



Love, Sacrifice and Women's Independence in Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre

Author : Makarani Sonam

Designation : Student of MA English (Sem 3)

Name of Department : Dr Subhash University Arts & Humanities

Name of organization : Dr. Subhash University

City : Junagadh , Country : India

Abstract:

Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre is one of the important novels of Victorian English literature. The novel presents the life of Jane ; an orphan girl who faces many difficulties from childhood but never gives up her self respect and personal values. Love is an important part of Jane's life especially her relationship with Rochester. She became governess in Rochester's house. Their relationship became an important part of her life. However their relationship is not only based on emotions. It also involves sacrifice, patience and personal independence. This paper studies the relationship between love and scarifies in Jane Eyre and examines how Jane's experience help her grow from unhappy young girl into a confident and independent woman.

Key words : Feminism, Women's Independence, Inequality.

I. INTRODUCTION

Jane Eyre is a novel published by feminist author charlotte Bronte in 1847. This novel describe the situation of women in 19th century when author grew up. Author faced many difficulties to published her work. At this time women had many limitation as a writer. Author's sister also writers and they are known as a Bronte sister.

The story begins with Jane's difficult childhood T gateshead hall, where she lives with the Reed family after became orphan. She is treated as as unwanted member of the house and experience loneliness and injustice. Later she sent to Lowood School where life is also difficult. Her experience at Gateshead and Lowood gradually make her more stronger. These early experiences are important because they shape the woman Jane becomes later in the novel.

Jane's life change when she became governess at Thornfield and meet Mr. Rochester. Their relationship develops slowly through conversation and emotional understanding. Their relationship therefore becomes more than a simple romantic story.

The central conflict of the novel appears when Jane discover an important secret about Rochester. At this point Jane has to choose between her love and her moral principles. Although leaving Rochester causes her great emotional pain, she refuses to sacrifice her self respect. This decision becomes one of the strongest example of scarifies in the novel. Bronte therefore presents love not merely as a source of happiness but also as a test of character.

1. Jane Eyre as a Strong and Independent heroine

Jane Eyre is at the centre of the novel. She begins her life as an orphan and faces rejection, loneliness and hardship. However these experience do not completely break her spirit. They help to develop a strong sense of right and wrong.

Jane wants to be treated as a human being with equal values. She does not accept that social position makes a person superior. Jane's relationship with Rochester is also influenced by this belief. She loves him so much. Her character therefore connects the ideas of love, scarifies and independence.

2. LOVE BETWEEN ROCHESTER AND JANE

The relationship between Jane and Rochester is one of the main attractions of the novel. Jane is attracted to Rochester not his money; she finds an emotional connection with him. Rochester also sees something different in Jane. Although she is socially and financially below him, but he respect her honesty and strong personality.

Their social class create difference. Rochester is wealthy man and owner of Thornfield hall; where Jane works in his house as a governess. Author shows that genuine love should not depend on only social class and money.

3. Love and Moral choice

Jane's love for Rochester is tested when she discovers that he is already married to Bertha Mason. Rochester asks Jane to remain with him, but Jane refuses to accept a relationship. This is one of the most important moments in Jane's development. She is deeply attached to Rochester. Her choice shows that she values her self respect. Jane's decision can therefore be understood as a sacrifice. Bronte shows this sacrifice as a sign of inner strength rather than weakness.

4. Jane's sacrifice for Self-respect

Jane's decision to leave Thornfield is emotionally difficult. She knows that leaving Rochester it means living person whom she loves a lot. She choose independence over uncertain relationship. This sacrifice is important because Jane does not sacrifice herself completely for love. Her action suggest that a woman can love deeply and still maintain her own principle.

Jane's journey also reflects the changing idea of the female character in nineteenth century fiction. She is not presented as a passive woman waiting for a man to decide her future. She is capable to take her own decision.

5. Rochester's Suffering and Change

Edward Rochester is also changed by his experiences. In the beginning he is wealthy, powerful and sometime controlling. His hidden marriage secret creates problem in his relationship with Jane. After Jane lives him he suffers a lot. This is turning point of his life. And he lost his power and became dependent on other.

Both life changed after this incident. Jane became independent and strong and Rochester faced difficulties and dependent on other he suffers a lot.

6. Role of Bertha Mason

Bertha Mason is an important figure in the novel. She is separated from Jane's daily life. Her presence creates the central mystery of Thornfield and eventually reveals the truth about Rochester. Her character also influence Jane's choices. The discovery of Rochester's marriage makes Jane understand that remaining at thornfield would conflict with her principle.

Thus, Bertha's presence indirectly becomes an important part of Jane's moral journey.

7. Sacrifice and Personal Growth

Sacrifice in Jane Eyre is closely connected with personal growth. Jane experiences several forms of loss and difficulty throughout her life. She loses her parents, suffers at Gateshead experiences hardship at Lowood and later leaves Thornfield despite loving Rochester.

Each experience contributes to her development. She becomes more mature and learns to make decisions independently.

8. Woman, society and Independence

Bronte also uses Jane's story to question the limited position of women in Victorian society. Jane does not want to live only as someone's dependent. She wants meaningful work, emotional respect and freedom of choice. Through Jane, Bronte creates a heroine who has both emotional sensitivity and intellectual strength.

9. Jane Eyre as a journey of self discovery

The entire novel can be understood as Jane's journey towards discovery. From Gateshead to Lowood, Thornfield every place contributes something to her development. Gateshead represents childhood suffering, Lowood represents education and discipline, Thornfield represents love and conflict.

Theme: Love and Equality

The novel suggest that love becomes meaningful when it's connected with equality and respect. Jane love only Rochester not his wealth and his social class. She want around him herself only.

At the end of the novel, the relationship between Jane and Rochester becomes more balanced. Jane has gained financial independence. Rochester lost some his physical and social power. Their final relationship viewed as emotional equality.

Famous line.....

Charlotte Bronte beautifully expresses Jane's desire for freedom and equality through the words:

“ I am no bird; and no net can hold me.”

Conclusion

Charlotte Bronte Jane Eyre is not simply a love story. It is also a story of courage, self respect, independence and personal growth. Jane loves Rochester deeply, but she does not allow her emotions to destroy her principles. Her decision to leave Thornfield show that sometimes love requires sacrifice in making the right choice even in painful. The novel also shows the transformation of Rochester and the changing nature of their relationship. Through Jane's experiences, Bronte presents love as something that should exist with equality, respect. Thus, love and Sacrifice are closely connected throughout Jane Eyre. Jane's sacrifices do not lead to the loss of her identity; instead they help her understand herself better. In this way the novel remains relevant because its ideas about love, independence and personal choice continue to have meaning for modern readers.

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