

CHARLOTTE BRONTE'S IDEAS ABOUT WOMEN IN HER FAMOUS NOVELS: THE STUDY ABOUT MORAL, SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF WOMEN AND THE EFFECTIVE IDEAS AS THE CONVENTIONAL SOLUTION OF LOVE AND MARRIAGE IN SHIRLEY

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper to explore the theme of women in Charlotte Bronte' Shirley. Therefore it will discover and focus the light on Charlotte Bronte as one of the most prominent female novelist in the nineteenth century. Since we know that, Charlotte Bronte was a subjective novelist and this paper will present her as a serious writer about conveying a subjective impression. Apart from this idea, there will be the presence of historical and critical background of her age where she became matured and originated the main literary tendencies which really was effective and decided the art and manner of her writings. At last it will be able to prove that Charlotte Bronte has established the moral, spiritual and social problems such as the positions and actions of women, but also will find a solution to the complications by dropping the problem and therefore will present some substitute ideas as the conventional solution of love and marriage.

KEYWORDS: Charlotte Bronte Shirley, Spirituality, Subjective Novelist, Impression Of Women, Love, Marriage.

INTRODUCTION

As a female novelist Charlotte Bronte was perhaps one of the most prominent novelists in 19th century. But in some ways she was even more typical indeed. In Bronte's novels she had a narrower range of writing which was not so great as Dickens. And her range was tied to the inner life, the private passion. Though Charlotte has passed the test of time and her works are still attractive enough to fascinate the readers and scholars of our time and of course despite

of her narrower range. Her creativity was stimulated to generate by the certain aspects of man's inner life as that of Dickens or Thackeray by certain aspects of his external life. Like Thackeray was the first English writer who has made his novels as the vehicle of a conscious criticism of life. And for Bronte that was the first to make it as the vehicle of personal revelation.

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However Charlotte Bronte was the first subjective novelist (Patricia, 1992: 45), the ancestor of Proust and Mr. James Joyce and all the rest of the historians of the private consciousness. And like them her range was also limited and narrower to those aspect of experience which stimulate to significance and activity and the private consciousness of their various heroes and heroines. According to Gaskell (1990: 133): "The life of Charlotte Bronte is very substance of her novels; three times she summarized what she had imagined, seen or felt. In Jane Eyre she depicted her imaginative life; in Vilette, her true moral life; in Shirley, coming out of herself a little- though very little in fact- and standing as it were at the window of her soul, she depicted the corner of Yorkshire where she lived and what little she had seen of human society. Each of her books has therefore a very marked character in the first, Jane Eyre, Vilette, the best parts of Shirley, are not exercises of the mind, but cries of the heart; not a deliberate self-diagnosis, but an involuntary self-revelation. Fundamentally, her principal characters are all the same person; and that is Charlotte Bronte. Her range is confined, not only to a direct expression of an individuals' emotions and impression, but to a direct expression of Charlotte Bronte's emotions and impressions. In this, her final limitations, we come indeed to the distinguishing fact of her character as a novelist. The world she creates is the world of her own inner life; she is her own subject. This does not mean, of course, that she never writes about anything about her own character .She is a story-teller, and a story shows character in action, character, that is, as it appears in contact with the world of external event and personality. Only the relation of Charlotte Bronte's imagination to this world is different from that of most novelist.. In this context Gaskell (ibid,p132) pointed out that; Charlotte Bronte has struck only one cord of the human heart, the most powerful it is true. In Shirley ,

the imagination alone speaks and when imagination is sole master one can be sure that it will run to strange, fiery passions, difficult of interpretations, theirs, inspired as it is by some aspect of human life outside their own, works, as it were objectively. Charlotte Bronte as a subjective novelist is concerned to convey a subjective impression. Her picture of the external world is a picture of her own reaction to the external world. But she did not write novels in order to illustrate a particular moral precept. such an obvious procedure is deliberately rejected at the end of Shirley: I think I now see then judicious reader putting on his spectacles to look for the moral. It would be an insult to his sagacity to offer direction. I only say God speed him in the quest. (p.90). In each and every page of Charlotte Bronte's novels, there were the presence of burn and breathes with vitality. Out of her improbabilities and her absurdities, she has constructed an original and actual vision of life from the scattered, distorted fragments of experience that has been managed to penetrate her huge self-absorption, therefore she has created a world. In this paper i shall present and also will explore the portrayal of women in Charlotte Bronte's Shirley. It will also try to give a historical and critical background of her age in which she matured and originated the main literary tendencies that has been affected and swayed her and determined the expression and manner of her writings which were actually significant and necessary at the outset.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF VICTORIAN ENGLISH SOCIETY AND CHARLOTTE BRONTE'S PRESENCE IN IT

If we want a full understanding of Charlotte Bronte's novels with the cultural and social background its necessary to put the selected novels of her in a social, literary and historical contexts. So the traits of Victorian English society and the place of Charlotte Bronte in it

must be examined for a grounded and more informed analysis and put the novel in question.

THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF CHARLOTTE BRONTE'S TIME

The beginning of Victorian age was in 187 and lasting until 1901, which was a period of massive changes for England, both socially and economically. By the 1840s that period was generally a time of peace and prosperity where England had emerged as the leading industrial society of the world and the center of a vast colonial empire. To quote Brownstein (2001:143) The process of industrialization quickened as more factories were built, particularly in the north of England, heavy engineering, machine tool production and the highly mechanized cotton and wool industries powered the economic boom and attracted greater number to towns and cities The rising middle class was amassing unprecedented wealth, but for the working population, the 1840s came to be known as the " Hungry Forties", a time of poverty and economic upheaval. While the sense of national pride at their country's exalted position on the world stage may have been gratifying to the British people, what mattered most to them was the quality of their lives at home. The process of social development and political reform which had begun earlier in the century continued throughout the Victorian period. The Victorian period was an age with new activities. There was a revolution in commercial enterprise, due to great increase of available markets, and, as a result of this, an immense advance in this use of mechanical devices. The new commercial energy was reflected in the Great Exhibition of 1851. According to Brownstein (ibid,p,143): The Great Exhibition, which opened in London in the newly constructed Crystal Palace on the first of May 1851, was a highpoint in the history of Victorian Britain,. The industrial and artistic

achievement of the nation were put on display for the world to admire. While millions did admire, others pointed out that, despite as seemingly endless success story. Britain was far from being a paradise on earth, Much criticism focused on the squalor and deprivation that was still to be found in the cities. While the middle and upper classes gloried in the prosperity of the times, the far-growing industrial working class began to question the premise that each such prosperity necessarily involved demeaning and exploitative working conditions and undemocratic political representation. Billington (1988:120). He mentioned that there was also the question of the growing number of poor, unmarried" surplus" women, who had limited means of supporting themselves and who were beginning to pose a real problem to society. One of the few options for the unmarried surplus women, who needed to support themselves, was to become a governess. A governess was one of those people without position in society because she did not belong to the household or the servant. It was a bitter experience shared by many women including Charlotte Bronte herself. During the Victorian era the occupation of governess had special appeal for middle-class women. In that period a woman who was not finically supported and helped by a husband or other male relative had few days to earn a living. While many women in 1800s used to work in mills and factories, the unmarried daughters of merchants, doctors, lawyers, and clergymen sought more" suitable" employment that could offer a moderately respectable lifestyle. A governess lived with the upper-middle class or upper-class family who hired her to teach their children. In addition to securing comfortable and fine lodgings, she usually earned a modest salary. That Victorian period took a similar stance toward the position of women especially working women. The subject of work for women was particularly relevant for women writers, who experienced

personal conflicts as a result of their desire to be viewed both as domestic and womanly and of their needs and wish as artists to assert themselves in the performance of work. Charlotte Bronte focused on their conflict in the partly autobiographical novel *Jane Eyre* (1847). In this novel *Jane Eyre*, she has presented her heroine Jane as a forced work seeker after she has left Mr. Rochester. Because she was a woman, only a limited number of options which were available to her. She told to St. John Rivers: I will be a dressmaker; I will be a plain-workwoman; I will be a servant, a nurse-girl, if I can be no better. (Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, p, 375) When she was offered the post of village schoolmistress, she accepted and realized that it would be the best among several unsatisfactory choices. However such work-though somewhat socially acceptable since she has no one to support her- is not fulfilling for the unmarried Jane; after a "day passed in honourable exertion" (J.E. *ibid*, p, 256.). She experienced strange dream at night: dreams many-colored, agitated, full of the ideal, the stirring, the stormy." (J.E. *ibid*, p, 156). The kind of work that was accessible to Jane didn't give full play to her talents and faculties. Likewise, in Bronte's *Villette* (1853), Lucy Snowe, faced with the necessity of supporting herself, resolved to become a governess, took the attitude "I had to lose" (Bronte, *Villette*, p, 57). For Lucy, "work had neither charm for her (her) taste, nor hold on her interest" (*Villette*, *ibid*, p, .78). Like Jane she earned for stimulus: "I did long, achingly, ... for something to fetch me out of my present existence, and lead me upwards and onwards." (V, *ibid*, p 90). So in both cases, what the women desired scope for their abilities was not socially acceptable for them to pursue. For Bronte, womanly and artistic duties were perpetually in conflict. For her characters, work, in the sense of an activity that earns daily bread, is at odds with vocation, an inclination or calling that brings intellectual and emotional gratification. Bronte's novels emphasized the

waste of female potential. Hunt (1988:12) observed that: Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century, along with the debate on women's position in society, there co-existed a unanimity on what is natural to the female character. According to the Victorian ideal, woman was the "angel in the house" and she was expected to be submissive, chaste, and physically frail, in addition to being religious, self-denying and capable of tremendous feats of self-discipline. Armed with these contradicting characteristics, the Victorian women were seen to represent morality and strength against, harsh and competitive world of business, in which men could not afford to possess. With the social tension that existed in the Victorian society, there were also disagreements about what the main values of society should be. Not everyone that accepted the increased material wealth which was the only worthwhile value. Writers like Mathew Arnold represented the views of those and felt that over-emphasis on materialism was turning nineteenth-century Britain into a less caring society, where cultural and artistic pursuits have been looked on as distractions from the main objective of making money.

THE LITERAL BACKGROUND

While the Renaissance period was truly identified with drama and Romanticism with poetry, and on the other hands the Victorian age was famous with the idea of novel. There were several reasons for the triumph of fiction, but perhaps the most significant and important was the rapid growth in the middle classes. Therefore since the eighteenth century, they were the avid consumers of this form of literature. Then the other factors and reasons were related to the improved education system, which led to greater literacy, and a fall in book prices. Because of the improved printing techniques and cheaper transport costs, also contributed to the success of the novel. Going

to the libraries became very popular and made people to borrow books for a relatively modest sum. Women, who had been freed from traditional chores such as candle and bread making, had more time to dedicate to reading and they were somehow the most important consumers of books. So we can say the Victorian age was characterized by the emergence of women not just readers but also as influential writers. In the novels of Thackeray and Dickens the various qualities of the domestic novel were gathered together and carried a step forward. Dickens was a social reformer, and yet did much to realize the England of his day, and to portray the life of the lower and middle classes with effectiveness, imagination and humor. While the Bronte sisters did create the romantic impulse in a full fledge inside of their novels to which they gave new depth of passion, greater intensity of intuitive sympathy, and a profound interest in the struggles of the individual soul. In this they did follow George Eliot, who showed a closeness of application to the mental processes of her characters that was carried further in the work of Meredith, and did lead towards the "psychological" novel of the present day. Most of George Eliot's novels were set in the Warwickshire countryside of her childhood, against which underlined the importance of love and family, Eliot did hit at Victorian materialism. The same theme was repeated in her novel *Middlemarch* (1871-1882), in which she described life in a provincial town in 1832. Readers in the 1870s could see how much progress had made in the sectors of medicine, transport and commerce. while at the same time very little progress had made in social concern for the foreshadows. After that Victorian writers who did reject the prevailing moral and religious code of the society in which she lived. The exploration of her psychological analysis which was to dominate much of twentieth century fiction. Besides Charlotte Bronte, George Eliot also dealt more

interestingly with history in her rural idyll *Silas Marner* (1861) than in her major historical novel *Romola* (1862-3). Marner told how Silas escaped from the harsh industrial world of Lantern Yard into the Arcadian village of Raveloe. He buried his treasured guineas, lumbered from his urban past, under the floor of his hut. When they were stolen, they became replaced in the gloom by the gleaming locks of the baby Eppie, ringlet which Silas' weak eyes firstly believed to be his returned gold. It was Christmas, and the parable of redemption through the coming of a child rings clear. But Sally Shuttleworth has suggested that, beneath the symbolism, the story explored current views of social development. The innocence of the rural Raveloe community was undercut by the villagers' inability to see that 'they are pressed hard by primitive wants', and exploited by the feudal squirearchy of the Red House (ch. 6). Silas' past was both his weakness and his strength. If his soul has been withered by his life in Lantern Yard, the hardness of industrial living has created the sturdy independence that has led him to adopt and rear the child Eppie in defiance of village advice. Silas has been physically stunted by labor at the loom, yet in a (literally) touching scene, when Jane and Godfrey Cass came to reclaim Eppie, Eppie can comfort and strengthen Silas because she knew the history of his weaver's hands, and understood that his craft has made them unusually responsive to her touch. 'She held Silas' hand in hers, and grasped it firmly-it was a weaver's hand, with palm and fingertips that were sensitive to such pressure' (ch. 19). Because of a human touch, history became alive in the domestic area. However the most famous representation of madness in Victorian literature was Bertha Mason in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*. While Bertha in *Jane Eyre* was depicted as mad before she was exhibited as an arsonist, she had been represented a prototype against which the depiction of mad women in Victorian novels may be measured.

Furthermore, while she was not initially portrayed as criminal, the issues of foreignness, miscegenation, class, and hereditary taint came into play in her characterization. Besides her we can say about George Eliot. In Felix Holt (1866) George Eliot became close to make a female character the center of her novel in her portrait of the daughter of a dissenting minister, Esther Lyon. (Rogers:1985:92). Eliot was actually interested in tracing the spiritual journey of a young woman whose understanding might be deepened when she would be exposed to attitudes and values that were very different from her own. Like many of Gaskell's characters, Esther was intellectually lively, yet unlike Gaskell's characters, at the beginning she was morally immature. With her refined tastes, she delighted most in her own creature comforts, was spending her wages on wax (not tallow) candles, attar of rose, collections of Byron's poetry. Though her relationship to a young radical. In Felix Holt, Esther became aware of the possibility of a nobler life, one that was not found upon the satisfaction of purely personal desires, but dedicated to an idea, a hope that the condition of the working class can be improved.

BIOGRAPHY OF CHARLOTTE BRONTE

Charlotte Bronte and her siblings were born in the small isolated village of Haworth on the Yorkshire moors where they lived with their father, who was the local vicar, their mother, three sisters and a brother. According to Alexander (2001:9) Charlotte Bronte, was born in 1816, grew up in the small mill town of Haworth on the edge of the rugged West Yorkshire, in northern England. The place was isolated and made lonelier because of Charlotte's mother when Charlotte was five. Charlotte, her four sisters-Maria, Elizabeth, Emily and Anne and their brother, Branwell, turned to each other for companionship. Due to the uncomfortable conditions in the orphanage

two sisters have fallen ill and consequently their father brought all five of them back to the family home. Charlotte Bronte was an avid reader of Shakespeare, Milton, Byron, Scott, the Classics and the Bible. Furthermore, she showed an early gift for writing, and as a form of amusement she wrote miniature books about fantasy worlds of her own creation with the help of her sisters as Gordon (1994:45) pointed out:

Throughout their childhood and into adulthood, the close-knit Bronte children entertained themselves by creating fanciful stories. Inspired by a set of twelve wooden soldiers their father brought home, they invented imaginary worlds that were a blend of myth, history, current events and society-page stories from newspapers and magazines. Gradually Charlotte Bronte came to focus on romantic passion and themes of temptation and betrayal in these melodramatic tales. This story-writing provided an essential outlet for her creativity, an outlet she would painfully miss once she began her "wretched bondage". In 1855, after just a few months of married life, Charlotte Bronte has died due to complications associated with pregnancy. Her final words to friends in her letter confirm her deep bond with her husband: I find my husband the tenderest nurse, the kindest support - the best earthly comfort that any woman had... as to my husband-my heart is knit to him. (Gordon 1994: 425).

CHARLOTTE'S CONTRIBUTION, REPUTATION & INFLUENCE

Charlotte Bronte agreed to the restrictions imposed upon women writers yet denied her suffering from them, or at least their hindering influence on her. At the same time, she disagreed to the masculine gender of the pen's name with which she signed her works and insisted on its general neutrality. She can discuss about the gender of the name, but

failed to offer an explanation. Somehow she was not such a daring woman, who didn't write under her original name. Charlotte Bronte was more introvert by her nature and that was seen in her writing as well. Because of the partly voluntary seclusion of her family and also of the romantic era, which affected the cultural atmosphere of the time by emphasizing the exploration of nature and emotion. Charlotte was much more in the world than her other contemporary writers, and her increasing contact with it on a variety of planets were revealed in her interest and love such as charity schools and their abuses, and the position of governess and teachers, which were still the significant jobs of an individual and was not aware of herself or of these issues as part of a wider society. Hence it is the individual and isolated passion of Jane that was central. Her anger at injustice, her temptation to forget the world and religion for individual happiness, her seeking for a fit and independent mode of existence. The world of Jane Eyre approached like *Wuthering Height* in the exploring of an individual's reaction to its own moral ambience and emotional universe. But this was not solely Charlotte's field of writing as she was not the isolated spirit. The position of women, the fear and tension of being an old maid, the struggle and urge for independence on the world's terms, not by retreat to the spiritual that made Shirley and *Villette* novels based more firmly in a recognized society. They dealt with problems of the individual which has been seen more and more in relation to society, but still revealing an individual vision. Charlotte Bronte's writings did carry some powerful agent in her effect. The scenes and atmosphere in her novels, indeed, were the peak of Charlotte Bronte's achievements. And no others became prominent like her imaginative power which did find the perfect fields for its expression. The pictures of her novels centered within love and character, though they revealed her powers, and it also offered equal scope to her intensity

and more on her she cannot satisfy. No power of psychological penetration or accurate observation were needed to communicate the impression of the senses in an abnormal nervous state; while to be dreamlike and unrestrained characteristic of such impressions. For once Charlotte Bronte was true not only to imagination, but to fact. She was a genius because her creative imagination which was the distinguishing quality of any artist with the very highest intensity. In spite of the frustration that the women probably feel as surplus women, Charlotte had very realistic attitudes towards marriage for herself and she decided that mere respect without affection was not enough, although marriage would have made them independent from the charity of others. In Charlotte's work she deepened on the same principle and married their heroines to men they loved but also made sure that happy couples were well off. However, Charlotte, in later life gave up her principle by marrying Mr. Nicholls, a man she respected but was not sure if she would love. Naturally Charlotte was too much of a Victorian and too much of a Puritan to do more than hint at its negative side. But her hints were quite enough to prevent the emotion seeming disembodied and unreal. Even Caroline Helstone, that was blameless dummy, came to life when alone in her room she abandoned herself to her yearning for Robert Moore. Here was a frustrated love. And writing as she did of the emotion of her own unsatisfied heart, Charlotte Bronte was most characteristically concerned to describe a frustrated love. In the novel *Jane Eyre*, Jane Eyre's love for Rochester, was so hopelessly, as it would seem, out of her reach like Lucy Snowe's for Dr. John, absorbed already in Ginevra Fanshawe. But the fact that it is frustrated which didn't make the love of Charlotte Bronte's heroines less intense. Indeed it made more of an obsession. Moreover, Charlotte Bronte can describe happy love equally well, if her story gives her a chance, As

a matter of fact love is the occasion of her few successful journeys of humor. Jane Eyre did tease Rochester, Lucy Snowe sparred with Paul Emanuel. And in these scenes she achieved real comedy. It was a little stiff shy, and it was also enchantingly demure and delicate; a sort of Puritan comedy of the sexes, unlike anything else in English literature. In addition to love's gaieties she can describe love's ecstasy, like most of the other novelist of her school. Besides a figure like novelists, Charlotte Bronte was also a poet; and her poetry was the pure lyrical poetry of passion. It connected itself with her sensibility to landscape. The special emotion of her love-scenes swelled to assimilate to itself the emotional quality of the scenery amid which they take place. In language of stilted compliment Mr. Rochester converse with Jane Eyre in his garden, and then he says "listen to the nightingales," (J.Y.123). And the four simple words, like the note of a violin, quicken the scene to a lyric rhapsody, in which the scent of the jasmine flowers, the chestnut in the distant sky, join to convey and symbolized the passion that animate the two became started who move among them. In this sort of effect she had no predecessor in English, and no successors till Meredith.

THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN SHIRLEY

If we compare Charlotte Bronte's Shirley with other novels then it will appear to have no relationship to them. It seemed to be an attempt at another genre, a new experiment which she did not repeat. Although she was to tell Mr. Smith(2000:68) "I cannot write books handling the topics of the day; it is of no use trying. Nor can I write a book for its moral. Nor can I take up a philanthropic scheme. Shirley is, nevertheless, a departure in this direction, being a historical, provincial and social novel that focuses on English middle-class women especially single women victimized in

contemporary society". In a letter to W.S William written during the planning of Shirley. Charlotte Bronte expressed her wish for 'the better ordering of the Social System': I often wish to say something about the 'condition of women's questions- but it is one respecting which so much 'cant' has been talked, that one feels a sort of repugnance to approach it. It is true enough that the present a market for female labor is quite overstocked- but where or how could another be opened?....

THE STORY OF THE NOVEL SHIRLEY

In the novel Shirley, the plot was a complicated one, since it has consisted of a number of parallel stories. Although the novel took its title from one of the characters, that character cannot be said to be the main protagonist. The novel was started with a lowest flattering picture of the curates of the area, and an attack on the new machinery for the mill. It was ended in the Victorian welter of marriages and reconciliations. In Shirley one of the characters was Caroline Helstone whose parents separated soon after her birth and she lived with her uncle, the Reverend Helstone, rector of Briar -field. She was in love with Robert Moore, who was of Flemish and English extraction, and whose father was distantly related to Caroline's mother. Robert's whole concern in life was centered the success of Hollow's mill and he was determined to install machinery there to ensure this success. Early in the story there was an argument between Helstone and Moore resulted in Caroline being forbidden to visit Hollow's cottage, though even before this she felt doubt about Robert's love for her. On the other hands Miss Shirley Keeledar, heiress, landowner in the district and landlord of the mill, arrived with her governess, Mrs. Pryor, to stay for a while at her house, Field head, since she came of age, a strong friendship emerged between the two girls. Together they witnessed the attempt by the

workers on Hollow's mill, together they took walks, together they took part in the annual Sunday-school walk and tea-drinking. Caroline fell into a decline, and was nursed to health by Mrs. Pryor, who turned out to be her long-lost mother. Shirley was visited by her uncle, Mr. Sympson, his family and his son's tutor. Because of wealth Moore wanted to marry her. But Shirley at length confessed her love for the tutor, Louis Moore, brother of Robert, whom she loved since she lived with the Sympson family as a girl. Robert Moore, got shot by a leader of the workman, and was nursed to health by his friends, The Yorkers. Robert then repented his general harshness, and married Caroline. Charlotte Bronte ended the story with the following; I think I now see the judicious reader putting on his spectacles to look for the moral. It would be an insult to his sagacity to offer directions. I only say, God speed him in the quest! (Shirley, 646). Despite the obvious irony of the above-mentioned passage in its reference to a male reader in particular, really, there was a 'moral' in Charlotte Bronte's Shirley, especially for the woman reader the 'moral' that came first in my reading of Shirley would seem to be the contemporary society depicted in the novel that did not yet allow women to be fully liberated and the social equals of men. Shirley was corrected by her 'mirror image', and has shown the proper behavioral patens for young women in the early nineteenth century.

However carefully in Charlotte Bronte marked some limits in the areas of story in time and place. Also she did carefully marked political, social and religious influences. The novel was not of the Victorian social reform kind. There was no reforming zeal at work. The brief picture of the child labourers was coming to the mill evoked no Dickensian indignation; the poverty-off workers no Gaskellian pity. To quote Argyle (1995:741): "Shirley presented a notable contrast to Miss Bronte's other novels. The

world of toil and suffering set behind, but ever so far away. Indeed it must be again encountered, its problems resolved, its sores probed; the hard and obstinate war again waged manfully; but in the mean time the burn foams and sparkles through the glen; there is sunshine among the purple harebells; and the leaves in the birken glad dance merrily in the summer wind.

SHIRLEY AND IDEA OF WOMEN

Through the novel, Charlotte Bronte showed how the patterns of women's lives(and those of the workers) can be shaped by social attitudes therefore forced over which they had no control. That the women's question was one of the main theme of the novel and recognized by both readers and the critics of the time. Although a concern with the position of women in society and the kinds of lives they lead was implicit in her other novel, where it was only in Shirley that it became a predominant theme centering on the lives of the two heroines Caroline and Shirley. On this context we can quote Bellringer (1993: 122): In Shirley, Charlotte Bronte was also concerned with the opposition between the more general behavior of both protagonists, and she linked this with the contrast between the opposite traits of passionate feeling and excitement, of individual freedom and fulfillment, and those of self-transcending or self-denying duty and moral responsibility. Rather than presenting this kind of divided approach in one character, as she did in Jane Eyre, therefore did split the behavior into two parts, assigned that the timid and dutiful young girl to Caroline, and that of the tougher and more independent women to Shirley. Caroline's lack of character, her long, brooding inactivity in the novel, her seriousness, were as much the result of the weariness of life without purpose of an unmarried woman as of the sorrowing and decline of the girl crossed in love. Shirley, who

was of course did show much to occupy her, but even so, a comparison of the occupations. Shirley's pursuits were quite as trivial in some ways as those of Caroline. Fundamentally, it was Shirley's nature which enabled her to find such restrictions of activity not irksome. In the novel, Caroline, was portrayed as shy. Her timidity was illustrated by Yoke's comparison of her pale quietness to one of the marbles of Canova. Shirley told Moore, quite feminine "nor of what they call the spirited order of women" (Shirely, 363), a girl whose rare outbursts have no "manly fire", but only "a short, vivid, trembling glow, that shot up, shone, vanished" and almost "left her scared at her own daring" (Shirely,364). Yet, at the same time, as Shirley also pointed out, Caroline "though gentle, tractable, and candid enough, is still perfectly capable of defying even Mr. Moore's penetration"(Shirely,364). In the novel also, Shirley was portrayed as an intelligent woman, who observed men's treatment of women and recognized the perception that underline it.

When Robert Moore didn't inform her of the attack on the mill, even though he did own it, she marked that men tell women nothing and keeping them completely in the dark about subjects which involve danger. She came to the conclusion that they perceive women as like children, and clearly that she thought this is wrong. In any case, Charlotte Bronte offered no solution to the feminist problem in this novel. Shirley, the landowner, farmer, mill owner and heiress, abdicated wealth, position and power in favor of her husband while Caroline did marry Robert Moore and the problems of unmarried life has removed from her. But a third attitude to the feminine dilemma was suggested by the young girl, Rose Yorke, in her determination to use the talents God gave her and bury them in a life of domesticity.

CONCLUSION

The central theme of Charlotte Bronte's novel is love. Since it was obviously the main preoccupation and so passionate as a temperament. Her creativity of depicting, it was of course, matched with the nature of her immense talent. She didn't able to dissect the workings of passion, therefore she did illuminate its effect on characters. In this novel Bronte actually conveyed the message of love in women's life in a strong manner. And this is what she did drastically in Shirley as it had never been done before in English fiction. Since its true that, to find love and getting married seem to be two of the most important themes in Charlotte Bronte's Shirley. In this novel the most prominent matter was the presence of unhappy marriages, marriages in which it is the woman who comes off worst, and this is closely related to the feminine theme, both involving a man's view of woman.

In Shirley, the men generally were not ready to accept women as equal and intelligent partners. A woman like Shirley was looked upon as a good match because of her money. Helstone did prefer women who were light-headed so he can see them at his inferiors and subordinate. In relation with this concept i would like to present Mrs. Pryor's statement. Mrs. Pryor commented as such, "life is an illusion... most of the cheats of existence are strong... [the] sweetness [of love] is... transitory(Shirely,364). But Shirley gave her ideology as to how one may judge the right mate, by observing his behavior with others, and by observing his attitude to women. But this was a minor view in face of all the opinions raised against marriage in the novel. Another theme was related the matter of household duties. Mrs. Yorke and Hortense Moore have their household duties to occupy them. Miss Mann and Miss Ainley have found their satisfaction in good works of a charitable kind, but under the dominance of male direction Young girls had to lead idle existences hoping to

marry eventually. Here Shirley was different and did uphold the woman's part which was the significant one to straddle the two groupings. She was a woman who, through birth and position, occupied many of the posts normally filled by men. She considered herself as Captain Keeldar. But it is noticeable that she was a figure-head in her position as landowner. She had more authority, power, dignity and more intimacy with business like attitudes than Caroline, but at crucial moments in political events she did retain the passive role of a woman. Shirley was eventually intended to have greater insight into what was going on than everyone else, but since she did not reveal her insights until a situation has been revealed to her, she was unconvincing. The attempt to depict the Charlotte's heroine, it is must to evolve within fortunate circumstances as well as the attempt to analyse the situation of the unmarried woman was unsuccessful because both, by their nature, are dogged by lack of appropriate action. Finally, Charlotte Bronte's theme of love and marriage revealed her power. But solitary obsession, while it offered equal scope to her intensity and her

imaginative strangeness, which has created no demands on her that she cannot satisfy. Because there is no power of psychological penetration or minute observation is needed to communicate the impressions of the senses in an abnormal nervous state; while to be dreamlike and not restricted, however is characteristic of such impressions.

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