of the great technological innovation and the imperial foreign trade.

It is true that the Victorian Age was an age of prosperity, yet it was an age of contradictions. People were not satisfied since the country enjoyed an economic success; however, there was a problem in the distribution of wealth. Poor people confronted bad living and working conditions. Poverty was regarded as a moral problem rather than a social one.

It is at the Marsh End residence that Jane gains the independence and self freedom that she has been seeking as she discovers both that she has living relatives and also that she is wealthy. Jane states that discovering that she has relative is a “[g]lorious discovery to a lonely wretch ... wealth to the heart” (381). Jane becomes free from the strict social hierarchical barriers that the English class system brings, and she is then rich by the end.

When Jane shares her wealth with the Rivers family, it indicates that Jane has not been seeking wealth and fortune but seeking independence and freedom.

Before she discovers that the Rivers are her cousins and that her uncle John Eyre left her his property, Jane has been living as poor young lady who works as governess to earn money and maintain her life. Jane is told by St. John that she has inherited twenty thousand pounds; she realizes that “the independence, the affluence” is hers. That is to say, Brontë tries to clarify the importance of money in the Victorian society and how it shapes the status of the individual. In other words, money may represent independence and freedom for Jane who finally becomes free from the oppression of the social class system.

Most importantly, the inheritance Jane has received does not provide her with the opportunity of getting materialistic possessions, but the right and acceptance in society to live as an independent woman as she does not have to depend on anyone or anything. Throughout the novel we learn that Jane has been looking for her own independence and equality.

4.5. Summary

Highlighting social aspects that pervaded Victorian society, Charlotte Brontë gives a realistic dimension to her novel *Jane Eyre*. Throughout the close analysis of the novel, we learn that Brontë provides a realistic description of various social issues that overwhelmed the Victorian society. For instance, Charlotte Brontë evokes the issue of class system which greatly influenced Victorians life. The differences between social classes represent an obstacle which prevents the interaction between people of different social classes. Women, precisely, confronted a distinctive way of life during the Victorian era. They were concerned with special roles that society theorized. In *Jane Eyre*, Brontë portrays her controversial thoughts against the social class system in England. The Victorian Age was an age which coincided with the industrial revolution that greatly helped in creating the prosperity of Britain. Regardless of the scientific improvements, the materialistic side played an important role in determining one's own life and social acceptance. In this respect, Charlotte Brontë shows how having money can change the life of the heroine and sets her free from the strict social norms and becomes a free independent woman.

Conclusion

Trough this research I have attempted to undertake a close analysis of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. To approach this objective, I have tried to explore the coexistence of Romanticism and Realism within a single piece of literature such as the Victorian novel *Jane Eyre*.

In other words, this study has been an endeavour to understand how a two opposed literary movements, i.e. Romanticism and Realism can converge in a literary work. For this reason, my choice was Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* which is an example where we can find the notion of the coexistence of Romanticism and realism. Through the novel, Charlotte Brontë tries to explore the truth of the Victorian Society and mainly focusing on the way women were treated and regarded at that time. Besides that the novel is considered as an autobiography of the author, *Jane Eyre* is a Victorian novel in which Brontë portrays continuous struggles of a young lady who is in search of home, love and identity in a society that maltreats women and underestimates them. In other words, *Jane Eyre* starts with a realization of the conditions of oppression and the overwhelming estrangement of the heroine from society as one radical fact of her existence.

After the close analysis of the novel, we have come up with the idea that all the elements which pertain to Romanticism such as the Setting, the Gothic, Macabre, and individualism help in giving us an insight about the psyche of the characters as well as the atmosphere of the different residences in the novel. On the other hand, Brontë uses a detailed description and a critical analysis to the social conventions and norms which the Victorian society was based on; this gives a realistic dimension to the story of the novel. As far as Realism is concerned, the novelist tries to highlight some of the social problems that dominated the Victorian society such as the social class system, the treatment of women at that time, and the materialistic side of life.

Resembling the miserable stages she went through, Charlotte wrote *Jane Eyre* in special way which was neither Romantic nor Realistic. This way of combining the elements of the two literary movements, i.e. Romanticism and Realism is, maybe, the secret behind the success of Brontë's masterpiece and being widely read. As far as this unconventional coexistence of Romanticism and Realism, we can say that the author of the novel herself claims this coexistence. To illustrate, Charlotte Brontë stated in one of her letters to George Henry Lewes that she agrees with him on the point that the novelist should not exclude reality from their writings and stick to romance for readers will be eager to read those pieces of literature that deal with real and everyday life events.

In the light of Charlotte Brontë's statement, we may conclude that she intentionally wrote her novel *Jane Eyre* in a way combining aspects of Romanticism and Realism because she could have believed that sticking to reporting reality would lead to boredom for the experience we get in life is limited. Thus, she feared to fall into redundancy and for that reason she chose to support her novel by using some aspects of Romanticism like Gothic, symbolism, etc. in a way to produce truth in an imaginative and Romantic way.

Finally, we may say that Charlotte Brontë is a Victorian writer influenced by the dreadful events she came across in her personal life experiences. In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte aims to appeal to readers by portraying her own life in an innovative manner in which she picturizes realistic scenes of life in an artistic way by frequently shedding light on these authentic scenes in a Romantic way.

Even though my work is limited in scope as a master degree research, I do acknowledge that there are a number of weaknesses in my work. Accordingly, in further research I will bridge the gap in an in-depth doctorate research hopefully. Additionally, we have been taught that Romanticism and Realism are totally antagonistic literary movements.

However, this research helped us to understand that things which seem antagonistic could be complimentary and may coexist.

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