Becoming Jane:

Identity, Dependency and Autonomy in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*

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Tässä pro gradu -tutkielmassani tarkastelen identiteetin, riippuvuuden ja itsenäisyyden teemoja Charlotte Brontën romaanissa *Jane Eyre* (1847). Keskityn tutkimaan kirjan päähenkilön Janen kasvua ja kehitystä viktoriaanisessa kulttuurissa. Janen matka aikuisuuteen ja "omaksi itsekseen" on täynnä haasteita, jotka kumpuavat sekä normaaliin psykologiseen kasvuun ja kehitykseen kuuluvista kehitystehtävistä että viktoriaanisen kulttuurin naisiin kohdistuvista rajoitteista ja ristiriitaisesta naiskuvasta. Janen identiteetin muodostumiseen vaikuttavat siis keskeisesti sekä sisäiset psykologiset tekijät että ulkoiset sosiaaliset tekijät, jotka usein ovat vuorovaikutuksessa keskenään tai kietoutuneet yhteen. Janen kehitykselle ominaista on myös tasapainottelu erityisesti riippuvuuden ja itsenäisyyden, mutta myös muiden eri elementtien ja vastakohtaisuuksien tai ääripäiden välillä. Lopulta Jane onnistuu tasapainottamaan eri elementit itsessään ja löytää onnen rakastamansa herra Rochesterin viereltä.

Tarkastelen Janen kehitystä pääasiassa kehityspsykologisesta ja psykoanalyyttisesta näkökulmasta. Teoreettisena viitekehyksenäni käytän Erik H. Eriksonin psykososiaalista kehitysteoriaa, Robert J. Havighurstin kehitystehtäväteoriaa sekä Jacques Lacanin ajatuksia identiteetin relationaalisuudesta ja peilautumisesta. Luvussa kaksi käyn läpi tämän tutkielmani teoreettisen viitekehyksen, ja luvussa kolme siirryn analysoimaan Janen kehitystä Eriksonin, Havighurstin ja Lacanin hahmottelemien kehitysvaiheiden, -tehtävien ja muun käsitteistön avulla. Janen kasvutarina voidaan jakaa viiteen eri osaan niiden paikkojen mukaan, joissa hän kronologisesti toimii kirjan eri vaiheissa: Janen lapsuus ja varhaisnuoruus Gatesheadissa ja Lowoodin sisäoppilaitoksessa, myöhäisnuoruus ja varhaisaikuisuus Thornfield Hallin kartanossa ja Marsh Endin talossa, ja lopulta aikuisuuden ja rakkauden kulminoituminen Ferndeanin kartanossa. Näitä paikkoja ja niiden henkilöhahmoja taustana käyttäen kartoitan Janen kasvua ja identiteetin, riippuvuuden ja itsenäisyyden tematiikkaa.

Tutkielmani neljäs luku pyrkii luomaan kulttuurissosiaalisen kontekstin Janen kehitykselle ja identiteetin muodostumiselle tarkastelemalla naisen asemaa ja käsityksiä naiseudesta viktoriaanisen ajan Englannissa. Viktoriaaninen kulttuuri rajoitti naisen elämää monin tavoin ja piti yllä ristiriitaista kuvaa naisista sekä hyveellisinä kodin enkeleinä että ylitsepursuavan seksuaalisina paholaisina. Erityisesti naiskeho demonisoitiin, ja naisen seksuaalisuutta pidettiin jopa mielenvikaisuuden merkkinä. Tässä kontekstissa herra Rochesterin "hullu" vaimo Bertha on erityisen tärkeä, ja tarkastelenkin Berthan hahmoa viktoriaanisen naisen ahdistuksen edustajana ja Janen alter egona, "toisena identiteettinä".

Avainsanat: identiteetti, riippuvuus, itsenäisyys, naisen asema, viktoriaaninen Englanti, Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, kehityspsykologia

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1. Introduction

The themes of growing up and finding one's place in the world are central in human life and common in fiction. One reason for the popularity of coming-of-age stories and the *Bildungsroman* genre is probably their universality and timelessness: although the context varies, every human being goes through the process of growing up. In this process and in human life in general, the questions of identity, dependency and autonomy are essential.

In this Master's thesis I will examine identity, dependency and autonomy in Charlotte Brontë's (1816–1855) novel *Jane Eyre*, published in 1847, by focusing on its protagonist's, Jane's, identity, dependency and autonomy. The aim of this study is to look into Jane's development and analyse her identity, dependency and autonomy with the help of a theoretical framework drawn from psychoanalysis and developmental psychology, and within the context of the Victorian era. I will examine how identity, dependency and autonomy can be seen in Jane's life both on the level of personal psychological growth and on the level of growing up as a woman in Victorian culture.

Jane Eyre is a Bildungsroman, a story about a young orphan girl who grows up and comes of age in the Victorian England. The novel focuses on Jane's experiences and psychological growth from youth to adulthood. Showalter (1977, 112) suggests that "In *Jane Eyre*, Brontë attempts to depict a complete female identity. . ." and Shuttleworth (1996, 71) notes that "Throughout Charlotte Brontë's fiction, her heroines relentlessly pursue their quest for self-definition and identity". Jane begins her journey as a mistreated and insecure ten-year-old girl and during the novel, develops into a self-confident and self-respectful woman in her early twenties. The novel starts with Jane's miserable childhood under her relatives' roof and continues with an account of her education and schooling years at the Lowood boarding school. However, the main focus of the novel is on her experiences as an 18-year-old governess who falls in love with her wealthy employer, Mr Rochester. The complex relationship to Mr Rochester, the discovery of new relatives and knowledge of her past and the unexpected inheritance are of great importance on her journey. She

meets different people, sees different places and becomes aware of the norms and restrictions of Victorian society. On her journey to maturity, the themes of identity, dependency and autonomy play an important role. “To become Jane”, she must face a variety of challenges, which derive both from the natural psychological maturation processes and from the contradictory demands and restrictions of the Victorian culture. The psychological and the social are both present and intertwined in Jane’s life, growth and identity formation.

Charlotte Brontë and her work – like all the Brontë sisters and their work – have been studied immensely and with great interest since the publication of *Jane Eyre* in 1847, with Elizabeth Gaskell’s *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1857) being the authoritative initiative for later biographical studies and literary criticism (Christian 1964, 214; 222). What is so appealing and timeless in Charlotte Brontë’s fiction is its capacity to combine different elements and genres in a meaningful and fascinating way. As Eagleton (2005, 141) notes, in Brontë’s fiction, different literary modes are mixed together, and it is this mixture of “Gothic, romance, fairy tale, picaresque, ghost story, melodrama and social realism” that makes her fiction intriguing. From the modern reader’s perspective, what is particularly fascinating is the psychological accuracy with which Brontë describes the inner life of her protagonists. Glen (2002, 5) argues that one of the strengths of *Jane Eyre* is its “reworking of melodrama and romance into a psychologically acute, historically specific new realism”, and Hemstedt (1978, 12) states that Charlotte Brontë’s importance in the history of novel is in the way that her works offer a bridge from Romanticism to modern psychological literature. Thus, the psychological aspect is important in *Jane Eyre*. The novel is also considered a classic representative of the “governess novel”, which became popular in the nineteenth century. Christ and Robson (2006, 992) suggest that the governess novel, of which *Jane Eyre* is one of the most famous examples, became a popular genre because women’s roles – and especially the unsettled position of the unmarried middle-class woman – could be explored through it. Indeed, at

the heart of *Jane Eyre*'s popularity could be its ability to explore many important questions and themes of its time.

Jane Eyre fits well to the description of a typical Victorian novel. The Bildungsroman – a novel about growing up – was a popular genre in the Victorian era, and many "canonical" writers of the era – such as the Brontës, Charles Dickens and George Eliot – explored and were interested in the themes of childhood and growing up (Nelson 1999, 78). The Victorian novel typically entails a protagonist, male or female, on a journey for self-definition. The novel portrays the conflict or tension between the social environment and personal aspirations: thus, it is most suitable form to describe women's struggle for identity and autonomy in the Victorian social context of female oppression. (Christ and Robson 2006, 995). Essentially, *Jane Eyre* deals with the contradictory and oppressive notions of womanhood characteristic of the Victorian culture. Charlotte Brontë, as a female writer, supposedly faced these notions in her own life, for writing was not considered the most traditional and suitable female occupation. Writing was defined as intellectual activity, and therefore, it was considered "unwomanly", which probably acted as a reason for many female writers to publish their work under male pseudonyms – such as Charlotte Brontë's pseudonym "Currer Bell" (Hume and Offen 1981, 280). Glen (2002, 5) sees at the centre of the story of *Jane Eyre* "a woman caring for herself – earning her own living, learning to resist passion and preserve her integrity in a world of patriarchal power". Thus, *Jane Eyre* actively participates in the discussion of women's position in the Victorian era.

In addition to participating in an active discussion about women's position and female rights, *Jane Eyre* also participates in the Victorian psychological discussion and discussion about selfhood. Shuttleworth (1996, 56) points out how the first-person narrators in Brontë's novels use actively the vocabulary of the Victorian psychological discourse when they explain their actions and feelings, and states that "The self is projected variously as a unified, self-determining agent, and as a fragmented site of conflicting forces". In the Victorian psychological discussion, selfhood was

associated with “the experience of conflict and struggle, both internally, between competing faculties, and externally, between self and other” (Shuttleworth 1996, 245). This notion of selfhood is actually very similar to modern thinking about the self and identity, as will be further explored in the next chapter. *Jane Eyre* also contains imagery from the Victorian psychological and psychiatric discussion. In *Jane Eyre*, there are “two of the classic images of excess in Victorian psychiatry: the passionate child and the hysterical, insane woman” (Shuttleworth 1996, 11–12), which will be examined in chapter four in this thesis.

In the next chapter, I will lay out the theoretical framework for this thesis. Firstly, I will try to define the terms *identity, dependency* and *autonomy*, examine them in general level and explain what I mean by them in the context of my thesis. As a theoretical framework I will use Erik H. Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development, Robert J. Havighurst’s theory of personality development and developmental tasks and Jacques Lacan’s theory of relational identity and “the mirror stage”. I will introduce these theories and their basic ideas, and concentrate on the most relevant material in them in relation to Jane’s development. Because *Jane Eyre* is a Bildungsroman, a novel about growing up, there is a good deal of previous research done on Jane’s development, but to my knowledge, there is no research done on *Jane Eyre* from this particular theoretical standpoint. Previous research and criticism on *Jane Eyre* has dealt with the issues of identity and the development of the main character from various points of view. Especially feminist and psychological readings seem to be popular, which is understandable considering the novel’s focus on female protagonist’s maturing process under the strain of the nineteenth century Victorian culture. In addition, postcolonial readings have been used in analysing British imperialism and Mr Rochester’s “mad” wife, the creole Bertha, who can be read as the alter ego of Jane (see Spivak 1985). To my knowledge, the ideas on identity, dependency and autonomy suggested by Erikson, Havighurst and Lacan have not been applied to *Jane Eyre* before. This study is built on the previous

research on *Jane Eyre* and combined in a meaningful way with the notions of identity, dependency and autonomy suggested by Erikson, Havighurst and Lacan.

In chapter three, I will investigate Jane's identity, dependency and autonomy in terms of her personal psychological development by examining her growth at different stages and places in the novel. I will apply the theories and notions by Erikson, Havighurst and Lacan to Jane's life, concentrating on her development from late childhood to young adulthood because those are the periods of her life depicted in the novel. How does she develop in the course of the novel – at Gateshead, Lowood, Thornfield Hall, Marsh End and Ferndean respectively? I will examine what factors and which characters contribute to her identity formation, and how she is psychologically dependent and autonomous, as well as what role the tension between dependency and autonomy has in her life and in forming and maintaining important relationships, especially romantic ones.

In chapter four, I attempt to create a cultural and social context for Jane's development by examining women's position and the conceptions of womanhood in the Victorian England. In other words, this chapter examines the premise and the realities of life from which Victorian women had to build their identities. This aspect is relevant because Jane is a woman who grows up in a strictly Victorian culture, and inevitably this culture influences her development. As Shuttleworth (1996, 156) points out, *Jane Eyre* examines the difficulties that Victorian women faced in the formation of their identities. I will look at the Woman Question and try to explain how women were dependent and autonomous in the nineteenth century England. For the most part, Victorian women's life was marked by dependency and restrictions, and Victorian culture maintained oppressing and contradictory formulations of womanhood, stating that women were both spiritual, virtuous angels and overly sexual, uncontrolled demons. Especially the female body was deemed degenerate, and female sexuality was associated with insanity. Victorian notions of female sexuality and psychology contribute to my analysis of Bertha, and I will treat her as Jane's alter ego and as a representative of the Victorian woman's distress under male control. Shuttleworth (1996, 167) considers Bertha

essential to Jane's identity, and regards her "as the crystallization of the negative images of womanhood available in contemporary social and scientific discourse". Moreover, because Bertha is a creole who lives in the golden age of British imperialism, her position as a colonized will also be dealt with, mostly with reference to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1985). Spivak's postcolonial theory of the female subaltern takes into account the postcolonial and feminist perspectives in identity formation, which will be useful when analyzing Bertha and Jane's position as a woman in the Victorian era.

All of these ideas on identity, dependency and autonomy together will contribute to my analysis of Jane's identity and development. They will help me to look into Jane's identity from slightly different viewpoints, and thus, to build a fascinating portrait of a fictional Victorian woman. Rather than trying to arrive at some definite conclusion on Jane's identity, my aim in this thesis is to present some views and ideas on Jane's identity and development, and to suggest and examine factors that surround Jane's identity and may contribute to its formation. That is why the cultural context of the Victorian era, women's position and the character of Bertha are studied in this thesis and considered important in relation to Jane's identity and development.

2. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I will discuss the theoretical framework for my thesis. Firstly, the concepts of *identity, dependency* and *autonomy* are discussed in general terms and with reference to various theorists. Then I will move on to explore the psychological theories and ideas expressed by Erik H. Erikson, Robert J. Havighurst and Jacques Lacan.

2.1. Identity, dependency and autonomy

The key theoretical concepts in my thesis are *identity, dependency* and *autonomy*. *Identity* is a multidimensional and nebulous concept that has been at least touched upon in a variety of human sciences, most notably perhaps in philosophy, psychology, social psychology and other social sciences, as well as cultural studies. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines *identity* as "the quality or condition of being the same in substance, composition, nature, properties, or in particular qualities under consideration; absolute or essential sameness; oneness" and "the sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances; the condition of being a single individual; the fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else; individuality, personality" and "who or what a person or thing is; a distinct impression of a single person or thing presented to or perceived by others; a set of characteristics or a description that distinguishes a person or thing from others". These definitions by OED associate identity strongly with the idea of sameness and continuity, while the definition of identity in Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's English Dictionary is simply "your identity is who you are" or "the identity of a person or place is the characteristics they have that distinguish them from others" (2006, 718). The idea that identity consists of characteristics that distinguish the individual from other individuals is clearly stated in both dictionaries' definitions.

Identity is a concept that is often mixed up with other self-related concepts. Often self-related concepts and terms – such as self and identity – are used interchangeably by theorists and people in general (Westen and Kegley Heim 2003, 644). Leary and Tangney (2003, 3) note that the self and self-related phenomena have been studied widely since the 1970s within psychology, sociology, and

other social and behavioral sciences, and that the self can be considered an umbrella term for many other notions, such as "self-awareness, self-esteem, self-control, identity, self-verification, self-affirmation, self-conscious emotions, self-discrepancy, self-evaluation, self-monitoring", and so on. They regard the capacity for self-reflection as the core element of the self. Westen and Kegley Heim (2003, 646), on the other hand, consider identity the widest self-related concept, and note the importance of Erik H. Erikson in the modern definitions of identity: "[Erikson] emphasized that identity is both a highly personal construction, developed through the integration of various identifications and disidentifications with significant others and reference groups, and a social construction, developed through internalization of roles and reflected appraisals of others".

In addition to examining the concept of identity in general, one can also specify the kind of identity one is studying. Depending on the discipline and subjective emphasis there can be found many kinds of "specified" identities: personal and social identity, national, cultural and ethnic identity, religious and group identity, online identity, gender identity, occupational identity, and so on. All of these "specified" identities together can be regarded as contributing to the individual's sense of the self – sense of the "whole" identity. This thesis concentrates on the concept and questions of identity from a developmental psychological and psychoanalytical viewpoint with relevant consideration of social aspects, culture and gender. The kind of identity examined in this thesis, therefore, will mostly be personal identity mixed with social and gender aspects. I find these aspects the most fruitful and suitable in my analysis of Jane's identity, for the social position of women in the Victorian era plays an essential role in Jane's identity formation in addition to her personal psychological development.

The questions of the self and its formation are essential in human development. As Hall (2000, 15) notes, the concept of identity has been widely studied in different disciplinary fields in recent years, for example in philosophy, psychoanalytically influenced feminism, cultural criticism and postmodernism. What is common in these fields is that all of them seem to be "critical of the

notion of an integral, originary and unified identity" (Hall 2000, 15). Hall (2000, 17) argues that identities are never stable or unified but ever-changing and fragmented, and constructed through difference – "through the relation to the Other, the relation to what it is not, to precisely what it lacks…" Hall's notion of identity seems to be exactly opposite to the previously mentioned OED definition of identity as "absolute or essential sameness . . . at all times or in all circumstances". Bhabha (2000, 99–100), too, seems to be arguing against the same and unified nature of identity when stating that identity is never "a finished product; it is only ever the problematic process of access to an image of totality". Butler (1999, 22–23) emphasizes the importance of gender and other social categories and functions through which the person's identity "assumes social visibility and meaning", and states that identity cannot be studied in isolation from the notion of gender and other social notions. Bordieu (2000, 299) acknowledges the importance of the process of nomination in relation to identity, and sees the proper name as a way to institute "a constant and durable social identity". However, the question whether identity is by nature stable and unified or unstable and fragmented seems to be highly controversial among researchers and theorists, and the opinions vary across different disciplines as well.

Anyway, the social, in addition to the personal, seems to be an integral component of the notion of identity for many theorists. Burke and Stets (2009, 3) argue that in the concept of identity, the individual and society are connected. They define identity as "the set of meanings that define who one is when one is an occupant of a particular role in society, a member of a particular group, or claims particular characteristics that identify him or her as a unique person", and because people act in many roles, are members of many different groups and have many kinds of personal characteristics, they also have multiple identities (Burke and Stets 2009, 3). Cast (2003, 41) notes that social structure organizes the self and that "the self is a process that both shapes and is shaped by interaction . . .". People use their role-based identities in interaction with other people in counter-roles. Stets (2006, 88-89) describes role identities as consisting of all the meanings – both personal

and socially derived – that a person attaches to himself, and sees the self and society as reflecting each other in their complexity and differentiation. To sum up, it seems that the social context, interaction, roles, and the idea of multiplicity are important in relation to the concept of identity. Arguably, in Jane's identity one can see how the personal and social are intertwined: both her personal psychological processes and her social position as a Victorian female contribute substantially to her identity.

Along with Jane's identity, I will examine the questions of dependency and autonomy in her life and development. By the terms *dependency* and *autonomy* in the context of my thesis I refer to the ways in which human beings are at the same time dependent on and independent of different things, such as other human beings or society and its structures. Because dependency and autonomy can be considered two opposing poles or binaries, there is naturally tension between them, and people have to try to deal with this tension and search for some sort of balance. The tension is both psychological and social; it exists both in the human mind and in society. In the OED, the relevant definitions (that is, the definitions that concern human beings) for *dependency* are "the condition of being dependent; the relation of a thing to that by which it is conditioned", "the relation of a thing (or person) to that by which it is supported; state of subjection or subordination" and in Collins (2006, 377) "you talk about someone's dependency when they have a deep emotional, physical, or financial need for a particular person or thing, especially one that you consider excessive or undesirable" . The relevant definitions for *autonomy* in the OED are "the condition or right of a state, institution, group, etc., to make its own laws or rules and administer its own affairs; self-government, independence", "the capacity of reason for moral self-determination" and "liberty to follow one's will; control over one's own affairs; freedom from external influence, personal independence", and in Collins (2006, 82) "autonomy is the ability to make your own decisions about what to do rather than being influenced by someone else or told what to do". In other words, *dependency* is highly associated with meaningful relations and needs, while *autonomy* highlights

the individual's freedom and independence of external influence, such as other people around the individual.

The conflict between dependency and autonomy is thus one of the basic human tensions with which one must deal, especially when one grows up and builds one's own life and world view and relationships to other people. In human development, the infant is psychologically, socially and physically dependent on its parents or primary caregivers. The dependency continues when the child grows older, but gradually the child comes more and more autonomous. The tension between dependency and autonomy seems to be particularly pertinent in adolescence, when one starts to leave childhood and child-like dependency behind and gradually enter into adulthood. However, the dynamics of dependency and autonomy characterize not only childhood and adolescence but the whole human life-span, for people are never absolutely dependent or absolutely autonomous: both "sides" exist and belong to human life. It is a question of relativity and "both-and" rather than "either-or". As I will argue, the dynamics of dependency and autonomy characterize Jane's personal psychological growth from childhood to adulthood as well as her position as a woman in Victorian society.

Maybe more than striving for dependency, human life is characterized by the incessant pursuit for autonomy – especially if such personal autonomy is noticeably lacking. As Pervin (2003, 134; 143) records, the psychologists Deci and Ryan have suggested in their self-determination theory that *autonomy* is one of the three basic human needs, alongside with *competence* and *relatedness*. These three needs are viewed as "fundamental aspects of our being":

> The need for competence is expressed in the motivation to feel a sense of mastery over difficult tasks. The need for autonomy is expressed in the motivation to feel free to choose action on the basis of one's own interests and values. The need for relatedness is expressed in the motivation to feel close and connected to important others. These three needs are viewed as innate, fundamental aspects of human nature. (Pervin 2003, 134)

So, according to Deci and Ryan, people have an innate need to be autonomous, at least in the sense that people are able to choose their action and values. *Relatedness*, as described in the extract

above, can be regarded as a kind of "positive dependency" in the sense that it involves being closely connected to other people, and usually being closely connected to other people presumes some kind of emotional dependency in the form of an important emotional attachment. It would seem that the "both-and" nature of dependency and autonomy that I proposed earlier is present in this Deci and Ryan's theory. People need autonomy, and the motive for autonomy is perhaps bigger, but people also need dependency in the form of relatedness – close and important connection to other people.

In the next three subchapters, I will examine the ideas of identity, dependency and autonomy expressed in the theories by the developmental psychologist and psychoanalyst Erik H. Erikson, the developmental psychologist and educator Robert J. Havighurst and the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development comes from the field of psychoanalysis and developmental psychology, Havighurst's theory of personality development and developmental tasks belongs to the field of developmental psychology, and Lacan's theory of relational identity and "the mirror stage" relies on the school of psychoanalysis. Thus, the theoretical framework for my thesis is heavily psychological, and, to be precise, this psychological viewpoint draws on psychoanalytical and developmental psychological approaches. These approaches seem to have relatively accessible and suitable theories and concepts to apply to individual's identity formation, and they also touch upon the themes of dependency and autonomy, which is why I have chosen them.

Of course one must remember that the theories of human development and identity are broad generalizations of how development may go or how it often goes. They are not all-embracing or infallible. In practice, development varies, and there are as many life stories as there are individuals in the world. However, theories are useful when one tries to outline the general patterns of development. What I find common in the theories by Erikson and Havighurst is that they both seem to suggest that the person must first achieve individually a sufficient amount of autonomy in order to become dependent once again in a positive way. Thus, by emphasizing the structure and order of

development, Erikson and Havighurst represent a more structural approach as opposed to Lacan and his post-structural tendencies. Nevertheless, a common factor in all these three theories is their inclusion of the social aspect in the person's development and identity formation: one needs others to become oneself. This suits well to Jane's development: she needs others to become herself.

2.2. Erik H. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development

Identity, dependency and autonomy are important concepts in terms of psychological theories of human development. Starting from Sigmund Freud and his famous theory of the psychosexual stages of development, some psychologists examine human development in terms of distinct stages (Pervin 2003, 186–187). Perhaps one of the most extensive stage theories of development is Erik H. Erikson's (1902–1994) theory of psychosocial development. While Freud emphasizes the deterministic and biological side of development and concentrates on childhood, Erikson emphasizes the social or "psychosocial" context of development alongside the biological and focuses not only on childhood, but also on adulthood's development, extending the stages to cover the person's whole life cycle (Pervin 2003, 189). Development is seen as determined by both internal biological and psychological processes and external social influences (Kail & Cavanaugh 2008, 11). Erikson's view is also less deterministic than Freud's: the early childhood development is not all-determining, but each stage of development from childhood to old-age gives chances for new positive results and developments (Pervin 2003, 189).

Erikson's theory of psychosocial development states that there are eight stages (see table below) in the person's life cycle and personality development, and in each of these stages the person confronts different developmental challenges or crises which must be resolved. The successful completion of these crises leads development onward and gives the person new strength and experience of basic emotions. Ideally, the person must complete one stage before entering into the next one (Kuusinen 2003, 316). The stages are not regarded as totally separate from each other. Rather, they are characterized by interdependence: the development in one stage is affected by the

developments in the previous stages and has effects on the developments in the following stages, for "The individual develops as a totality" (Pervin 2003, 190). In addition, as Newman & Newman (2011, 66) note, being in a certain stage does not mean that the person cannot function at all at the tasks or questions assigned to other stages – people may anticipate later challenges or reflect upon past ones. Here are seen the core elements of Erikson's theory:

Erikson's Eight Stages of Psychosocial Development

Age	**Stage**	**Strength/basic emotion developed**
0-1 years	Trust vs. Mistrust	Hope
2-3 years	Autonomy vs. Shame and doubt	Willpower
4-5 years	Initiative vs. Guilt	Purpose
6-12 years/latency	Industry vs. Inferiority	Competence
Adolescence	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Fidelity
Young Adulthood	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Love
Middle Age	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Care
Old Age	Ego Integration vs. Despair	Wisdom

(The table has been compiled of Erikson 1962, 239-257; Pervin 2003, 189; Mcleod 2008)

At each stage, the person confronts a new "basic conflict", the resolution of which gives a new strength to the developing self (Erikson 1962, 256). In the following, I will look more closely at three of these stages because they are the most relevant ones in my thesis, considering the themes of identity, dependency and autonomy and Jane's age (from ten years old to her early twenties) in the novel: the stages of 6–12 years/latency, adolescence and young adulthood.

The stage of 6–12 years old/latency is about the sense of industry versus inferiority with the optimal outcome being the virtue of competence. At this stage, the role of school-life, education, teachers and peers is essential. The child learns to work hard and trust his own ability in achieving goals (Mcleod 2008). The child develops the ability "to be absorbed in productive work" and is able to experience "pride in completed product" (Pervin 2003, 189). Failing in these tasks and in developing new skills, and not receiving support for their initiatives, the child may develop the "sense of inadequacy and inferiority" and may be "unable to complete work" (Pervin 2003, 189;

Mcleod 2008). The child may fall in desperation and feel unable to relate to his peers (Erikson 1962, 248). In other words, what is important is to support the child and help him to develop self-confidence in his skills and efforts, so that he may experience a sense of competence in life.

The stage of latency is followed by the stage of adolescence. According to Erikson's theory, the psychosocial crisis or conflict in adolescence is about identity versus role confusion, the basic emotion developed being fidelity. The adolescent reaches genital maturity, starts to question the former childhood beliefs and is increasingly interested in what other people think about him or how other people perceive him (Erikson 1962, 249). Erikson emphasized the importance of this stage and regarded it as crucial in the person's identity formation (Mcleod 2008). He viewed human behavior and actions as shaped and motivated by the urge to resolve identity crisis (Markus & Nurius 1987, 162). However, as Hart et al (1987, 121) note, Erikson does not consider identity formation exclusively the task of the stage of adolescence; rather, the development of identity is a lifelong task that extends itself from childhood to adulthood, adolescence being the significant stage in this identity process. The adolescent becomes more and more autonomous with age and experience, and "begin[s] to look at the future in terms of career, relationships, families, housing, etc" (Mcleod 2008). This stage includes exploration of different values and roles (Pervin 2003, 190). The person sees, ponders and tries different roles and, ideally, arrives at forming his own true identity and the experience of his true authentic self (Kuusinen 2003, 316). He feels "confidence of inner sameness and continuity", and his sense of his own identity matches with the perception of others (Pervin 2003, 189). Pervin (2003, 217) defines this stage as a "stage of development in which the person struggles to establish a sense of identity, or continuity as to who he or she is, as opposed to being without a sense of continuity or direction". Not succeeding in the tasks of this stage, then, the person may feel not really knowing who he is and where he is heading (Pervin 2003, 190).

It is noteworthy that the identity formation process described above is associated with the term "struggle": it suggests that the process of forming one's identity is not an easy one. Erikson

(1962, 249) notes that this identity struggle often involves the adolescent ranging against other people – people who may mean well, such as parents or authorities, but who must be fought against in search of one's own self-determination. As Erikson (1980, 95) puts it, the adolescent is "desperately seeking for a satisfactory sense of belonging . . ." Moreover, adolescents may deeply idolize some people and identify with their idols during their process of self-search, and mirror themselves to their idols. Hence, identity formation in adolescence is not straightforward but very variable – sometimes a very difficult process – with its advancements and possible setbacks.

Burke (2003, 1) associates the Eriksonian use of the term *identity* with substantial individualism (rather than social aspects), dealing with the person's subjective sense of uniqueness, sameness and continuity. However, because the Erikson's view of identity formation entails seeing, trying and reflecting over different role models and identities in the person's immediate milieu and society in general, I consider it impossible to regard the Eriksonian view of identity as lacking any social context. Rather, Erikson's view of identity can be seen as concentrating on individual development but not forgetting the social context in which this development takes place.

The crisis in young adulthood concerns intimacy versus isolation: the capacity to love and to develop and maintain intimacy and intimate relationships to other people versus the incapacity to love genuinely or to be loved, the "deep sense of isolation", withdrawal into oneself and the sense of loneliness (Erikson 1968, 135–136; Kuusinen 2003, 316–317). The successful completion of this stage gives the person the experience of love as one of the basic powers in life. The positive outcomes of this stage also include "mutuality" and "sharing of thoughts, work, feelings" (Pervin 2003, 189). In Erikson's (1962, 250) opinion, young people are not truly ready for this stage of intimacy until they have gone through the struggle for identity and managed to arrive at some coherent sense of the self. This is because intimacy and close relationships usually involve situations which require some sort of "self-surrender" and forgetting oneself (such as orgasms, sexual and other close relationships), and people must be able to deal with the sense or fear of

losing themselves in these situations. Erikson (1980, 101) argues that "The youth who is not sure of his identity shies away from interpersonal intimacy; but the surer he becomes of himself, the more he seeks it in the form of friendship, combat, leadership, love, and inspiration". The sense of identity helps people to confront this fear of losing themselves in intimate relations. If the person is very afraid of losing himself, he may avoid intimate situations and isolate himself (Erikson 1962, 250–251).

Although outlined as distinct stages in Erikson's theory, human development is not viewed in terms of utterly fixed chronological sequences: room is given for individual timetable, which is heavily affected by the person's biological maturation and the cultural context (Newman & Newman 2011, 65). However, a sense of sequence and order is certainly inscribed in the theory. Thus, considering the stages of latency, adolescence and young adulthood, Erikson's theory seems to suggest that by completing these developmental stages successfully and in the correct order, the person first achieves a sense of competence, then forms his true identity, and finally, experiences the feeling of true love and intimacy. To these three stages I will return in chapter three in my analysis of Jane's development.

2.3. Robert J. Havighurst's theory of personality development and development tasks

Robert J. Havighurst's (1900–1991) theory of personality development and development tasks defines six major stages (see table below) of development from birth to old age. In each of these stages, the person encounters different development tasks or questions that are characteristic of each stage and age. Havighurst (1953, 2) defines a development task as "a task which arises at or about a certain period in the life of the individual, successful achievement of which leads to his happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by society, and difficulty with later tasks". Havighurst (1972) identifies three sources for development tasks: physical maturation, personal aspirations and social pressure. Development is regulated by biological growth and interaction with social environment (Kuusinen 2003, 312–313). As one can

see, there are great similarities between Havighurst and Erikson: both conceive development as distinct stages and as interplay of the biological, the mental and the social. Both of them are concerned with "tasks" or questions assigned to different stages, and both of them view the stages and their respective tasks sequential. However, Havighurst is less concerned with the notion of identity than Erikson, and his tasks or questions are far more concrete than those of Erikson.

Havighurst's Six Major Stages (and the Developmental Tasks)

Age	Stage	Developmental tasks
0-5 years	Infancy and Early Childhood	learning to walk, to take solid foods, to talk, to control the elimination of body wastes, learning sex differences and sexual modesty, acquiring concepts and language to describe social and physical reality, readiness for reading and learning to distinguish right from wrong and developing a conscience
6-12	Middle Childhood	learning physical skills necessary for ordinary games, building a wholesome attitude toward oneself, learning to get along with age-mates, learning an appropriate sex role, developing fundamental skills in reading, writing, and calculating, developing concepts necessary for everyday living, developing conscience, morality, and a scale of values, achieving personal independence and developing acceptable attitudes toward society
13-18	Adolescence	achieving mature relations with both sexes, achieving a masculine or feminine social role, accepting one's physique, achieving emotional independence of adults, preparing for marriage and family life, preparing for an economic career, acquiring values and an ethical system to guide behavior and desiring and achieving socially responsible behavior
19-30	Early Adulthood	selecting a mate, learning to live with a partner, starting a family, rearing children, managing a home, starting an occupation and assuming civic responsibility
30-60	Middle Adulthood	helping teenage children to become happy and responsible adults, achieving adult social and civic responsibility, satisfactory career achievement, developing adult leisure time activities, relating to one's spouse as a person, accepting the physiological changes of middle age and adjusting to aging parent
61 years and over	Later Maturity	adjusting to decreasing strength and health, adjusting to retirement and reduced income, adjusting to death of spouse, establishing relations with one's own age group, meeting social and civic obligations and establishing satisfactory living quarters

(Havighurst 1972)

In Havighurst's theory, human development is seen as a process, in which people try to learn the tasks that society requires of them at different stages (Newman & Newman 2011, 67). Tasks vary

according to age and "reflect areas of accomplishment in physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development, as well as development of the self-concept" (ibid, 68). Succeeding or failing in the tasks contributes to the person's identity formation and the way the person perceives himself.

In my analysis of Jane's development I will apply three of these stages and their respective developmental tasks: the stages of middle childhood, adolescence and early adulthood. These are the stages relevant (in terms of Jane's age, again) in my study. What is common to these three stages is that they all seem to aim at the development of a more and more autonomous individual. The stage of middle childhood consists of tasks that increase the individual's readiness for building himself and his world-image, such as developing basic academic skills and concepts. The stage of adolescence includes such tasks as achieving emotional independency of one's parents, preparing oneself for intimate relationship or marriage, choosing a career and vocation and building one's own world view, values, ethics and belief system, independent of former authorities. Little by little, the person starts to cut loose from his parents and question his former beliefs. The tasks of early adulthood are choosing a life-companion, setting up a family and sharing a household, participating in working life and assuming civic duties. (Kuusinen 2003, 313–316). The person starts to build his own "adult" life, settle down and assume responsibilities. He has gained a sufficient amount of independency and is ready to accept new duties that may bring a new kind of dependency with them, such as the emotional dependency on one's life companion and new family.

To sum up, Havighurst's stages of middle childhood, adolescence and early adulthood resemble Erikson's stages of latency, adolescence and young adulthood both in name and content. However, there are some differences: Erikson's stages are more abstract and greater emphasis is put on identity formation, while Havighurst's stages consist of rather concrete and detailed tasks. I find that the two theories suit well together and support each other, and in chapter three, I will use them both in my analysis of Jane's development.

2.4. Jacques Lacan's theory of relational identity and "the mirror stage"

In addition to the developmental psychological aspect represented by Erikson and Havighurst, I wanted to bring a more psychoanalytically oriented nuance in my thesis in the form of Jacques Lacan. Jacques Lacan's (1901–1981) theory of relational identity allows for relativity and difference in one's identity formation (Bertens 2008, 126). The important concepts in Lacanian psychoanalysis are the "Imaginary", the "mirror stage", the "Symbolic" and the "Real", of which the "mirror stage" is the crucial one in the person's identity formation. Williams (1995, 59) argues that Lacan's importance for literary criticism is in his bringing aspects of language to the traditional Freudian concepts of the psyche and sexuality.

The infant's development begins with the state called the "Imaginary", in which the child has not yet developed the ability to speak or the sense of limitations or boundaries between itself and the world. The infant lives in a world of primal desires and drives. Through the important "mirror stage", the child moves on to a state called the "Symbolic", in which language – words, symbols – and the ability to speak are central. At the same time, the child enters the "Real", the real world beyond language which we can never truly know directly but which is indirectly conveyed to us in language. In entering the "Symbolic" and the "Real", the child loses its sense of wholeness and boundlessness, and enters into a world of language, social conventions and limitations. The desires and drives of the "Imaginary" are suppressed and moved to the unconscious part of mind. In the world of language and social systems, the notion of authority is central. Authority is conveyed to us through language and called "the *nom du père*, the name of the father, in recognition of the patriarchal character of our social arrangements". (Bertens 2008, 126). For Lacan, male dominance is thus culturally constructed, through language.

Between the states of "Imaginary" and "Symbolic" is the most important stage in relation to identity formation: the "mirror stage". Lacan (2000, 45) says that the mirror stage means identification: "the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image. . ." At

this stage, the person starts to build his identity on the basis of the "mirror image" that other people and the world reflect back to the person. Like an image in an actual mirror, this mirror image is a distorted version, a reflection, of the actual being. (Bertens 2008, 126). "The mirror-image is a mirage of the 'I'. . ." (Bowie 1991, 25). Nevertheless, it forms the basis for the person's identity. Lacan (2000, 46) also notes the importance of the mirror apparatus itself in showing "the appearances of the *double*, in which psychical realities, however heterogeneous, are manifested". Thus, in a mirror, one is able to see and experience different sides and notions of oneself.

Crucial for the person's identity is the concept of *others* or *the Other*, which links the person's identity strongly to the environment, to the social:

> For Lacan, we need the response and recognition of *others* and of *the Other* to arrive at what we experience as our identity. Our 'subjectivity' is construed in interaction with 'others', that is, individuals who resemble us in one way or another but who are also irrevocably different. We become subjects – that is to say, ourselves – by way of the perspectives and views of others. (Bertens 2008, 126–127)

In other words, the individual's identity is essentially constructed in interaction with the "Other" or "others" and the world outside the individual. The "Other" can be embodied in concrete persons, "other people", or refer to the society and social order in which we live. The individual's identity is dependent on the "Other" and cannot exist without it. As a result, the identity that a given individual has at a given moment is always a relational construction: it allows for a great deal of difference and change, because the "Other" (that is, the world outside the individual, whether other people or social and cultural systems) is not stable but changes constantly. Thus, identity changes too, and is rather an ever-ongoing process than a fixed state. The relational and dynamic nature of identity is essential in Lacanian notion of identity. (Bertens 2008, 126–127).

When entering the world of language, the individual has to repress the desires and drives of the original "Imaginary" state, as mentioned above. However, these desires and drives do not completely disappear but remain in the unconscious of the individual, from which they may emerge from time to time. Williams (1995, 59) notes that it is actually here that the unconscious is born, for

at this stage repression takes place. The *unconscious* refers to “those thoughts, experiences, and feelings of which we are unaware” (Pervin 2003, 257). The notion of unconsciousness can also be associated with society as a whole, not just a single individual. As Bertens (2008, 128) notes, Lacan parallels the individual unconsciousness with social unconsciousness and sees society’s prevalent ideology as the social consciousness:

> We may expect everything that is ideologically undesirable within a given culture to have found refuge in the unconsciousness of its members. If we see ′ideology′ in psychoanalytic terms, that is, as the conscious dimension of a given society, then we may posit an unconscious where everything that ideology represses – social inequality, unequal opportunity, the lack of freedom of the subject – is waiting to break to the surface. . . . The social unconsciousness will just like our individual unconsciousness succeed in getting past the censor. (Bertens 2008, 128)

So, the repressed elements may surface from both the individual and social unconsciousness. This notion of social unconsciousness is important in my analysis of Jane’s development in Victorian society and the character of Bertha in chapter four.

To sum up, Lacan’s notion of identity crucially involves the ideas of relationality, the importance of the Other, the mirror-stage, and the double. I will use these ideas in examining Jane’s development in chapters three and four. Although Lacan’s stages are used in describing an infant’s development, I regard them as symbolically applicable to human development in general, and hence, useful and relevant in analyzing Jane’s development. Together with Erikson’s and Havighurst’s theories, these notions and ideas by Lacan offer a useful theoretical framework for my analysis of Jane’s identity, dependency and autonomy in the next chapters.

3. Jane's development: identity, dependency and autonomy

Essentially, *Jane Eyre* is a story about growing up and finding one's place in the world. Gilbert and Gubar (1979, 339) call it "a distinctively female *Bildungsroman*", and Boumelha (1990, 60) sums up the key elements in Jane's development: "the painful acquisition of identity, of independence and of a marriage of equals". The novel closely traces the life and inner feelings of its protagonist and is written in the first person narrator form, which makes it fascinating to follow Jane's psychological development and maturation, as well as the experiences and problems that she has to face and resolve. As I will argue, identity, dependency and autonomy play an important part in the maturation process and in the development of an individual.

The novel can be divided into five parts according to the five different places or buildings where Jane stays for various periods of time: Jane's childhood at Gateshead with her aunt and cousins, her education at the Lowood School, her time as governess at Thornfield Hall, her time with the Rivers family at Marsh End and, finally, her time at Ferndean Manor. The novel goes through these five distinct stages, and each stage is important in Jane's development. In my analysis, I will examine Jane's development at each of these five places.

In this chapter, I will rely on the theoretical framework by Erikson, Havighurst and Lacan in my analysis of Jane's personal psychological development and the notions of identity, dependency and autonomy in this development. I will use Erikson's psychosocial stages of latency, adolescence and young adulthood with their respective strengths or basic emotions as outcomes, and employ Havighurst's stages of middle childhood, adolescence and early adulthood and his ideas of developmental tasks. I will show that these stages and their respective tasks or questions are relevant in Jane's development. From Lacan, I will use the ideas of the mirror-stage, the Other and the double in Jane's identity formation in this chapter, and I will return to Lacan's notions again in chapter four in my analysis of the Victorian society and the character of Bertha.

3.1. Gateshead and Lowood

Jane Eyre covers approximately ten years of Jane Eyre's life: the novel begins with the ten-year-old child Jane and ends with the young adult Jane of about twenty years old. Jane the child's world consists of two important places: her relatives' house Gateshead and the Lowood boarding school for girls. These places act as scenery for Jane's development at the Eriksonian stage of latency and Havighurst's stage of middle childhood, and also witness the beginning of Jane's adolescence.

The orphan Jane spends her childhood with her uncle's family at Gateshead where she is physically and emotionally abused by her aunt Mrs Reed and her three cousins. The affluent Reed family despises her and constantly reminds her of the fact that she is merely a dependant in the house, totally dependent on their providing and "benevolence". Jane is deprived of any parental or sisterly affection, and she suffers from hostile verbal and physical attacks by her cousin John Reed:

> "You have no business to take our books; you are a dependant, mama says; you have no money; your father left you none; you ought to beg, and not to live here with gentlemen's children like us, and eat the same meals we do, and wear clothes at our mama's expense." (Brontë 1992, 6)

Shuttleworth (1996, 154) states that Jane is – already as a child – involved in Victorian "class and gender war": her cousin John Reed calls him a "rat" (Brontë 1992, 6), a filthy "dweller in the sewers", which associates her with the lower social classes. Also the household servants, Bessie and Miss Abbot, constantly remind Jane of her dependency and slave-like position in the Reed family:

> "You ought to be aware, Miss, that you are under obligations to Mrs. Reed: she keeps you: if she were to turn you off, you would have to go to the poorhouse." I had nothing to say to these words: they were not new to me: my very first recollections of existence included hints of the same kind. This reproach of my dependence had become a vague sing-song in my ear: very painful and crushing, but only half intelligible. Miss Abbot joined in – "And you ought not to think yourself on an equality with the Misses Reed and Master Reed, because Missis kindly allows you to be brought up with them. They will have a great deal of money, and you will have none: it is your place to be humble, and to try to make yourself agreeable to them." (Brontë 1992, 8)

As the extracts above illustrate, Jane's situation is marked by powerless dependency which is emphasized by the fact that she is still a child, a ten-year-old orphan girl, who does not have anybody else in the world. The conflict between industry vs. inferiority of the stage of latency is

present in Jane's life. She feels inferior to her cousins, and cannot understand why all her efforts are denied and why she is not loved at Gateshead:

> All John Reed's violent tyrannies, all his sisters' proud indifference, all his mother's aversion, all the servants' partiality, turned up in my disturbed mind like a dark deposit in a turbid well. Why was I always suffering, always browbeaten, always accused, for ever condemned? Why could I never please? Why was it useless to try to win any one's favour? (Brontë 1992, 10)

She does not succeed in winning Mrs Reed's motherly love or care, and when Jane finally shows her anxiety and anger and revolts in a fight started by her cousin John, Mrs Reed punishes her for her behaviour and shuts her to the scary "red-room", which is a large chamber with heavy red-coloured furnishings at Gateshead. The red-room is a place that witnessed the death of Jane's uncle, Mr Reed, which is why the room is entered rarely and Jane finds it ghostly and intimidating. Even when Jane is scared to death in the red-room and pleads for getting out, Mrs Reed is unyielding:

> "Silence! This violence is all most repulsive:" and so, no doubt, she felt it. I was a precocious actress in her eyes; she sincerely looked on me as a compound of virulent passions, mean spirit, and dangerous duplicity. (Brontë 1992, 12)

Consequently, Jane lives a loveless childhood filled with insecurity. This is well demonstrated by the fact that she feels safe rather among strangers than among her relatives. The apothecary Mr Lloyd comes for a visit after Jane's fainting in the red-room, and Jane feels relieved and safe:

> I felt an inexpressible relief, a soothing conviction of protection and security, when I knew that there was a stranger in the room, an individual not belonging to Gateshead, and not related to Mrs. Reed. . . . I felt so sheltered and befriended while he sat in the chair near my pillow; and as he closed the door after him, all the room darkened and my heart again sank: inexpressible sadness weighed it down. (Brontë 1992, 13)

The apothecary notices Jane's distress in the Reed household and plants an idea of going to school in Jane's mind. Jane starts to see education as a gateway to liberty: "school would be a complete change: it implied a long journey, an entire separation from Gateshead, an entrance into a new life" (Brontë 1992, 19). Finally, Jane leaves Gateshead for the Lowood Institution in bad relations to her aunt, and with negative feelings toward her first home and primary caregiver, Mrs Reed.

Gateshead means for Jane's development the struggle with her sense of dependency and inferiority. Her identity begins to develop, but as a child living in hostile environment, Jane's sense of self is constructed through "her position of exclusion and sense of difference", through her being an outsider in the Reed family (Shuttleworth 1996, 153). "I am glad you are no relation of mine. . ." (Brontë 1996, 29), Jane exclaims angrily to Mrs. Reed: Jane is not allowed to, and after years of scorn and misery, does not even want to identify with the Reed family. Eagleton (1988, 25–26) points out how Jane's identity at Gateshead is both dependent on and denied by her relatives. She is an outsider with all the bonds of kinship cut off, which makes her conveniently free to forge her own life path.

Later, the adult Jane tries to reconcile with her aunt, which is important for Jane's development to autonomy. Havighurst's theory discusses the emotional independency from one's parents as one of the development tasks of adolescence. Nestor (1987, 56–57) suggests that this kind of emotional independency from one's primary caregivers is achieved when the adult Jane visits Gateshead and her dying aunt. It is not until then that Jane is able to deal with her past and her relationship to her aunt profoundly, and is finally able to forgive her, to go over it and leave it behind:

> I still felt as a wanderer on the face of the earth; but I experienced firmer trust in myself and my own powers, and less withering dread of oppression. The gaping wound of my wrongs, too, was now quite healed; and the flame of resentment extinguished. (Brontë 1992, 200)

> A sneer, however, whether covert or open, had now no longer that power over me it once possessed: as I sat between my cousins, I was surprised to find how easy I felt under the total neglect of the one and the semi-sarcastic attentions of the other . . . (Brontë 1992, 201)

At the Lowood Institution – a charity school for girls – new characters enter into Jane's life, and she begins her adolescent years. At Lowood, too, she first has to overcome her sense of inferiority: by Mrs Reed's request, the head of the school, Mr Brocklehurst, humiliates Jane publicly. However, during the years at Lowood, Jane is able to overcome her sense of inferiority

with the help of education and close relationships. She forms a close friendship with a girl called Helen Burns and one of the teachers, Miss Temple. Helen and Miss Temple act as loving mother figures, nourishing and nurturing her, and thus, filling the emotional hole left by Mrs Reed. In addition, they are important role models for young Jane. She mirrors herself to them in her growth, and starts to form her own identity which is not based on exclusion anymore but inclusion to the school community. According to Nestor (1987, 58), Miss Temple "offers Jane a model for temperate rebellion" and Björk (1974, 94) notes that especially Helen's personality and morals have a big influence on Jane, even though Jane cannot fully relate to Helen's saint-like patience and resignation. As Nestor (1987, 56–57) points out, Jane learns important lessons of self-respect and self-control from Helen. She learns to moderate her behaviour, not to be so extreme in her reactions. Helen's death also forces Jane to confront and deal with the grief of losing a friend.

Important development also takes place in Jane's notions of the world and values. This is exemplified by Jane's changing attitude towards poverty. At Gateshead, the child Jane cannot think anything worse than poverty, when the apothecary Mr Lloyd inquires if Jane would like to go to live with her other "poor" relations, if she had such:

> I reflected. Poverty looks grim to grown people; still more so to children: they have not much idea of industrious, working, respectable poverty; they think of the word only as connected with ragged clothes, scanty food, fireless grates, rude manners, and debasing vices: poverty for me was synonymous with degradation. . . . I could not see how poor people had the means of being kind; and then to learn to speak like them, to adopt their manners, to be uneducated, to grow up like one of the poor women I saw sometimes nursing their children or washing their clothes at the cottage doors of the village of Gateshead: no, I was not heroic enough to purchase liberty at the price of caste. (Brontë, 1992, 18–19)

As Jane gets older and learns the worth of friendship and affection at Lowood, her opinion changes. The poor conditions of Lowood are dearer to her than the genteel luxury of Gateshead: "I would not now have exchanged Lowood with all its privations for Gateshead and its daily luxuries" (Brontë, 1992, 64). Through personal experience, Jane's attitudes change: she learns to value friendship and spiritual support over material comfort.

At Lowood, then, Jane has new experiences; she matures and gains knowledge through education. She finds that she is gifted in academic skills and that industrious disposition and manner pays off:

> I had the means of an excellent education placed within my reach; a fondness for some of my studies, and a desire to excel in all, together with a great delight in pleasing my teachers, especially such as I loved, urged me on: I availed myself fully of the advantages offered me. In time I rose to be the first girl of the first class; then I was invested with the office of teacher . . . (Brontë 1992, 72)

Jane's responsive attitude and industry overcomes her sense of inferiority, and she is able to achieve a sense of competence in life. Eventually she ends up creating the occupational identity of a teacher. Nestor (1987, 54-55) states that Lowood provides Jane with three necessary things: education, love and the examples of different forms of behaviour and different identities. These are all "tools" for Jane in making her way in the world. From a negative dependency on the Reed family at Gateshead she has taken a step toward a positive autonomy and self-definition at Lowood.

Hence, it seems that Jane's development at the stage of latency seems to follow well Erikson's model of the conflict between industry versus inferiority with the basic emotion developed being competence. Jane learns to work hard and trust her own abilities. She is able to relate to her peers and receives support from her peers and teachers. In addition, at Lowood Jane starts to move to the next psychosocial stage, to that of adolescence, with its important emphasis on identity. As Erikson's theory suggests, it is important to see and ponder over different role models and identities when forming one's own identity, and this is exactly what Jane does in mirroring herself to the models offered by Helen and Miss Temple at Lowood.

Jane, at the stage of middle childhood and adolescence is also able to resolve many of the developmental tasks suggested by Havighurst. She learns to get along with age-mates and develops fundamental skills in reading, writing, and calculating, as well as concepts necessary for everyday living. Her conscience, morality, and a scale of values develop especially through her religion-oriented conversations with Helen and through the example of the kind-hearted and fair-minded

Miss Temple. Jane herself acknowledges the importance of Miss Temple to her development: “to her instruction I owed the best part of my acquirements; her friendship and society had been my continual solace; she had stood me in the stead of mother, governess, and, latterly, companion” (Brontë, 1992, 72). Jane achieves relative personal independence (at least if her position at Lowood is compared to her position of dependency at Gateshead) and develops acceptable attitudes toward society. Of the developmental tasks of adolescence, Jane already starts to prepare for an economic career of a teacher and acquires values and an ethical system to guide her behavior.

After spending eight years at Lowood, first as a student and then as teacher for a couple of years, Jane, on the threshold of adulthood, suddenly starts to long for a change in her life:

> My world had for some years been in Lowood: my experience had been of its rules and systems; now I remembered that the real world was wide, and that a varied field of hopes and fears, of sensations and excitements, awaited those who had courage to go forth into its expanse, to seek real knowledge of life amidst its perils. . . . school-rules, school-duties, school-habits and notions, and voices, and faces, and phrases, and costumes, and preferences, and antipathies – such was what I knew of existence. And now I felt that it was not enough; I tired of the routine of eight years in one afternoon. I desired liberty; for liberty I gasped; for liberty I uttered a prayer; it seemed scattered on the wind then faintly blowing. I abandoned it and framed a humbler supplication; for change, stimulus: that petition, too, seemed swept off into vague space: ‘Then,’ I cried, half desperate, ‘grant me at least a new servitude!’ (Brontë 1992, 73)

Jane’s desire resembles that of a youth who is eager to leave the safe and familiar circles behind and enter the new and exciting phase of adulthood. Jane makes the decision to advertise for a post of a governess. She leaves Lowood and her life there behind her and receives a post as a governess at Thornfield Hall. Thus, she completes the task of choosing a career and vocation, the developmental task of adolescence as suggested by Havighurst’s theory.

3.2. Thornfield Hall and Marsh End

Thornfield Hall and Marsh End act as the two important sites for the young adult Jane. These places and the periods of time that Jane spends in them can be considered the crucial ones in terms of Jane’s identity, dependency and autonomy. In these places, Jane continues to face and resolve the

tasks and questions of the stage of adolescence, and in addition to that, faces the new questions of the stage of young adulthood (as named by Erikson) or early adulthood (Havighurst).

The Thornfield Hall and Marsh End parts of the novel revolve around Jane's identity and self-assertion. I suggest that Lacan's notion of the mirror stage can be regarded as a metaphor for Jane's identity formation: Jane meets different people and different circumstances, different social practice and different settings on her journey to maturity, that is, different "others" or the "Other" from which to draw her own identity. She faces the world of changes and challenges, and changes and develops her identity accordingly. Identity is a process: the whole novel, *Jane Eyre*, can be read as Jane's identity formation process. The places of Thornfield Hall and Marsh End witness the culmination of this process.

Jane takes the position of governess at Thornfield Hall for a little girl called Adèle, and becomes acquainted with the moody and mysterious master of Thornfield Hall, Mr Edward Rochester, of whose ward Adèle is. Jane begins to feel attracted to Mr Rochester, and her hopes for intimacy and love arise, although she is constantly aware of the disparity between their social positions. Jane's social position at Thornfield – just like at Gateshead – presents dilemma for Jane, and at first, seems to block her route to happiness. As Shuttleworth (1996, 152) points out, both as a child under her relatives' roof, and then as an adult, in the occupation of a governess, Jane is situated in problematic social relations: she is neither kin nor a servant, but somewhere in between. As a governess, she is situated in an ambiguous point in the social structure: she is servant, but an "upper" servant, equipped with sound school education and professional sophistication (Eagleton 1988, 16). Marshall (2000, 308) defines "social status" as referring to "position in the hierarchy of social prestige". Evidently, Jane's social status and prestige are lower than those of Mr Rochester's, who is a wealthy heir of the upper gentry and has a grand estate and a prestigious family lineage. A union or intimate relationship – at least socially acceptable one – between the two is an

impossibility, of which Jane is conscientious to remind herself in her rumination, as well as she is eager to reproach herself for building up her hopes:

> "You have nothing to do with the master of Thornfield, further than to receive the salary he gives you for teaching his protégée, and to be grateful for such respectful and kind treatment as, if you do your duty, you have a right to expect at his hands. Be sure that is the only tie he seriously acknowledges between you and him; so don't make him the object of your fine feelings, your raptures, agonies, and so forth. He is not of your order: keep to your caste, and be too self-respecting to lavish the love of the whole heart, soul, and strength, where such a gift is not wanted and would be despised." (Brontë 1992, 142)
>
> "*You*," I said, "a favourite with Mr. Rochester? *You* gifted with the power of pleasing him? *You* of importance to him in any way? Go! your folly sickens me. And you have derived pleasure from occasional tokens of preference – equivocal tokens shown by a gentleman of family and a man of the world to a dependent and a novice. How dared you? Poor stupid dupe! . . . It does good to no woman to be flattered by her superior, who cannot possibly intend to marry her . . ." (Brontë 1992, 140)
>
> "Listen, then, Jane Eyre, to your sentence: tomorrow, place the glass before you, and draw in chalk your own picture, faithfully, without softening one defect; omit no harsh line, smooth away no displeasing irregularity; write under it, "Portrait of a Governess, disconnected, poor, and plain."" (Brontë 1992, 141)

As is clear from the extracts above, Jane is sure that Mr Rochester could not care for a woman of her "caste". She is also aware of the social norms and conventions that bind not only her, but also the upper classes. When Mr Rochester entertains the genteel parties of the Ingrams and Eshtons under his roof and courts the proud and beautiful Miss Blanche Ingram, Jane has to acknowledge that dependency to class is a pervasive feature in society, although she at first is surprised that Mr Rochester, too, is conditioned by these social traditions:

> I have not yet said anything condemnatory of Mr. Rochester's project of marrying for interest and connections. It surprised me when I first discovered that such was his intention: I had thought him a man unlikely to be influenced by motives so commonplace in his choice of a wife; but the longer I considered the position, education, etc., of the parties, the less I felt justified in judging and blaming either him or Miss Ingram for acting in conformity to ideas and principles instilled into them, doubtless, from their childhood. All their class held these principles: I supposed, then, they had reasons for holding them such as I could not fathom. (Brontë 1992, 164)

Thus, it is not just Jane and the lower classes but also the members of the upper gentry who face the pressure to "keep to their caste" and build their identity on the basis of their social status.

Despite the severe incongruence between Jane and Mr Rochester's social positions, Jane is unable to extinguish her affectionate feelings and the sense of strong affinity between them. Jane is able to identify with Mr Rochester mentally though not socially:

> "He is not to them [the Ingrams and Eshtons] what he is to me," I thought: "he is not of their kind. I believe he is of mine; – I am sure he is – I feel akin to him – I understand the language of his countenance and movements: though rank and wealth sever us widely, I have something in my brain and heart, in my blood and nerves, that assimilates me mentally to him. . . . I must, then, repeat continually that we are for ever sundered: – and yet, while I breathe and think, I must love him." (Brontë 1992, 153)

Jane is deeply in love, but is resolved to subdue her feelings. This inner battle between the sense and sentiments is characteristic of Jane and her emotional growth throughout the novel but particularly pertinent at Thornfield where she has to deal with her emotions toward Mr Rochester. She constantly tries to keep herself "checked", but cannot help experiencing the overflow of feelings from time to time. Jane's inner struggle between sense and sensibilities is clearly visible in these extracts that explore passion versus reason:

> Sense would resist delirium: judgment would warn passion. Too feverish to rest, I rose as soon as day dawned. (Brontë 1992, 133)
>
> When once more alone, I reviewed the information I had got; looked into my heart, examined its thoughts and feelings, and endeavoured to bring back with a strict hand such as had been straying through imagination's boundless and trackless waste, into the safe fold of common sense. (Brontë 1992, 140)
>
> I was actually permitting myself to experience a sickening sense of disappointment; but rallying my wits, and recollecting my principles, I at once called my sensations to order; and it was wonderful how I got over the temporary blunder . . . (Brontë 1992, 141)
>
> Conscience, turned tyrant, held Passion by the throat. . . (Brontë 1992, 262)
>
> Ere long, I had reason to congratulate myself on the course of wholesome discipline to which I had thus forced my feelings to submit (Brontë 1992, 141).

Walker (1910, 16) notes that Victorian literature often presents the contrast of emotion and intellect, and the idea that both of them are needed. Finally, Jane arrives to this conclusion in her own reflections: "Feeling without judgment is a washy draught indeed; but judgment untempered by feeling is too bitter and husky a morsel for human deglutition" (Brontë 1992, 208). The synthesis of and balance between sense and sensibility is needed, and in her development, Jane is able to achieve

this balance in the end. However, some maturation and developmental challenges have to be gone through before arriving to this inner “triumph”.

Jane has to overcome the social constraints in asserting her identity. She acknowledges that her status and appearance does not make her the ideal and eligible young Victorian lady. Nevertheless, she demands for recognition and respect for who she is, as she is – respect for her identity as such as she defines it. In a speech she gives to Mr Rochester in the garden of Thornfield Hall, Jane, overwhelmed by her emotions and the fear of losing Mr Rochester, asserts herself courageously:

> “Do you think I can stay to become nothing to you? Do you think I am an automaton? – a machine without feelings? and can bear to have my morsel of bread snatched from my lips, and my drop of living water dashed from my cup? Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong! – I have as much soul as you, – and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you. I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom, conventionalities, nor even of mortal flesh; – it is my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God’s feet, equal, – as we are! . . . I am a free human being with an independent will, which I now exert to leave you.” (Brontë 1992, 223)

Especially her inner accomplishments and qualities, and her equality and value as a human being, she insists above, need and deserve to be noticed and appreciated. Although Jane describes herself as “poor, obscure, plain, and little” and “indigent and insignificant plebeian” (Brontë 1992, 141), she seems to be aware that these are only “external qualities”, derived mostly from social conventions that do not let her inner character shine. Her inner “world”, she tells Mr Rochester, is full of “heart and soul”, and her “spirit”, or mental qualities, stands equal to those of any member of the upper gentry. She is not rich or beautiful, but the value of her identity should not, and is not, dependent on those qualities. Jane is able to overcome her “plainness” in a society where female beauty is valued and lauded. Accepting one’s physique is one of the developmental tasks of adolescence suggested by Havighurst, and Jane seems to have accepted her body and appearance well enough, although they do not follow the Victorian feminine ideal and although she feels that

her life would perhaps be easier if they would. Jane seems to say that her physique is what it is, but that does not make her any less a unique individual or less equal to or independent of other people: that is acceptance enough.

Thornfield also acts as a site for Jane's practicing and achieving mature relations with the male sex and achieving a feminine social role, another set of developmental tasks delineated by Havighurst. Eagleton (1988, 18) argues that "it is Jane's stoical Quakerish stillness which captivates Rochester". Jane acquires and expresses confidence in her sexual identity and erotic play, as the following extracts demonstrate:

> It little mattered whether my curiosity irritated him; I knew the pleasure of vexing and soothing him by turns; it was one I chiefly delighted in, and a sure instinct always prevented me from going too far; beyond the verge of provocation I never ventured; on the extreme brink I liked well to try my skill. (Brontë 1992, 137)

> [Mr Rochester to Jane]: Jane, you please me, and you master me – you seem to submit, and I like the sense of pliancy you impart; and while I am twining the soft, silken skein round my finger, it sends a thrill up my arm to my heart. I am influenced – conquered; and the influence is sweeter than I can express; and the conquest I undergo has a witchery beyond any triumph I can win. (Brontë 1992, 229)

> [Mr Rochester to Jane]: 'Look wicked, Jane: as you know well how to look: coin one of your wild, shy, provoking smiles; tell me you hate me – tease me, vex me . . .' (Brontë 1992, 248–249)

Mr Rochester calls Jane a "provoking puppet," "malicious elf," "sprite" and "changeling" (Brontë 1992, 241), stressing Jane's stimulating, almost mysterious or supernatural influence on him and the exciting erotic playfulness between them. Jane highly enjoys this sexual tension and teasing, and gathers confidence in her sexual identity and in herself as a sexual partner. However, Jane's attitude to Mr Rochester is not simply light and teasing; she soon realizes that Mr Rochester begins to fill all her thoughts, emotions and existence:

> My future husband was becoming to me my whole world; and more than the world: almost my hope of heaven. He stood between me and every thought of religion, as an eclipse intervenes between man and the broad sun. I could not, in those days, see God for His creature: of whom I had made an idol. (Brontë 1992, 242)

As is characteristic of adolescence – the period in which energetic youthful fancies are most strong and common – Jane idolizes Mr Rochester beyond measure, making him almost the object of her worship. Even this stage, with the possibility and threat of losing herself in Mr Rochester, is vital in Jane's identity formation and her arriving to a satisfying balance between dependency and autonomy.

Thus, Jane and Mr Rochester fall in love with each other, declare their love to each other, and are about to get married when the secret of Mr Rochester's existing marriage to a mad woman called Bertha Mason is revealed, as well as the fact that Bertha lives confined in the attic of Thornfield Hall and is responsible for the strange noises and events at Thornfield, such as the ominous bursts of murmur and laughter, the creeping sounds in the corridors at night-time, the fire in Mr Rochester's room, and the secretive behaviour of one of the household servants, Grace Poole, who is revealed to be Bertha's guard and keeper in the attic. The character of Bertha is essential in Jane's development. Showalter (1977, 113) suggests that in *Jane Eyre* "the Victorian female psyche" is divided into two extreme elements, the mind and the body, and that the characters of Helen Burns and Bertha Mason are embodiments or representatives of these polarities: self-denying, spiritual and angelic Helen as the mind and animal-like, passionate Bertha as the body. Jane rejects both of these elements as such, in their extremities. The world is not black and white, but grey: both mind and body are needed, and Jane results in integrating them successfully. Jane finds that there is "union of what at first appear to be opposites" (Burkhart 1973, 69). In other words, Jane manages to find balance between elements that are often considered opposites.

The element of balancing seems to be characteristic of Jane in her identity development. Throughout the novel, she is presented with possible role models (such as Bertha, Helen or Miss Temple), which she rejects as such but gains knowledge and experience of them and different world views, and ultimately builds her own "self" and worldview, independent of others – but through others. She does not adopt these different models, ideas or ways of being blindly, uncritically, but

observes the world and sees if these models work or not, and how she feels about them. She meditates carefully on what she sees, feels and experiences, and eventually, builds her own way of being by balancing the polarities and extremities in the world and within her. Testing the extremities and arriving at some sort of balance and harmony – achieving balance in herself, as Nestor (1987, 64) states – is an important part of Jane's identity development.

In addition to being the representative of body and passion, Bertha also represents rage and anger in a way that no other character in the novel does. She can be seen as Jane's double, as Gilbert and Gubar (1979, 360) point out, and as a way for Jane to exhibit her repressed aspects and feelings. Bertha is the Lacanian double in which different psychical realities can be explored. To develop wholly and to mature, one must face different aspects in oneself and acknowledge both negative and positive emotions within oneself. Bertha can be considered the representation of these negative emotions at their extremity. She shows them openly through destructive behaviour. Having exhibited such fierce negative feelings and behaviour herself as a child at Gateshead, the inwardly passionate but outwardly calm adult Jane seems to acknowledge the inevitability of their existence and is able to sympathize with Bertha, as her following utterance to Mr Rochester would suggest: "“Sir,” I interrupted him, “you are inexorable for that unfortunate lady: you speak of her with hate – with vindictive antipathy. It is cruel – she cannot help being mad”" (Brontë 1992, 265). Emotions cannot be controlled, they come and go as they will, but one can decide what to do with the emotions – how to deal with them and how to behave oneself. I will explore the character of Bertha in more detail in chapter four.

Mr Rochester asks Jane to live with him despite his living wife – to be his mistress. Jane refuses to enter into a union that would not be based on equality, although the passion and love she feels for Mr Rochester makes the decision difficult for her. As Boumelha (1990, 62) points out, to be Mr Rochester's mistress would be a form of slavery or dependency for Jane. Moreover, it seems that Jane is not quite ready yet for intimate relationship; she needs time for herself. Even before the

secret of Bertha is revealed, Jane starts to hesitate about the forthcoming wedding and marriage to Mr Rochester. She is conscious of the class distinction between them and her financial inferiority to Mr Rochester, and feels awkward when he buys her expensive clothes and jewellery:

> Glad was I to get him out of the silk warehouse, and then out of a jewellers shop: the more he bought me, the more my cheek burned with a sense of annoyance and degradation. . . . "It would, indeed, be a relief," I thought, "if I had ever so small an independency; I never can bear being dressed like a doll by Mr. Rochester, or sitting like a second Danae with the golden shower falling daily round me. . . . if I had but a prospect of one day bringing Mr. Rochester an accession of fortune, I could better endure to be kept by him now." (Brontë 1992, 236)

Mr Rochester's eagerness to buy expensive jewellery and clothes for Jane seems to only emphasize her financial dependency on him. She feels uncomfortable and slave-like: "He smiled; and I thought his smile was such as a sultan might, in a blissful and fond moment, bestow on a slave his gold and gems had enriched: I crushed his hand, which was ever hunting mine, vigorously, and thrust it back to him red with the passionate pressure" (Brontë 1992, 236–237). Jane also experiences wedding anxiety on a night before their assumed wedding day. She is sleeping next to Adèle, reflecting, and contrasting the innocence of childhood with the uncertainty and anxiety of adulthood. Entering marriage and leaving the earlier life and youth behind is a big and frightening step for Jane:

> With little Adèle in my arms, I watched the slumber of childhood – so tranquil, so passionless, so innocent – and waited for the coming day: all my life was awake and astir in my frame: and as soon as the sun rose I rose too. I remember Adèle clung to me as I left her: I remember I kissed her as I loosened her little hands from my neck; and I cried over her with strange emotion, and quitted her because I feared my sobs would break her still sound repose. She seemed the emblem of my past life; and he I was now to array myself to meet, the dread, but adored, type of my unknown future day. (Brontë 1992, 252)

Jane's anxiety in the face of the unknown world of marriage is also reflected in her recurrent nightmares where she is carrying a wailing infant:

> "During all my first sleep, I was following the windings of an unknown road; total obscurity environed me; rain pelted me; I was burdened with the charge of a little child: a very small creature, too young and feeble to walk, and which shivered in my cold arms, and wailed piteously in my ear . . . I still carried the unknown little child: I might not lay it down anywhere, however tired were my arms – however much its weight impeded my progress, I must retain it. . . . the child clung round my neck in terror, and

> almost strangled me . . . the child rolled from my knee, I lost my balance, fell, and woke.” (Brontë 1992, 248-249)

These baby nightmares may reflect Jane’s fears of marriage life and the female “duties” in it, like that of having and taking care of children. Thus, Jane is hesitant and anxious about the forthcoming union with Mr Rochester even before the wedding, and her fears culminate in the revelation of Bertha.

However, Bertha’s revelation gives time for Jane to mature and forces her to ponder over her values and ethical dilemmas – an important developmental task suggested by Havighurst’s theory. Jane has to achieve an ethical system to guide her behavior and to desire and achieve socially responsible behavior. Her refusal to be Mr Rochester’s mistress fulfills these requirements, for in the context of Victorian culture, her accepting the position of a mistress would have been a “social death” and deemed very irresponsible behavior. Jane’s refusal is also, and essentially, a strong assertion of her own identity and autonomy. She chooses her values and makes her own decisions, independent of others. Mr Rochester tries to make Jane stay with him by pointing out that Jane has no “relatives or acquaintances” that could be offended by Jane’s choice of living with him. Jane is conscious of this and tempted by the possibility of staying:

> This was true: and while he spoke my very conscience and reason turned traitors against me, and charged me with crime in resisting him. They spoke almost as loud as Feeling: and that clamoured wildly. “Oh, comply!” it said. “Think of his misery; think of his danger – look at his state when left alone; remember his headlong nature; consider the recklessness following on despair – soothe him; save him; love him; tell him you love him and will be his. Who in the world cares for *you*? or who will be injured by what you do?” (Brontë 1992, 280)

Jane may not have relatives that care for her, but she has herself: “Still indomitable was the reply – “*I* care for myself. The more solitary, the more friendless, the more unsustained I am, the more I will respect myself”” (Brontë 1992, 280). She is determined to leave and well aware that it is in her own hands to make the right decision: “you shall tear yourself away, none shall help you: you shall yourself pluck out your right eye; yourself cut off your right hand: your heart shall be the victim,

and you the priest to transfix it" (Brontë 1992, 262). Jane's self-reliance is visible in these excerpts. She is decided to leave and not to become Mr Rochester's mistress, although she loves him.

Jane's decision to leave Mr Rochester is further confirmed when she learns about his history of mistresses and his opinion on them:

> "I could not live alone; so I tried the companionship of mistresses. . . . What was their beauty to me in a few weeks? . . . Hiring a mistress is the next worse thing to buying a slave: both are often by nature, and always by position, inferior: and to live familiarly with inferiors is degrading. I now hate the recollection of the time I passed with Celine, Giacinta, and Clara." (Brontë 1992, 275)

Jane does not want to be a follower in the line of Mr Rochester's mistresses, which he now hates bitterly: "I felt the truth of these words; and I drew from them the certain inference, that if I were so far to forget myself and all the teaching that had ever been instilled into me, as . . . to become the successor of these poor girls, he would one day regard me with the same feeling which now in his mind desecrated their memory" (Brontë 1992, 275). Thus, Mr Rochester's negative attitude to mistresses confirms Jane in her decision to not to become his mistress: Jane shows self-reliance and confidence in her own instincts. Mr Rochester is not happy with Jane's decision. He holds her passionately, almost violently, trying to make her stay with him and realizing that he cannot and does not even want to force her:

> "Never," said he, as he ground his teeth, "never was anything at once so frail and so indomitable. A mere reed she feels in my hand!" (And he shook me with the force of his hold.) "I could bend her with my finger and thumb: and what good would it do if I bent, if I uptore, if I crushed her? Consider that eye: consider the resolute, wild, free thing looking out of it, defying me, with more than courage – with a stern triumph. Whatever I do with its cage, I cannot get at it – the savage, beautiful creature! If I tear, if I rend the slight prison, my outrage will only let the captive loose. Conqueror I might be of the house; but the inmate would escape to heaven before I could call myself possessor of its clay dwelling- place. And it is you, spirit – with will and energy, and virtue and purity – that I want: not alone your brittle frame. Of yourself you could come with soft flight and nestle against my heart, if you would: seized against your will, you will elude the grasp like an essence – you will vanish ere I inhale your fragrance." (Brontë 1992, 281)

Mr Rochester understands that violence and force are not the answer: if they were to be together and live happily, it has to be of Jane's own free will and choice; otherwise there would not even be

the Jane with whom he liked to live and love. Though desperate and angry for losing her, Mr Rochester has to acknowledge Jane's identity as an independent creature with a will of her own.

Thus, for the sake of her conscience, self-respect and independency, Jane decides to leave Mr Rochester and Thornfield Hall. On her way through the moors, she accidentally loses her few possessions and has to live the life of a beggar for a while. Exhausted and heartbroken, and in the grip of poverty, Jane is still able to maintain her endurance: "Life, however, was yet in my possession, with all its requirements, and pains, and responsibilities. The burden must be carried; the want provided for; the suffering endured; the responsibility fulfilled. I set out." (Brontë 1992, 287) Finally, she arrives at Marsh End and ends up at the door of the three siblings of the Rivers family, who admit her under their roof and take care of her. Jane lives in anonymity to prevent Mr Rochester from finding her.

Jane is not ready for intimacy with Mr Rochester until she has found her true identity, her real self. Thus, leaving Mr Rochester is necessary for Jane's identity search. The time she spends at Marsh End is vital for the development of her identity: she gains knowledge of her origin and discovers new relations, her cousins, of whose existence she was not even aware. These new findings help her to define herself – she has roots, now, and a family that cares for her. Gilbert and Gubar (1979, 364) note the importance of having relatives on her journey of finding her place in the world. Moreover, after the mental and emotional struggle at Thornfield, she is able to take a time out at Marsh end, lick her wounds for a while and grow in a secure and friendly environment which supports her. Especially the support that her newly found cousins Diana and Mary offer for Jane is important in her recovery. Spaull (1989, 97) aptly remarks that throughout the novel, Jane gathers strength from her friendships and relationships with other women, such as Helen and Miss Temple at Lowood, and with Diana and Mary at Marsh End. Jane also gains growth for her educational or academic identity through Diana and Mary:

> They were both more accomplished and better read than I was; but with eagerness I followed in the path of knowledge they had trodden before me. I devoured the books

> they lent me: then it was full satisfaction to discuss with them in the evening what I had perused during the day. Thought fitted thought; opinion met opinion: we coincided, in short, perfectly. (Brontë 1992, 309)

Jane is eager to learn more and is able to do it in a supporting atmosphere at Marsh End. Jane's desire to be autonomous and hard-working member of society is seen in her wanting to work and be independent of the help and benevolence of the Rivers family as soon as possible. She becomes a teacher of a nearby charity school, which gives her professional self-confidence, despite her first deeming the post of a village school teacher as "humble" and "plodding" (Brontë 1992, 314).

At Marsh End, Jane not only receives new relatives in the form of Diana, Mary and John Rivers, but she also receives a great sum of money in the form of a sudden inheritance from her uncle. Jane's attitude to wealth is practical and down-to-earth:

> . . . *this* is solid, an affair of the actual world, nothing ideal about it: all its associations are solid and sober, and its manifestations are the same. One does not jump, and spring, and shout hurrah! at hearing one has got a fortune; one begins to consider responsibilities, and to ponder business; on a base of steady satisfaction rise certain grave cares, and we contain ourselves, and blood over our bliss with a solemn brow. . . this money came only to me: not to me and a rejoicing family, but to my isolated self. It was a grand boon doubtless; and independence would be glorious – yes, I felt that – that thought swelled my heart. (Brontë 1992, 338)

To Jane, the most important aspect of being rich seems to be the autonomy it brings with it; otherwise, she seems to consider wealth almost a burden. In fact, Jane seems to appreciate much more the discovery of her relations than the discovery of her wealth, as is evident from the following extract:

> It seemed I had found a brother . . . and two sisters, whose qualities were such, that, when I knew them but as mere strangers, they had inspired me with genuine affection and admiration. . . . Glorious discovery to a lonely wretch! This was wealth indeed! – wealth to the heart! – a mine of pure, genial affections. This was a blessing, bright, vivid, and exhilarating; – not like the ponderous gift of gold: rich and welcome enough in its way, but sobering from its weight. (Brontë 1992, 341)

At Marsh End, Jane's relationship to her relatives is notably different from her relations to the Reed family at Gateshead. At Gateshead, Jane was dependent on her relatives; at Marsh End, her relatives are, at least partly, dependent on Jane and her sudden inheritance (Eagleton 1988, 27). Luckily for

her cousins, Jane is only happy to be able to share her wealth of twenty thousand pounds with them: "the independence, the affluence which was mine, might be theirs too . . . It would please and benefit me to have five thousand pounds; it would torment and oppress me to have twenty thousand . . ." (Brontë 1992, 341–342). To sum up, Jane's attitude to wealth is very modest and practical.

However, Marsh End is not just a place of wealth, peace and refuge for Jane. Jane is put in a position where powerful self-assertion and defending of her identity is needed: confronting her unyielding cousin Saint John Rivers and his religious principles forces her to ponder over her own world view and values, making her more self-reliant and autonomous on the way. Shuttleworth (1996, 176-177) points out that "With St John Rivers, Jane enters into a new cycle of her battles for self-definition" and that being under St John's penetrating and severe gaze, Jane is lowered to an object position – she is a "thing" to be scrutinized closely by an authoritative patriarchal figure. St John regards Jane as "a specimen of a diligent, orderly, energetic woman" (Brontë 1992, 332), and starts to teach her Hindustani and other subjects. Jane soon finds herself in a suffocating situation:

> He expected me to do a great deal . . . By degrees, he acquired a certain influence over me that took away my liberty of mind: his praise and notice were more restraining than his indifference. I could no longer talk or laugh freely when he was by, because a tiresomely importunate instinct reminded me that vivacity (at least in me) was distasteful to him. I was so fully aware that only serious moods and occupations were acceptable, that in his presence every effort to sustain or follow any other became vain: I fell under a freezing spell. When he said "go," I went; "come," I came; "do this," I did it. . . . I daily wished more to please him; but to do so, I felt daily more and more that I must disown half my nature, stifle half my faculties, wrest my tastes from their original bent, force myself to the adoption of pursuits for which I had no natural vocation. (Brontë 1992, 352–353)

Thus, when Jane starts to study by St John's command and under his guidance, she begins to lose her sense of autonomy and feels oppressed and dependent. Kind and benevolent by nature, she wishes to please her cousin but is soon mentally exhausted under his pressure. She is forced to "disown" her identity and natural dispositions. Moreover, Jane does not quite sympathize with St John's strict and hard religious beliefs and his general coldness: "The humanities and amenities of life had no attraction for him – its peaceful enjoyments no charm. Literally, he lived only to aspire .

. . I comprehended all at once that he would hardly make a good husband: that it would be a trying thing to be his wife" (Brontë 1992, 347).

St John' oppressing attitude to Jane deepens when he asks her to marry him. St John plans to become a missionary in India, and he asks Jane to accompany him as his wife:

> "God and nature intended you for a missionary's wife. It is not personal, but mental endowments they have given you: you are formed for labour, not for love. A missionary's wife you must – shall be. You shall be mine: I claim you – not for my pleasure, but for my Sovereign's service." (Brontë 1992, 356)

St John represents "cold reason" and sees Jane solely as a tool for his mission: educated and hardworking, she would make a good missionary's wife. He presents his proposal in a very possessive manner, although he insists that it is not for his sake that Jane is needed, but for God's. He says that "it is not the insignificant private individual – the mere man, with the man's selfish senses – I wish to mate: it is the missionary" (Brontë 1992, 359), and thus, diminishes Jane's identity and uniqueness as an individual. Jane would agree to accompany him as his friend or sister, but not as his wife:

> "Consent, then, to his demand is possible: but for one item – one dreadful item. It is – that he asks me to be his wife, and has no more of a husband's heart for me than that frowning giant of a rock, down which the stream is foaming in yonder gorge. He prizes me as a soldier would a good weapon; and that is all. Unmarried to him, this would never grieve me; but can I let him complete his calculations – coolly put into practice his plans – go through the wedding ceremony? Can I receive from him the bridal ring, endure all the forms of love (which I doubt not he would scrupulously observe) and know that the spirit was quite absent? Can I bear the consciousness that every endearment he bestows is a sacrifice made on principle? No: such a martyrdom would be monstrous. I will never undergo it. As his sister, I might accompany him – not as his wife . . ." (Brontë 1992, 358–359)

Jane clearly foresees, fears and refuses the loveless marriage with St John. The excerpt above seems to include also the fear of cold and loveless sexual intercourse, when Jane refers to "all the forms of love" that "he would scrupulously observe" once they are married. Hence, St John's proposal forces Jane to ponder over the questions of love, sexuality and selfhood (Shuttleworth 1996, 178). Jane refuses to abandon herself and her ideal of love for "higher purposes" of the mission. As Eagleton (1988, 24) notes, "For someone as socially isolated as Jane, the self is all one has; and it is not to be

recklessly invested in dubious enterprises". Jane insists on the uniqueness and value of the self and refuses self-sacrifice on behalf of St John and his mission. She anticipates that her life would be miserable with St John: "as his wife – at his side always, and always restrained, and always checked – forced to keep the fire of my nature continually low, to compel it to burn inwardly and never utter a cry, though the imprisoned flame consumed vital after vital – *this* would be unendurable" (Brontë 1992, 361).

St John refuses to regard Jane as merely his "sister" and insists on marriage and the strong union it would bring: "I . . . do not want a sister: a sister might any day be taken from me. I want a wife: the sole helpmeet I can influence efficiently in life, and retain absolutely till death" (Brontë 1992, 359). St John's possessive manner reflects the Victorian patriarchal order, in which wives were practically owned by their husbands. This order violates Jane's autonomy. St John and Jane also have very differing ideas of love:

> [St John to Jane]: "Jane, you would not repent marrying me – be certain of that; we *must* be married. I repeat it: there is no other way; and undoubtedly enough of love would follow upon marriage to render the union right even in your eyes."
>
> "I scorn your idea of love," I could not help saying, as I rose up and stood before him, leaning my back against the rock. "I scorn the counterfeit sentiment you offer: yes, St. John, and I scorn you when you offer it." (Brontë 1992, 361–362)

St John's notion of love consists of reason and practicalities, while Jane defends the notion of passionate romantic love. Eagleton (1988, 21) notes that Jane rejects St John because of his "imperious masculinity" and because his exacting manner and cheerless ideas of love insult Jane's identity and her notion of love and companionship. In India, Jane would face continual repression and constrain as St John's wife.

St John's proposal and the discussion following it is an important turning point in the novel: Jane sees clearly the impossibility of their union and reassures her own identity. St John and his views of marriage and love offer a good setting in which Jane may reflect on her own views and sentiments. Jane refuses to enter into a union based only on reason. She stays true to her feelings,

and Nestor (1987, 64) says that Jane's refusal is "the last necessary affirmation of her own identity and integrity".

Thus, St John, like Mr Rochester, is an important character in Jane's identity formation and in her balancing between the sense of dependency and autonomy. Eagleton (1988, 22) remarks incisively that St John's marriage offer consists of a social function that neglects any personal aspirations, while Mr Rochester offers a personal fulfillment at the expense of a respectable social position (if Jane was to become Mr Rochester's mistress). Eagleton (1988, 19) also points out that it is necessary for Jane's self-fulfillment that she refuses both St John and Mr Rochester at first: neither the "loveless conventionalism" offered by St John nor the "illicit passion" offered by Mr Rochester can satisfy Jane's needs as such. She has to find a suitable balance between the two – between pure sense and pure passion. However, I argue that it is important that the two men with their "marriage offers" approach Jane even if she is not ready or willing to receive them, because they – like Helen and Miss Temple before them – offer Jane the opportunity to develop herself through interaction and mirroring.

After the rest and struggle at Marsh End, Jane is ready to move on. She has not been able to forget Mr Rochester, and decides to find out what has happened to him. Having achieved financial independency through her inheritance during her stay at Marsh End, she is not financially inferior to Mr Rochester anymore: they stand on more equal ground. Now that she has had the time to build her identity and become more independent and self-confident, she returns to Mr Rochester and is ready for intimacy and love.

3.3. Ferndean

Jane learns that Thornfield Hall has been destroyed by a fire set by Bertha. During the fire, Bertha has committed suicide and Mr Rochester has injured himself: he is blind, crippled and retired to his old manor house at Ferndean. Ferndean acts as final site for Jane's development. At Ferndean, Jane finishes and finds culmination for the tasks and question of the stage of young/early adulthood. She

resolves the conflict between intimacy and isolation, and achieves the experience of love as one of the basic powers in life. In this respect, Jane's development follows Erikson's model of psychosocial development perfectly: first she has to complete the crisis of identity in order to resolve the crisis of intimacy and to be able to throw herself into a love relationship. In other words: she must achieve personal autonomy before she is ready for such dependency of free will on love and on another person in a love relationship. Like Jane herself says to Mr Rochester of her autonomy: "I told you I am independent, sir, as well as rich: I am my own mistress" (Brontë 1992, 385). She must be independent to become healthily dependent.

The Ferndean part of the novel is also the fulfillment of the developmental tasks of early adulthood suggested by Havighurst: Jane selects her mate, learns to live with her partner, starts a family, rears children and manages a home. Jane and Mr Rochester get married and settle down at Ferndean manor house. Because Mr Rochester is blind and disabled, he is dependent on Jane's help and guidance. His dependency brings him and Jane closer together:

> Mr. Rochester continued blind the first two years of our union; perhaps it was that circumstance that drew us so very near – that knit us so very close: for I was then his vision, as I am still his right hand. Literally, I was (what he often called me) the apple of his eye. (Brontë 1992, 399)
>
> [Jane to Mr Rochester]: "I love you better now, when I can really be useful to you, than I did in your state of proud independence, when you disdained every part but that of the giver and protector." (Brontë 1992, 394)

As the extracts above illustrate, Mr Rochester's disability brings a new kind of dependency and closeness between Jane and him. Spacks (1976, 65) argues that the Ferndean part of the novel "dwell[s] almost obsessively on dependency" but I find both elements of dependency and independency in it. Chase (1984, 90) suggests that Mr Rochester's blindness brings the necessary element of distance between the couples: blindness lets them be at once close to and far from each other, thus balancing their passionate relationship. They are able to be autonomous and distant to each other as well as healthily dependent and close to each other.

The impassionate Mr Rochester is a contrast to the passionless St John, and thus, fulfills Jane's ideal of romantic love and her requirements for a partner: "I do not want a stranger – unsympathising, alien, different from me; I want my kindred: those with whom I have full fellow-feeling" (Brontë 1992, 343). Mr Rochester, unlike St John, acknowledges and appreciates Jane's identity and personality: "I longed for thee, Janet! Oh, I longed for thee both with soul and flesh!" (Brontë 1992, 396). Mr Rochester wants Jane in person, mentally and physically – to him, Jane is not just a mere tool for some higher purpose, but a unique and valuable individual, "[his] second self, and best earthly companion" (Brontë 1992, 223), as he tells Jane. Most importantly, Jane feels free and is able to be herself with Mr Rochester: "with him I was at perfect ease, because I knew I suited him; all I said or did seemed either to console or revive him. Delightful consciousness! It brought to life and light my whole nature: in his presence I thoroughly lived; and he lived in mine" (Brontë 1992, 387). Jane is not forced to disown her identity or natural dispositions with Mr Rochester as it was with St John.

Jane and Mr Rochester's marriage is based on equal and mutual dependency and autonomy. The equality that exists between Jane and Mr Rochester begins already at Thornfield but deepens at Ferndean. At Thornfield, Mr Rochester says to Jane: "My bride is here . . . because my equal is here, and my likeness" (Brontë 1992, 224). At Thornfield, Jane and Mr Rochester are equal mentally, "in spirit"; at Ferndean, they are also socially equal. Vanden Bossche (1999, 91) argues that at the end of the novel, the social relations between Jane and Mr Rochester are altered with Jane's inheritance and economic autonomy and Mr Rochester's loss of "physical and psychological advantages". In other words, Jane moves upward and Mr Rochester comes downward, which makes them more equal and solves the social dilemma in the novel. Eagleton (2005, 131), too, states that Rochester's blindness and disability at the end of the novel reverses the power-relationship between him and Jane: now it is Mr Rochester who is in a more dependent position, while Jane, with her inheritance and self-determination, is in a more autonomous position than ever before in her life.

The social gap between the two has decreased considerably, making them equal socially as well as spiritually.

Jane and Mr Rochester are able to grow and affirm their identities in each other's presence. Their relationship seems to be the kind of "pure relationship" suggested by Giddens (2000, 258–264). Giddens (2000, 264) suggests the notion of "the pure relationship" for the kind of intimate and emotionally demanding relationship that exists primarily between sexual and/or married partners or between very close friends. He acknowledges several core elements in the pure relationships, one of which is the following:

> In a pure relationship, the individual does not simply 'recognise the other' and in the responses of that other find his self-identity affirmed. Rather . . . self-identity is negotiated through linked processes of self-exploration and the development of intimacy with the other. Such processes help create 'shared histories' of a kind potentially more tightly bound than those characteristic of individuals who share experiences by virtue of a common social position. (Giddens 2000, 264)

It is not their common social position that draws Jane and Mr Rochester ultimately together; it is their (at least Jane's) ability to combine self-exploration with intimacy, and thus, form their identities. It seems that at Ferndean, Jane and Mr Rochester finally achieve mutual relatedness, a positive kind of emotional dependency as discussed in chapter two. They are closely knit together, as Jane describes in the following extract:

> I have now been married ten years. I know what it is to live entirely for and with what I love best on earth. I hold myself supremely blest – blest beyond what language can express; because I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine. . . .To be together is for us to be at once as free as in solitude, as gay as in company. We talk, I believe, all day long: to talk to each other is but a more animated and an audible thinking. All my confidence is bestowed on him, all his confidence is devoted to me; we are precisely suited in character – perfect concord is the result. (Brontë 1992, 399)

They talk and mirror themselves to each other in "perfect concord", and make their own "shared history". Their relationship is described by "mutuality" and "sharing of thoughts, work, feelings" – the positive outcomes of the stage of young adulthood suggested by Erikson. When they are together, they feel "as free as in solitude, as gay as in company": they feel both autonomous and positively dependent. The continuous interplay of dependency and autonomy ultimately draw Jane

and Mr Rochester together. Eagleton (1988, 18) suggests that Jane's autonomy and self-sufficiency keeps Mr Rochester attracted to and tied to her, as well as it keeps herself tied to and dependent on him. It is the dynamics of the two forces of dependency and autonomy which finally results in their happy union. As Foster (1985, 87) points out, *Jane Eyre* offers "a new vision of mutuality between men and women".

4. Jane's cultural context: women's life and position in Victorian England

The Victorian Age (1830–1901, according to Christ and Robson 2006, 979) is characterized by relatively rapid changes in English society: together with industrialization, the expansion of the British Empire and economic growth, there were important social changes that took place. New sciences, technologies and notions emerged. People started to question the traditional views and roles as well as to point out the inequalities in society. One of the biggest questions was the role of women. As Christ and Robson (2006, 990) state, the inequalities between men and women evoked active discussion about women's roles and place in society. The debate was known as the "Woman Question".

Jane Eyre deals with the question of women's position and the conceptions of womanhood. As Shuttleworth (1996, 2) notes, Charlotte Brontë's novels actively participate in the mid-nineteenth-century social, psychological and economic discussion and ideologies. Brontë's work can be placed and examined firmly in the context of the Victorian era. Shuttleworth (1996, 3–4) studies Brontë's novels especially within the context of Victorian psychological discussion, and points out how popular sciences and notions of the era – such as physiognomy and phrenology, which were "dedicated to decoding the external signs of the body in order to reveal the concealed inner play of forces which constitute individual subjectivity", a new interiorized notion of the self of which inner forces must be kept in place through rigid self-control and surveillance, the notion of moral insanity, and the different natures and separate spheres for men and women – can be seen in Brontë's novels. Especially in *Jane Eyre*, Shuttleworth (1996, 148) finds the themes of "self-control, the female body and sexuality, and the insurgence of insanity" emphasized. These are the themes that I will study in this chapter.

In this chapter, I will explore the cultural and social context of the Victorian era in relation to Jane's identity, dependency and autonomy. In other words, I try to create a cultural context for Jane's development. As stated earlier, a shared feature in Erikson, Havighurst and Lacan's theory is

their inclusion of the social context in the person's development. This social context surrounding Jane is what I will examine next. Firstly, I will examine women's life and position in Victorian England, the image of an ideal woman, and the controversial notions of womanhood which were typical of the Victorian era. I will explore some conceptions of female sexuality and psychology of the era. Secondly, I will study the character of Bertha more closely and treat her as a representative of Jane's identity and the Victorian woman's anguish under patriarchal control. Shuttleworth (1996, 164) recognizes several textual parallels between Jane and Bertha: the red room and the attic as sites of female confinement, the imagery of fire, and the references to Jane's animality and violent behavior as a child. I will examine how these textual parallels bring Jane and Bertha together, and I will also study Bertha in more detail and treat her as a colonial representative in the novel.

4.1. Woman's position and the ideal woman

In many ways, the life of a Victorian woman was restricted. Women did not share the same legal or political rights with men: they could not vote or stand for election, and opportunities for employment or (especially higher) education were few (Christ & Robson 2006, 990). Formal education for girls and women was generally considered unnecessary and even dangerous. Especially for upper class girls – who were expected to marry – it was enough to have skill in certain "accomplishments" such as singing, playing the piano or arranging flowers (Picard 2010). The ability to be attractive, to please one's husband and his guests and to reproduce were considered essential qualities in accomplished women (Picard 2010).

Job opportunities for women were minimal. However, as Hume and Offen (1981, 272–273) note, it was typical of Victorian women to work, although Victorian culture was reluctant to recognize female work. Women's work was both visible – in factories, domestic service or governessing – and invisible work at home. This invisible domestic work was generally proposed on women, and the importance of good household management was emphasized. In the nineteenth century, the governess – alongside with servants, carriages and other possessions – became a

symbol of wealth and power in upper and middle class households: to have a hired governess signaled economic power and set the lady of the house "at leisure" by leaving the education of the genteel children the duty of a governess (Peterson 1972, 5). As *Jane Eyre* illustrates, the occupation of a governess seems to be the only appropriate option for an unmarried middle class woman to earn a living in a respectable way. When Jane finishes her education at Lowood and thinks about her future options, to become a governess seems to be the only way to go on in life and attain some level of independency. Thus, the employment of a governess gave some autonomy to a woman: at least she could earn her own living. To become a governess required education, and Nestor (1987, 54) suggests that education is the most important means of escaping dependency for Jane and other Victorian women who desired to achieve financial autonomy. However, to work as a governess was still far from being absolutely free or equal, as Christ and Robson (2006, 992) point out, for "a governess could expect no security of employment, only minimal wages, and an ambiguous status, somewhere between servant and family member, that isolated her within the household." Greg (1869, 6) sees governesses as "women, more or less well educated, spending youth and middle life as governesses, living laborously, yet perhaps not uncomfortably, but laying by nothing, and retiring to a lonely and destitute old age . . ."

In 1851, there were approximately 25000 governesses in England – much less than the number of women who worked in industry or as domestic servants (Peterson 1972, 4). The interest and discussion on governesses in the Victorian era was substantial, given the relatively small amount of them and the fact that they hardly had any political or social position of importance. "She was at best unenvied and at worst the object of mild scorn, and all she sought was survival in genteel obscurity" (Peterson 1972, 4). In *Jane Eyre*, these scornful upper class attitudes to governesses are shown in the discussion between Blanche Ingram and her mother Lady Ingram who speak of the "tribe" of governesses in a contemptuous tone:

> "You should hear mama on the chapter of governesses: Mary and I have had, I should think, a dozen at least in our day; half of them detestable and the rest ridiculous, and all

> incubi – were they not, mama?" . . . "My dearest, don't mention governesses; the word makes me nervous. I have suffered a martyrdom from their incompetency and caprice. I thank Heaven I have now done with them!" . . . "I noticed her [on seeing Jane]; I am a judge of physiognomy, and in hers I see all the faults of her class." . . . "I have just one word to say of the whole tribe; they are a nuisance." (Brontë 1992, 154–155)

Even Mr Rochester does not escape this contemptuous attitude to the occupation of a governess: "You will give up your governessing slavery at once" (Brontë 1992, 238), he says to Jane after they have declared their love to each other and set up the wedding day, and indeed, that is what Jane does in the end. As Hume and Offen (1981, 283) note, "the figure of the female teacher did not threaten the prevailing ideology of domesticity", for teaching could be viewed as women rehearsing for motherhood and educating her own children. Usually women gave up their teaching employment with marriage; this is what happens in *Jane Eyre* as well. When Jane is rich and married to Mr Rochester at Ferndean, she gives up teaching and concentrates on taking care of her home and family.

As schools, hospitals and other institutions became more common in the nineteenth century, they offered new job opportunities for women. Victorian ideology accepted women's work at schools and hospitals, because working as a teacher or nurse was close enough to the traditional female work of taking care of the children and the sick; thus, it was not considered as dangerous or threatening to the family system as female work in factories or some other untraditional places. (Hume and Offen 1981, 278). The emphasis of governessing and domestic service in women's employment started to diminish toward the end of the century when the invention of the typewriter, telegraph and telephone brought new job opportunities for women, such as the "lady typist" or "lady telephonist" (Seaman 1990).

Anyway, the ideal Victorian woman was not supposed to work but to focus on the home, the husband and the children. Rather than being active participants in the labour market themselves, women were encouraged to concentrate on their role "as biological reproducer of labour" in the domestic sphere (Shuttleworth 1996, 85). In the Victorian era, marriage was considered a perfect

institution that guaranteed human happiness and social stability (O'Donnoghue 1828) – "an institute of God" (James 1828, 11). As to being autonomous, the situation of married women was even worse than single women. Financially, they were totally dependent on men: they could not own or use their own property or earnings (Christ & Robson 2006, 990), and, as Foster (1985, 7) adds, women did not have the right to act independently in court proceedings, and obtaining a divorce was difficult for them. In court, men were granted a divorce if their wife had committed adultery; women were granted a divorce only if their spouse had, in addition to adultery, been cruel to or deserted the wife. Adultery by a woman was considered a more serious offence than adultery by a man. (Seaman 1990, 180). Until A Married Women's Property Act in 1870, the husband became directly after marriage the sole owner of the wife's money and possessions. The act of 1870 only gave wives the right to their own money; it was not until the further acts of 1882 and 1893 that women obtained the right to property (ibid, 181). In other words, women spent most of the nineteenth century deprived of any rights to ownership, while being themselves, in a sense, owned by men – either by the father or the husband. In *Jane Eyre*, Mr Rochester, though rather playfully, threatens to position himself as the "owner" of Jane as soon as they are married:

> "It is your time now, little tyrant, but it will be mine presently; and when once I have fairly seized you, to have and to hold, I'll just – figuratively speaking – attach you to a chain like this" (touching his watch-guard). "Yes, bonny wee thing, I'll wear you in my bosom, lest my jewel I should tyne." (Brontë 1992, 238)

In spite of the light and playful, teasing tone, there is a more serious meaning readable between the lines here: women ought to be kept in their place, and after the wedding, it was the husband's right to "chain" the woman in her rightful place.

In addition to these legal and economic restrictions, the Victorian ideology about male and female roles stated that men and women have separate spheres, and the very nature of woman and womanhood was limited to the domestic sphere. According to the ideology, it is in the woman's nature to take care of domestic duties and make home a place of peace, rest and refuge for men, whereas men's place was outside the home, in the "big world" and business. The ideal woman was

a pure, obedient, selfless and self-denying wife and a mother. This concept of womanhood was called *The Angel in the House*, according to a title of a popular Victorian poem by Coventry Patmore (Christ & Robson 2006, 992; Foster 1985, 5). In *Jane Eyre*, this ideology is seen in Mr Rochester's occasional utterances to Jane. He tells Jane "You are my sympathy – my better self – my good angel" (Brontë 1992, 278) and considers her "a very angel as my comforter", to which Jane – feeling silly and uncomfortable with this notion – responds: "I laughed at him as he said this. "I am not an angel," I asserted; "and I will not be one till I die: I will be myself. Mr. Rochester, you must neither expect nor exact anything celestial of me – for you will not get it, any more than I shall get it of you: which I do not at all anticipate."" (Brontë 1992, 229) Jane refuses to define herself and does not want to be defined by others as purely angelic and good; she needs recognition for all the sides of herself, both positive and negative. She seems to be aware that the whole idea of angelic purity is impossible, for people always have positive and negative sides in them – in this regard, Jane is a true realist.

However, the ideal of women as the angelic home-builders seemed to be pervasive, insomuch that operating or working outside the house was considered harmful and degrading for women. The following statement by an English essayist William Rathbone Greg in 1869 illustrates well these attitudes:

> There are hundreds of thousands of women . . . who have to earn their own living, instead of spending and husbanding the earnings of men; who, not having the natural duties and labours of wives and mothers, have to carve out artificial and painfully-sought occupations for themselves; who, in place of completing, sweetening, and embellishing the existence of others, are compelled to lead an independent and incomplete existence of their own. (Greg 1869, 5)

Using the phrases such as *have to* and *are compelled to* in reference to women's working outside the home underlines the Victorian ideal in which women do not have to, and do not, act outside the domestic sphere. The domestic sphere "required" female touch: "In general, it is for the benefit of the family, that a married woman should devote her time and attention almost exclusively to the ways of her household: her place is in the centre of domestic cares" (James 1828, 48). Both the

supposed fundamental differences between the very natures of men and women and their very different "work fields" intensified the gap between separate male and female spheres. As Hume and Offen (1981, 273–274) note, the word "work" meant very different things for Victorian men and women: men worked increasingly outside the home, in "public", within the growing economy market and earned cash wages, whereas women, for the most part, continued to work at home. Women experienced the continuous overlap of home and work, and their work usually remained "invisible", unpaid and disregarded. It is noteworthy that domestic service and governessing – although paid work and usually outside one's own home – was nevertheless work at somebody's home, that is, it still remained within the domestic circle. Thus, domesticity was very deeply associated with female work.

It was the duty of men to provide for their wives and children, and the essential duty of wives – compelled by "the laws of God and man" – to be obedient to their husbands (O'Donnoghue 1828, 85). Women were supposed to carefully guard their honour and virtue and be discreet in their every action (O'Donnoghue 1828, 97; 102). James (1828, 54–71) lists essential duties of good Christian wives: subjection to and reverence for the husband, meekness ("the strength of woman, lies not in resisting, but in yielding"), economy in personal and domestic expenditure, and attentiveness to the welfare and comfort of children. Resistance in women was considered distasteful. The wife's duty was also to comfort the husband, the head of the house, who returned home after a hard day of work and business. The wife was expected to make home a heavenly refugee, where "the cares of the one are relieved, and his spirits soothed, by domestic endearments, and his self-respect kept alive by finding that, though all around is darkness and humiliation, yet there is still a little world of love at home, of which he is the monarch" (O'Donnoghue 1828, 97–98). Although deemed weak, dependent and trivial by nature, in the hour of trial a woman's angelic nature is supposed to come forth: "no man knows what a ministering angel she is, until he has gone with her through the fiery trials of this world; for these alone call forth the energies and fervent sympaties of her nature"

(O'Donnoghue 1828, 99). As in O'Donnoghue's (1828) text, it is made clear in James (1828) as well that the husband is superior to the wife:

> . . . superiority vests in the husband: he is the head, the lawgiver, the ruler. In all matters touching the little world in the house, he is to direct, not indeed without taking counsel with his wife, but in all discordancy of view, *he*, unless he choose to waive his right, is to decide; and to his decision the wife should yield, and yield with grace and cheerfulness. (James 1828, 56)

Subjection and yielding, as in the extract above, were associated with Victorian feminine ideal. Confusingly, the ideas of individualism and independence were also appreciated in the nineteenth century, though mostly with reference to men and nations. Dyhouse (1978, 174–175) acknowledges the plight of Victorian women in face of the feminine ideal of dependence, self-sacrifice and total devotion to others, when taking into account that Victorian society in general "enshrined independence as one of the highest human virtues". The contradictory demands placed on Victorian women also included the transition from a positional to a personal family style: Victorian culture maintained that women's position was static and instrumental in the family, but to fulfill that position – to become a "communicative and loving mother", for example – required more and more personal orientation, and thus, women became more and more "aware of themselves as persons, and . . . transmitted their sense of autonomy to their children, both male and female". (Hellerstein et al 1981, 4). In other words, it was impossible for women to stay ignorant in relation to autonomy in an era which emphasized and appreciated autonomy.

These contradictory ideals must have put women of the era in an awkward position. As for the attitude to female appearance, the conflicting trend continues: women were supposed to be both attentive to their looks and "invisible". Physical appearance of women was regarded as an important contributor for men's happiness and pleasure. Women were supposed to be attentive to their dress and looks, and O'Donnoghue warns especially married women not to disregard their appearance, because it plays an important role in preserving their husband's affection and gratification:

> Neatness and cleanliness of apparel, and a becoming style of dress, always contribute to render a woman more attractive and engaging in the sight of her husband; whilst a

> loose, slovenly, or ill-made dress, or a carelessness in the mode of putting it on, will disgust a well educated man. (O'Donnoghue 1828, 88)

This required female attentiveness to physical appearance and the female worries about fulfilling it is shown in *Jane Eyre*. Jane, glowing after learning that Mr Rochester is in love with her, ponders over her looks and acknowledges her past fear that her appearance does not please Mr Rochester:

> While arranging my hair, I looked at my face in the glass, and felt it was no longer plain: there was hope in its aspect and life in its colour; and my eyes seemed as if they had beheld the fount of fruition, and borrowed beams from the lustrous ripple. I had often been unwilling to look at my master, because I feared he could not be pleased at my look; but I was sure I might lift my face to his now, and not cool his affection by its expression. I took a plain but clean and light summer dress from my drawer and put it on: it seemed no attire had ever so well become me, because none had I ever worn in so blissful a mood. (Brontë 1992, 226)

Attention given to Jane's clothing in the extract above and in the novel generally is not unusual in Victorian novels. Newman (2004, 16) examines the social practice of dress and sees it as a part of feminine display: the corset, for example, can be regarded as a metaphor for Victorian woman's submission and confinement, supporting in its rigidity and coverage the Victorian ideal of female self-control and concealment.

Newman (2004, 3) also points out how the Victorian novel seems to celebrate heroines who abstain from public self-display and are self-effacing, almost "invisible". These heroines reflect the Victorian feminine ideal of modesty, discreetness and invisibility. In the Victorian novel, this ideal is often juxtaposed with female characters who actively exhibit their extravagance and the desire to be seen. In *Jane Eyre*, such juxtaposition is between the modest Jane and the glamorous Blanche Ingram, and Jane embodies the "triumph of the woman as quiet observer rather than spectacle" (Newman 2004, 21; 25). However, Jane's discreetness or "invisibility" is not merely passivity or subjection but something that Newman (2004, 25) calls "strategic inconspicuousness". In the scenes where Mr Rochester is entertaining and socializing with his gentry friends the Ingrams and Eshtons at the drawing-room of Thornfield Hall – and has commanded Jane to accompany them – Jane is often found as "disappearing" into the furniture of the room, hidden from public view behind the

window-curtains, which gives her good opportunity to observe others while leaving herself unobserved: she is able to see without being seen – inconspicuousness has its benefits for Jane (Newman 2004, 25). Moreover, as Newman (2004, 29) suggests, concealment with the opportunity to see others – especially the object of her love, Mr Rochester – has a component of erotic playfulness in it. Jane is able to win Mr Rochester's heart with her obscurity: Jane's disposition against display is being rewarded, while Blanche Ingram's showiness results in a crushing defeat. Adams (1999, 130), too, notes that subtlety and repression were often eroticized in Victorian novels, whereas overtly sensual behavior and lack of erotic discipline were disapproved. This can be seen in *Jane Eyre*: it is the outwardly disciplined and modest Jane who evokes sexual feelings in Mr Rochester, not the bold and beautiful Blanche Ingram or the aggressively passionate Bertha. Nonetheless, the whole thematic of the "gaze" and display contains a small paradox: the Victorian woman was to be surveyed and controlled by the male gaze, and at the same time, supposed to be "invisible" and hidden from the public gaze. Woman can be understood as both a spectacle and object for the (male) gaze and as an object to be concealed from the gaze (Newman 2004, 7). This reflects the contradictory notions attached to women and womanhood in the Victorian era, the subject I will move on to study next.

4.2. Conceptions of womanhood: female sexuality and psychology

The Victorian era is often associated with conservatism and reserve in regard to sex and sexuality, but in reality, Victorians were highly interested in sexual matters and discussed about them extensively. During the nineteenth century, sexuality became more and more regulated and "adviced". Different sorts of self-help manuals concerning sexuality and other physical, psychological and behavioral questions were common.

Victorian sexual ideology was filled with conflicting advice: it was warned, for example, that both sexual excess and sexual abstinence could result in insanity or disease, especially in women. Despite the possible dangers, however, it was considered that marriage essentially included the right

and duty of sexual intercourse. (Freedman and Hellerstein 1981, 124–125). Fidelity was required from both married men and women, but in practice, men could easily "violate the wedding vow" and have extramarital relationships without much damage to their public image or place in "good society", while the consequences of this "criminality of men" (such as in the form of illegitimate children or a woman losing her reputation and place in society) fell heavily on women (O'Donnoghue 1828, 80–81). In theory and as an ideal, then, sex before and outside marriage was out of the question for Victorians; the practice and reality did not quite follow this ideal, and it was typically the women who had to carry the consequences or suffer the punishment.

It was generally supposed that women, unlike men, were not interested in sex. As Weeks (1986, 47) notes, there has been a powerful assumption at work throughout history stating that "there is a fundamental difference between male and female sexual natures", and this assumption was very much alive in the Victorian era. A Victorian medical doctor William Acton (1862, 101) wrote: "The majority of women (happily for them) are not very much troubled with sexual feelings of any kind", a statement which emphasizes the supposed lack of sexual interest in women. This alleged lack of sexual interest culminated in the Victorian ideal of the "perfect lady", an ideal which was most fully developed in the upper middle class. The upper class young women were brought up to be innocent and sexually ignorant, "although family affection and the desire for motherhood were considered innate . . . In her most perfect form, the lady combined total sexual innocence, conspicuous consumption and the worship of the family hearth". (Vicinus 1972, 9). Female virtue and purity was usually associated with the upper class women, while passion and dangerous sexuality was associated with the lower classes and poorer women, such as foreigners, slaves and prostitutes (Freedman and Hellerstein 1981, 125). Thus, sexual ignorance and innocence was associated with the ideal femininity and the upper classes, whereas sexuality and looser standards were used to describe the lower classes and the lowest of the low.

This division of sexual innocence and sexuality actually – and most curiously – was used to characterize the very nature of womanhood in the Victorian era. The aforementioned angel in the house ideology was not the only notion of womanhood alive. Shuttleworth (1996, 75–76) acknowledges the contradictory formulations of womanhood in the Victorian era:

> While man is deemed to occupy the central defining position of rationality and control, woman is assigned to the two contrary poles of spirituality and bodily subjection. *At once angel and demon*, woman came to represent both the civilizing power which would cleanse the male from contamination in the brutal world of the economic market, and also the rampant, uncontrolled excesses of the material economy. . . Woman, with her constant predisposition to hysteria, is a figure of radical instability. (Shuttleworth 1996, 76, my emphasis)

So, the Victorian age maintained conflicting ideologies of femininity: women were both (outwardly) calm, serene, spiritual "angels" in the peaceful domestic sphere and (internally) uncontrollable, filthy, overly sexual "demons" that were subjected to the energies of their bodies – "the internal mysteries of the female body" with its processes of menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth and lactation. In the nineteenth century, these processes and the female uterine system became the focus of interest and medicalization. (Shuttleworth 1996, 76–77). The processes of the female body – especially menstruation – were also used in establishing gender identities and the separate spheres for men and women: for example, women were warned that intellectual study could result in "suppressed menstruation, and thence, to the eruption of nymphomania" or "to a complete breakdown of female health" (ibid, 77). In *Jane Eyre,* this Victorian double standard of womanhood is visible in Mr Rochester's attitude to Jane and Bertha. To Mr Rochester, Jane seems to represent the "angelic" side of womanhood, while Bertha is the representative of the "demonic" side of the female nature (Shuttleworth 1996, 165).

Jardine (1989, 68) argues that throughout history, "women have been identified with the body . . .", and Foucault (2000, 102–103) states that the eighteenth century saw the start of a hysterization of women's bodies, which regarded female bodies as totally saturated with sexuality and which resulted in the nineteenth century figure of "the hysterical woman". Moreover, the

female body was considered allegorical to a Victorian industrial city, both of them "containing within them dark hidden recesses harbouring disease or crime, liable to burst out at any moment in excesses of passion or social discontent" (Shuttleworth 1996, 73). In other words, the female body was associated with ominous, uncontrollable powers and passions – with a kind of "inner pollution". Female sexuality, then, especially with the associations of prostitution and syphilis, was regarded as a threatening force or a source of evil that must be cleansed and controlled (Shuttleworth 1996, 75). Weeks (1986, 47) states that there has been a long cultural tradition of treating female sexuality as a "voracious, all-devouring and consuming" force.

Female sexuality was strongly linked to insanity in the Victorian era. As Showalter (1977, 122) states, female sexual appetite and passion were associated with madness: a passionate woman was morally insane and pathological. Psychiatry or "mental science" in Victorian era was interested in "female hysteria and insanity and the unstable processes of the female body" (Showalter 1977, 122). Showalter (1991, 3) argues that insanity has been taken for essentially a female malady, juxtaposed often with male rationality and scientific nature, and, as said, associated strongly with female sexuality. Uncontrolled sexuality was regarded as almost defining symptom of madness in women, and that is why the regulation of women's menstrual cycles and sexuality was considered a necessity (Showalter 1991, 74). In addition to the dangers of sexuality and bodily excess, excesses in the mind were also supposed to lead people to insanity. It was believed that if "passion overturns reason", one could become insane. Especially the unstable female identity and selfhood was believed to be vulnerable for the workings of excess, leading to uncontrolled behaviour and hysteria. (Shuttleworth 1996, 11–12). In *Jane Eyre*, this is demonstrated by Bertha, whose insanity is described as stemming from her excesses: "her excesses had prematurely developed the germs of insanity" (Brontë 1992, 271). The threat of insanity seemed to be lurking everywhere, and in order to avoid it, people clung to the social order: "Social conformity thus became an index of sanity; the only measure available to the individual fearful of his or her own normality would be a willing

obedience to designated social roles" (Shuttleworth 1996, 35). Thus, there was a strong social pressure to conform to the "proper" social roles in order to not to reveal any suspicious frailty in one's psychological dimension.

The psychological discourse in the Victorian era included new ideas on subjectivity and selfhood. The "interiorized self" or the "inner self" was hidden from view and could contain material "inaccessible even to the subject's own consciousness". This notion of selfhood prefigures Freudian theory and the idea of the unconscious element in human mind. It was though that identity – "for the sane and insane alike" – was situated in the inner space of oneself. (Shuttleworth 1996, 9; 15). For women, this identity was, by definition, fragmented, unstable and contradictory, as discussed above. Like Shuttleworth (1996, 92) points out, women "were expected to be more controlled than men, but were also presumed to be physiologically incapable of imposing control". This double standard imposed on women is an important cultural background when considering Jane's life and development in *Jane Eyre*:

> . . . the whole rhetoric of self-control, so crucial to the socialization of Victorian men and women, was nonetheless in direct conflict with an alternative strand of psychological discourse which stressed woman's innate lack of self-control, and her subjection to the forces of the body. This conflict, with its dichotomous models of the female body and mind, underpins much of Brontë's fiction, where female self-assertion is invariably twinned with a sense of powerlessness and self-aversion. (Shuttleworth 1996, 70)

Throughout the novel, Jane is balancing between the sense of power and control and the feeling of powerlessness and helplessness. As Shuttleworth (1996, 62) puts it, "[Brontë's] protagonists shift constantly between a sense of power and autonomy and its converse, a feeling of helplessness in the face of irresistible internal forces". Jane systematically tries to impose rigid control over herself, according to the Victorian ideal, but has to acknowledge and accept her strong feelings and desires. In Victorian culture, self-control was heavily emphasized, and with it lived the fear of losing control. However, "men and women were placed in very different relation to the doctrines of control" (Shuttleworth 1996, 33). Female helplessness and dependency on their own

physical and mental forces was juxtaposed with male autonomy and self-control. Showalter (1991, 73) points out how the supposed instability, childlikeness and irrationality of female nature and body was used to render women powerless and to deny them entrance to professions and political rights, as well as to justify male domination in the family and society. Perhaps more than any other male character in the novel, St John seems to represent pure rationality and self-control – the attributes that he oppressively tries to impose on Jane as well. St John's patriarchal restrictions include him restraining Jane's eating, when Jane, starving and exhausted, first comes to his and his sisters' door at Marsh End: ""Not too much at first – restrain her," said the brother; "she has had enough." And he withdrew the cup of milk and the plate of bread" (Brontë 1992, 297). St John, who as a clergyman can be considered the "spiritual nourisher" of his congregation, rather concretely takes away the nourishment from the hungry Jane. He also tries to control Jane's actions, when Jane enthusiastically furnishes the Marsh End home after having her inheritance:

> "I trust that when the first flush of vivacity is over, you will look a little higher than domestic endearments and household joys . . . Jane, I shall watch you closely and anxiously – I warn you of that. And try to restrain the disproportionate fervour with which you throw yourself into commonplace home pleasures. Don't cling so tenaciously to ties of the flesh; save your constancy and ardour for an adequate cause; forbear to waste them on trite transient objects. . . ." (Brontë 1992, 345–346)

St John relies on his authority as a man and spiritual leader in telling Jane what she ought to do and ought not to do. Jane, although she loves and respects St John as a friend and cousin, feels distressed and confused under these spiritual and patriarchal demands, which violate her own will and preferences.

Given these restrictions and oppressive views about womanhood it is no wonder that many Victorian women felt distressed and imprisoned, and called for a change. Mr Rochester seems to acknowledge Jane's restlessness and plight under the restrictions of Victorian culture:

> Do you never laugh, Miss Eyre? Don't trouble yourself to answer – I see you laugh rarely; but you can laugh very merrily: believe me, you are not naturally austere, any more than I am naturally vicious. The Lowood constraint still clings to you somewhat; controlling your features, muffling your voice, and restricting your limbs; and you fear in the presence of a man and a brother – or father, or master, or what you will – to smile

> too gaily, speak too freely, or move too quickly: but, in time, I think you will learn to be natural with me, as I find it impossible to be conventional with you; and then your looks and movements will have more vivacity and variety than they dare offer now. I see at intervals the glance of a curious sort of bird through the close-set bars of a cage: a vivid, restless, resolute captive is there; were it but free, it would soar cloud-high. (Brontë, 1992, 121)

Mr Rochester sees that Jane is a “captive” in the Victorian patriarchal order, unable to even laugh or move freely, desiring for freedom and new prospects for life. As in the extract above, Mr Rochester refers to Jane as “bird” on another occasion as well: he calls her “a wild frantic bird” when Jane asserts herself and trembles with emotion (Brontë 1992, 223). Moers (2011, 275–276) draws attention to the bird imagery attached to women in the novel, and considers the image of caged bird a specifically female metaphor. At the beginning, Jane the child is feeding a hungry robin with bread crumbs on the window sill at Gateshead (Brontë 1992, 24), and later in the novel she herself is referred to as bird, who, in a way, is in the need for “nourishment of soul”. Bird has the potentiality for airy freedom, but as a small and fragile creature, it is easily captured and imprisoned.

The sense of imprisonment and the desire to escape are major themes in *Jane Eyre*. As Gilbert and Gubar (1979, 341) note, the motif of enclosure and escape can be seen throughout the novel, at different stages in Jane’s life: as an oppressed orphan girl at Gateshead, as a student suffering from hunger and hard discipline at Lowood, as a governess and dependent in an ambiguous situation at Thornfield, and as a penniless outcast and under religious pressure at Marsh End. It is not until she has gone through all these stages of imprisonment and dependency that she, at last, finds some freedom and autonomy at the end of the novel. To escape is to act, and Showalter (1977, 124) suggests that “For Jane Eyre, action is a step toward independence; even if it begins as escape, it is ultimately directed toward a new goal”. Jane’s desire to be free and independent comes out both implicitly through oppressive prison imagery and explicitly in her reflections. In what is perhaps one of the most famous sections in the novel Jane is pacing backwards and forwards in the third

story corridor at Thornfield – unaware that Bertha is doing the same just behind the wall – and reflecting over women's position and demanding for change to it:

> Who blames me? Many, no doubt; and I shall be called discontented. I could not help it: the restlessness was in my nature; it agitated me to pain sometimes. Then my sole relief was to walk along the corridor of the third storey, backwards and forwards, safe in the silence and solitude of the spot, and allow my mind's eye to dwell on whatever bright visions rose before it – and, certainly, they were many and glowing; to let my heart be heaved by the exultant movement, which, while it swelled it in trouble, expanded it with life; and, best of all, to open my inward ear to a tale that was never ended – a tale my imagination created, and narrated continuously; quickened with all of incident, life, fire, feeling, that I desired and had not in my actual existence.
>
> It is in vain to say human beings ought to be satisfied with tranquillity: they must have action; and they will make it if they cannot find it. Millions are condemned to a stiller doom than mine, and millions are in silent revolt against their lot. Nobody knows how many rebellions besides political rebellions ferment in the masses of life which people earth. Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts, as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex. (Brontë 1992, 95)

As the excerpt demonstrates, Jane feels and acknowledges the anguish of Victorian women under patriarchal restrain. She demands for freedom and equality. Not insignificantly, Jane's rational thinking, reflections and demands for female rights are juxtaposed with Bertha's "mad" laughter and murmur behind the wall: it is as if Bertha is laughing at Jane's demands (Shuttleworth 1996, 164). This scene and many other elements in the novel draw the characters of Jane and Bertha together. In the next section, I will discuss Bertha and her importance in the novel in more detail.

4.3. Bertha

In regard to Jane's identity and the Victorian woman's distress, the character of Bertha Rochester is essential. Bertha, the mad creole wife of Mr Rochester, can be analyzed in many ways – and by using slightly different words – in relation to Jane: she can be considered the alter ego of Jane, "the other side" of Jane, the wild, suppressed side of Jane or the unconscious element of Jane's identity.

Either way, there is clearly a connection between them, and an important one. As Shuttleworth (1996, 151) states, there seems to be a parallel between Jane and Bertha throughout the novel, and "In constructing the parallel histories of Jane and Bertha, Brontë constantly negotiates between these different models of womanhood, trying to find an image of female empowerment and control which would not also be a negation of femininity". In other words, Brontë seems to be balancing between the notions of womanhood that Jane and Bertha represent and attempting to find a positive image of womanhood. Shuttleworth (1996, 49) notes that "in *Jane Eyre* . . . the seeming outward conformity of Jane is counterpointed by the eruptions of 'moral madness' from Bertha".

Bertha can be considered the "mad" representative of fleshly desires and female sexuality, the embodiment of lawless passion (Chase 1984, 61). She and Mr Rochester were originally married in Jamaica, where the young and unsuspecting Mr Rochester was dazzled by her beauty and soon tricked into marriage by his father who was after Bertha's wealth. Once married, Mr Rochester discovered the true nature of his wife. Mr Rochester names "debauchery" as one of the "attributes" of Bertha (Brontë 1992, 275), which seems to refer to Bertha being licentious and crossing the line of the acceptable female sexual behavior. She is anything but the ideal *Angel in the House*, and therefore, must be punished and confined. Showalter (1991, 67) states that Bertha's madness is associated with female sexuality and more precisely, with "the periodicity of the menstrual cycle", for Bertha's aggression seems to follow the cycles of the moon. Showalter (1991, 67) also notes the Victorian psychiatric belief that female reproductive system was the source of female mental illness, and that is why it was considered likely that girls inherit madness from their mothers. Bertha stands for as a perfect example of this belief, for she is presented as having inherited her insanity from her mother, as Mr Rochester accounts:

> "Bertha Mason is mad; and she came of a mad family; idiots and maniacs through three generations? Her mother, the Creole, was both a madwoman and a drunkard! – as I found out after I had wed the daughter: for they were silent on family secrets before. Bertha, like a dutiful child, copied her parent in both points". (Brontë 1992, 257–258)

The idea that Bertha's madness and excess of aggression and sexuality is hereditary also suits to the nineteenth century idea of sexuality noted by Foucault (1978, 118) that sexual diseases and perversions can pass on from generation to the next. The dangers of excess are visible not only in Bertha, but in Jane herself – in Jane the child, to be precise. Jane is associated with two famous figures of the Victorian psychological discussion, both of them belonging to the dangerous realm of excess: the passionate child and the madwoman (Shuttleworth 1996, 153).

Bertha is a reminder of Jane the child and Jane's behavior as a child – in a way, a shadow of Jane's past identity. As a child, Jane shows Bertha-like aggression and passion in the face of an unjust punishment after the fight with her cousin. Jane's aunt has ordered the servants, Bessie and Miss Abbott, to take Jane into the scary red-room, and Jane resists fiercely:

> I resisted all the way: a new thing for me, and a circumstance which greatly strengthened the bad opinion Bessie and Miss Abbot were disposed to entertain of me. The fact is, I was a trifle beside myself; or rather out of myself, as the French would say: I was conscious that a moment's mutiny had already rendered me liable to strange penalties, and, like any other rebel slave, I felt resolved, in my desperation, to go all lengths. "Hold her arms, Miss Abbot: she's like a mad cat." (Brontë 1992, 7)

Jane is called "a mad cat", a wild animal, just like Bertha is associated with animality. Shuttleworth (1996, 13-14) notes the general belief in the Victorian era that women were more close to animals than men. Bertha's appearance and behaviour is systematically associated with fearful bestiality in the novel, as the following excerpts demonstrate:

> "a woman, tall and large, with thick and dark hair hanging long down her back . . . Fearful and ghastly to me . . . It was a discoloured face – it was a savage face. I wish I could forget the roll of the red eyes and the fearful blackened inflation of the lineaments! . . . the lips were swelled and dark; the brow furrowed: the black eyebrows widely raised over the bloodshot eyes. Shall I tell you of what it reminded me? . . . Of the foul German spectre – the Vampyre." (Brontë 1992, 250)
>
> In the deep shade, at the farther end of the room, a figure ran backwards and forwards. What it was, whether beast or human being, one could not, at first sight, tell: it grovelled, seemingly, on all fours; it snatched and growled like some strange wild animal: but it was covered with clothing, and a quantity of dark, grizzled hair, wild as a mane, hid its head and face. (Brontë 1992, 258)
>
> . . . the clothed hyena rose up, and stood tall on its hind-feet. . . . Mr. Rochester flung me behind him: the lunatic sprang and grappled his throat viciously, and laid her teeth

> to his cheek: they struggled. She was a big woman, in stature almost equalling her husband, and corpulent besides: she showed virile force in the contest – more than once she almost throttled him, athletic as he was. He could have settled her with a well-planted blow; but he would not strike: he would only wrestle. At last he mastered her arms; Grace Poole gave him a cord, and he pinioned them behind her: with more rope, which was at hand, he bound her to a chair. The operation was performed amidst the fiercest yells and the most convulsive plunges. (Brontë, 1992, 259)

Bertha's animality, aggression, activity and virility are collectively despised. Spivak (1985, 249) suggests that "Bertha's function in *Jane Eyre* is to render indeterminate the boundary between human and animal . . ." In other words, Bertha can be seen as representing the suppressed animality or bestiality in humans. Shuttleworth (1996, 164) argues that Bertha's instability does not only stem from her madness, but also from the fact that she is a creole – she is of an undefined "race", something between European and non-European. The context of race and colonialism is, in fact, important when examining Bertha and the nineteenth century British culture.

The Victorian era was the golden age for British imperialism. Ashcroft et al (2007, 19) suggest that *binarism* or the *binary structures*, "doubles" or "pairs", such as colonizer/colonized, white/black, good/evil, and so on, were (and are) important in constructing imperial ideology, and note that often these binaries involve "a violent hierarchy" and opposition between the dominant and the dominated (such as white dominating over black, for example). When considering the binaries of colonizer/colonized, white/black, good/evil, man/woman, human/bestial and civilized/primitive in relation to Bertha, it is quickly learned that she always represents the dominated side of these oppositions: she is the colonized, evil, bestial and primitive black woman, who is situated lower in rank. Mr Rochester, who can be taken for the dominant party, clearly constructs an opposition between himself and his wife in his account of Bertha:

> "I found her nature wholly alien to mine, her tastes obnoxious to me, her cast of mind common, low, narrow, and singularly incapable of being led to anything higher, expanded to anything larger – when I found that I could not pass a single evening, nor even a single hour of the day with her in comfort; that kindly conversation could not be sustained between us, because whatever topic I started, immediately received from her a turn at once coarse and trite, perverse and imbecile – when I perceived that I should never have a quiet or settled household, because no servant would bear the continued outbreaks of her violent and unreasonable temper, or the vexations of her absurd,

> contradictory, exacting orders . . . Bertha Mason, the true daughter of an infamous mother, dragged me through all the hideous and degrading agonies which must attend a man bound to a wife at once intemperate and unchaste."(Brontë 1992, 270–271)

> "I longed only for what suited me – for the antipodes of the Creole. . ." (Brontë 1992, 274)

Bertha, who comes from the British ruled colony of Jamaica – Jamaica came under the British rule in 1665 and gained full independence only in 1962 – and thus stands as a colonial representative in the novel, is associated with pure negativity by Mr Rochester. Mr Rochester also makes the opposition between Jamaica and his native England, when he describes his "agonies" and suffering in Jamaica. Europe appears to him as a safe and sound refuge:

> "A wind fresh from Europe blew over the ocean. . . . The sweet wind from Europe was still whispering in the refreshed leaves, and the Atlantic was thundering in glorious liberty; my heart, dried up and scorched for a long time, swelled to the tone, and filled with living blood – my being longed for renewal – my soul thirsted for a pure draught. I saw hope revive – and felt regeneration possible. From a flowery arch at the bottom of my garden I gazed over the sea – bluer than the sky: the old world was beyond; clear prospects opened. . ." (Brontë 1992, 272)

This idealized picture of Europe highlights the superiority and dominance of Europe as opposed to the corrupt Jamaica and its unpleasant representative, Bertha. Mr Rochester sees only bad, unfeminine features in his wife: "I was not sure of the existence of one virtue in her nature: I had marked neither modesty, nor benevolence, nor candour, nor refinement in her mind or manners . . ." (Brontë 1992, 269). Bertha does not meet Mr Rochester's requirements for ideal femininity. She is deemed low, in many respects. She can be considered in the light of the notion of *subaltern*, and especially, *female subaltern*.

The term *subaltern* refers to "those who are lower in position or who . . . are lower in rank", and Spivak uses the term for "the lower layers of colonial and postcolonial society: the homeless, the unemployed, the subsistence farmers, the day labourers – in short, those groups with the least power of all" (Bertens 2008, 170). Moreover, Spivak focuses on the notion of *female subaltern* and argues that women in the context of colonization have "traditionally been doubly marginalized" (Bertens 2008, 170) under what Morris (2010, 3) calls "the masculine-imperialist ideology". Spivak

(1988, 28) says that “the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow”. The colonized women, then, can be regarded as “doubly powerless”: firstly, because of their situation as the colonized, and secondly, because of their sex.

The idea of a double marginalization of women in the context of colonization seems to apply well to Bertha: she is a Jamaican born creole, she is a woman living in the nineteenth century England, and she is locked in the attic – “silenced”. Bertha is a true example of a female subaltern. She cannot speak: we never hear Bertha’s version of the story or the events that take place in *Jane Eyre*. Bertha’s history is narrated to us by Mr. Rochester and Bertha’s present state in the novel by Jane. Bertha is not allowed to speak for herself – a white European male and a white European female speak for her: she is doubly marginalized and doubly silenced. Given this confined nature of Bertha’s existence, her “madness” and violence could be read as opposition to the existent order and repression – as a rebellion against the colonizer. She shows resistance – in a disordered and violent manner – against the suppression of the colonized and women. This violent rebellion is analogical to the resistance that Jane shows as a child in the face of the repression and imprisonment that she feels when her aunt confines her to the scary red-room. Indeed, one can read Jane as rebelling throughout the novel: she shows rebellion first at Gateshead against the tyrannical attitude of John Reed and the unjust attitude of Mrs. Reed, then she shows rebellious spirit in her early conversations with Helen Burns at Lowood, and finally, the adult Jane exhibits her rebellious spirit both in herself, inwardly, and in Bertha, outwardly. The child and early adolescent Jane rebels more overtly, but when she grows up and learns the Victorian social etiquette, her rebellion is moderated and becomes implicit in herself (visible mainly in her thoughts and self-assertions), and explicit in the form of Bertha. It is as if Bertha takes the burden of the passionate, energy-consuming rebellion on Jane’s behalf. In a curious way, Jane and Bertha’s lives and rebellion are intertwined, suggesting a strong connecting and doubleness between the two women.

The idea of oneself "doubled" is similar to the notion of "implicit self" or "implicit identity". In the notion of implicit self and identity, self-related processes occur unconsciously, without the person being aware of them (Devos and Banaji 2003, 169). Bertha can be seen as Jane's implicit identity, of which influence Jane is not consciously aware of: Jane herself does not draw explicit parallels between herself and Bertha, but the reader is able to draw these parallels through the imagery and construction of the novel. The important imagery and symbols that draw Jane and Bertha together are those of mirrors, confinement and fire, in addition to the previously mentioned animality.

The importance of the mirror and mirror image in *Jane Eyre* is well manifested in the scene where Bertha escapes her room at the dead of the night, goes to Jane's room and wears Jane's wedding veil before destroying it. Jane wakes up and sees Bertha through the mirror: "presently she took my veil from its place; she held it up, gazed at it long, and then she threw it over her own head, and turned to the mirror. At that moment I saw the reflection of the visage and features quite distinctly in the dark oblong glass" (Brontë 1992, 250). In this scene, one can see the "Lacanian mirror apparatus" that shows the *double* – shows different side of Jane – shows Bertha. When Jane sees Bertha in the mirror, she actually sees her own double – her own image. Spaull (1989, 100) notes the importance of mirrors in *Jane Eyre*, and says that "Jane is constantly confronting her 'truest and darkest double' in reflections of herself". As early as at the beginning of the novel, Spaull argues, when Jane the child sees her image in the mirror in the red-room, that image anticipates the character of Bertha:

> ". . . the looking-glass; my fascinated glance involuntarily explored the depth it revealed. All looked colder and darker in that visionary hollow than in reality: and the strange little figure there gazing at me, with a white face and arms specking the gloom, and glittering eyes of fear moving where all else was still, had the effect of a real spirit: I thought it like one of the tiny phantoms, half fairy, half imp . . ." (Brontë 1992, 9)

In the mirror, Jane sees herself different, "othered", from her usual self, and Spaull (1989, 100) suggests that the "real spirit" that Jane sees is embodied by Bertha later in the novel. Shuttleworth

(1996, 166) too, points out that the reader's first encounter with Bertha takes place with her "gazing into *Jane's* mirror" (my emphasis).

As mentioned above, the imagery of confinement is present throughout the novel, and the state of being literally confined in a room is yet another feature that Jane and Bertha share. Jane the child is locked in the red-room at Gateshead and Bertha in the room at the attic of Thornfield Hall. Jane recollects her sentiments of fear and anxiety that accompany her in her "prison": "I was oppressed, suffocated: endurance broke down; I rushed to the door and shook the lock in desperate effort" (Brontë 1992, 12). Jane and Bertha's confinement stands as a representative of the Victorian woman's physical and psychical confinement. Their imprisonment could also be named "domestic confinement", for they are both imprisoned in their home. Mr Rochester wanted to ensure that nobody would find his shameful wife and "saw her safely lodged in that third-storey room, of whose secret inner cabinet she has now for ten years made a wild beast's den – a goblin's cell" (Brontë 1992, 273). Shuttleworth (1996, 154) sees the red room, in which Jane is imprisoned after attacking her cousin, and the third story of Thornfield Hall, in which the violent Bertha is imprisoned, as "a spatialized configuration of Victorian notions of female interiority". Both Jane and Bertha are imprisoned in these rooms after showing excess of emotion and violent activity – after showing their "animal" and uncontrollable female nature. These kinds of associations with the "non-human" and imprisonment draw Jane and Bertha together (Shuttleworth 1996, 155).

Spaull (1989, 102) notes that the image of fire is an essential symbol in *Jane Eyre*. In addition to mirror and prison imagery, fire is yet another symbol that draws Jane and Bertha together. Jane's inner passion, "fire", and her statement "Whereas I am hot, and fire dissolves ice. . ." (Brontë 1992, 339) are paralleled with Bertha's inner passion and her acts of setting the fire, literally, at Thornfield: firstly, her attempt to burn Mr Rochester in his bed and secondly, her starting a fire that destroys Thornfield Hall to ruin.

Thus, there are several textual parallels that bring Jane and Bertha together in the novel. Lastly, I want to pay attention to Lacan's idea of social consciousness and unconsciousness in relation to Jane and Bertha and the Victorian culture. If society's prevalent ideology is taken for the social consciousness, as suggested by Lacan, then the Victorian ideology can be regarded as the social consciousness of the nineteenth century Britain and everything that is undesirable and does not fit to the Victorian ideology is repressed and belongs to the social unconsciousness. To this social unconsciousness belong the inequalities between men and women, repressed female desire, female sexuality and aggression, and so on. These suppressed desires and drives break free from the unconscious from time to time, just like Bertha breaks free from the attic on several occasions when left unguarded. Social inequality, unequal opportunity, the lack of freedom of the subject – all these are associated with the Victorian woman. I suggest that Jane is the approved and controlled conscious element of her identity and the Victorian culture, while Bertha is the disagreeable and uncontrolled unconscious element of Jane's identity and the Victorian culture. Jane is forced to suppress the Bertha in her because of the oppressive social climate of the Victorian era.

5. Conclusion

Jane Eyre is a depiction of a girl's journey to maturation in Victorian settings: a journey to finding one's identity and the balance between dependency and autonomy. According to Vanden Bossche (1999, 83–84), "a metamorphosis from dependency to autonomy was at the heart of the Victorian idea of adolescence", and "the belief that the ideal adult ought to be independent and autonomous" was pervasive in Victorian culture. It was important to achieve independency from one's parents and family of origin financially, emotionally and psychologically. There were different stages in this road to autonomy, such as leaving home for school, choosing a vocation, marriage and setting up one's own family and household. (Vanden Bossche 1999, 83–84). Of course, this development as such applied only to men; women had much more limited options (for choosing a vocation, for example). However, the basic framework for development was similar to both sexes, and in *Jane Eyre*, one can see how Jane, as a young adult, goes through these stages in her development to became herself as a more autonomous individual.

This thesis contributes to the academic discussion on *Jane Eyre* and the issues of identity, dependency and autonomy. In this thesis I examined Jane's identity, dependency and autonomy in the context of her personal psychological growth and development and in the context of the Victorian culture and women's position in it. I tried to show how Jane's identity, dependency and autonomy are influenced by both internal psychological factors and external, social and cultural factors. As a main theoretical framework it was used Erik H. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, Robert J. Havighurst's theory of personality development and developmental tasks and Jacques Lacan's notions of relational identity and the mirror stage. Thus, the theoretical standpoint for this thesis was drawn from developmental psychology and psychoanalysis.

In chapter two, I delineated the theoretical framework for this thesis, and in chapter three, I moved on to study Jane's development at different places in the novel. I found out that the psychosocial stages of latency, adolescence and young adulthood – with their respective strengths

or basic emotions as optimal results – suggested by Erikson can be seen in Jane's life: Jane first struggles to achieve and achieves a sense of competence at Gateshead and Lowood, then struggles and arrives at forming her identity at Thornfield Hall and Marsh End, and finally, experiences the feeling of true love and intimacy with Mr Rochester at Ferndean. Throughout her journey, the people that Jane meets act as important "significant others", to whom Jane may mirror her own identity and development. Jane's identity is formed in interaction with these people, who act as counter-roles for Jane's role-based identities, whether she is in a role of a mistreated orphan, student, governess, lover, wife or a mother. At Gateshead, Jane struggles with her sense of inferiority and not belonging in the presence of her cold and unyielding aunt and cousins. At Lowood, she receives support, love and education from her friend Helen and the teacher Miss Temple, and learns to trust to her competence. At Thornfield Hall, meeting and falling in love with Mr Rochester forces Jane to struggle with her sense of social inferiority and dependency, which finally, after the secret of Bertha is revealed, results in strong self-assertion and a sense of autonomy. At Marsh End, Jane receives love and support from her cousins Diana and Mary, while confronting St John's oppressive demands and harsh rationality forces Jane to the final verifying of her identity and values. At Ferndean, she is finally able to be who she is at ease with the changed Mr Rochester. "To become Jane" is not an easy task for Jane, but she manages it despite the obstacles.

Dependency and autonomy exist in Jane's life both on the personal psychological level and on the social, more general level of female dependency and autonomy in Victorian era. On the personal psychological level Jane is both dependent and autonomous. The tension between dependency and autonomy can be seen in her life and relationships: on one hand, she craves for love and affection and on the other hand, she longs for freedom and independency. Her triumph is to find balance between these competing emotional demands and to understand that both of them are necessary in the human life and development. She also manages to find balance in the formation of her identity

and to unite the opposing elements of body and mind. In the character of Bertha, Jane is able to experience and express her negative feelings. She becomes more and more independent during the novel, and when she has achieved a level of autonomy that is personally adequate to her and satisfies her needs, she is ready to accept more dependency in her life in the form of an intimate relationship. She must form her identity and independency before entering into intimacy and true, equal love relationship with Mr Rochester. She is emotionally dependent on Mr Rochester, but this dependency is mutual between the lovers and based on free will. In this sense, Jane's development agrees with Erikson's theory about the crises of identity and intimacy.

Jane also confronts the development tasks suggested by Havighurst's theory. Havighurst's stages of middle childhood, adolescence and early adulthood with their respective developmental tasks are highly relevant in Jane's life. Jane resolves the tasks of learning to get along with peers and developing fundamental academic skills at Lowood – important tasks of middle childhood. In adolescence and early adulthood, Jane achieves mature relations and acquires feminine social role in interaction with Mr Rochester, and she also accepts her physique and achieves emotional independence of her aunt Reed when visiting Gateshead briefly. She prepares for the economic career of governess already at Lowood, and at Thornfield, she starts to prepare for marriage and family life after Mr Rochester's proposal. Bertha's revelation, Jane's refusal to be Mr Rochester's mistress and resisting St John means asserting her values and an ethical system to guide her behavior. At Ferndean, Jane chooses Mr Rochester for her partner and starts her own family and household. Thus, Jane's development coincides with the development suggested by Havighurst's theory, although the stages and their relevant tasks do not always go so neatly hand in hand in Jane's life as in Havighurst's theory: for example, Jane already starts the occupation of a teacher at Lowood in her late adolescence, when Havighurst's theory considers starting an occupation a task of early adulthood.

Lacan's notions of relational identity and the mirror stage can be applied to Jane's life. Jane can be analyzed as building her identity on the basis of the "mirror image" that other people in the novel and the Victorian world reflect back to her. Jane's identity and subjectivity is constructed in interaction with *others* or the *Other* in the novel – with other characters and the surrounding Victorian culture. Jane's identity is dependent on this context of the Other, and because the Other – the characters and situations in the story – change, Jane's identity changes too. As she says to Mr Rochester after the cancellation of their wedding: "All is changed about me, sir; I must change too" (Brontë 1992, 265). Jane's identity is relational and dynamic, ever-changing with the context. Lacanian notions also lend themselves well to analyzing aspects of Victorian culture and the relation between Jane and Bertha. His ideas of the patriarchal character of social order and male dominance in society describe well Jane's situation as a woman under the Victorian ideology of male dominance and the repressive female image. Lacanian mirror symbolism brings Jane and Bertha together, and Bertha can be regarded as Jane's double or the unconscious element in Jane's identity.

In chapter four, I tried to build a cultural context for Jane's development and studied women's position and the ideals and conceptions of womanhood in the Victorian era. I examined what possibilities women had in forming their identities and autonomy, and related that to Jane's life. If Jane is able to achieve a sufficient amount of autonomy on her personal psychological level, on the social level of female dependency and autonomy, Jane is more dependent than autonomous. The life of a Victorian woman is marked by dependency. She is able to achieve some autonomy through education, work or inheritance, which make her financially less dependent. However, opportunities for education and employment were few, and the Victorian ideology did not encourage women to act outside the domestic sphere. To work as a governess was one of the few opportunities for unmarried middle-class women to earn their living respectably: married women most often did not work outside home. In the patriarchal society, women were not considered

legally competent adults: they did not share the same rights with men and were legally and financially dependent on men. The restrictive view of womanhood idealized purity and obedience and punished the expressions of female sexuality and aggression, although at the same time lived a notion of women as being unable to control themselves and their bodies. The oppressive female image in the Victorian era essentially included the negative attitudes to female passion and sexuality. Sexuality in women was not regarded as a positive resource or even a natural feature but as a dangerous and abnormal force which must be repressed, and because women themselves – uncontrolled and weak as they are – are unable to do it themselves, they must be placed under male control and guidance.

Thus, Victorian culture dictated a truly contradictory model of the female selfhood: women were required to be calm, composed, self-controlled, stable, but it was impossible for them, for the very definition of the female nature stated that women were unstable, uncontrolled, subjected to the forces of their bodies. The anxiety caused by these contradictory demands is expressed in the character of Bertha and her insanity. In this thesis, Bertha is seen as Jane's "other self", her alter ego, through which the adult Jane may show her rebellion freely. The imagery of animality, mirrors, confinement and fire draw the characters of Jane and Bertha tightly together. With the context of nineteenth century British colonialism, Bertha is also seen as a representative of a colonized woman, a female subaltern. So, especially through the character of Bertha, *Jane Eyre* actively participates in the Victorian psychological discussion and the discussion about female rights. The novel depicts female anxiety and the sense of confinement, and questions the inequalities of Victorian society.

Eagleton (1988, 16) calls Brontë's protagonists a confusing combination of rebelliousness and conventionalism. The ending of *Jane Eyre* has been criticized for its reactionary spirit, with Jane contenting herself with the traditional female roles of the wife and mother, and thus maintaining the status quo. Mills et al (1989, 230) present the idea that complex literary texts – such as *Jane Eyre* –

are likely to explore ideologies and elements that "both support and oppose the *status quo*". Jane's strong self-assertions and the character of Bertha certainly fight against the status quo of Victorian ideology and female oppression, but Bertha's tragic death and Jane's conformity to traditional female roles seem to support this very same status quo. However, it is noteworthy that Jane brings important nuances to her conformity: she is sufficiently dependent and autonomous in her life, and satisfied with her identity. Her relationship with Mr Rochester is characterized by positive interdependence, mutuality, equality and reciprocal love. For Jane, it seems, being a wife and a mother does not mean the loss of one's identity and autonomy; rather, the roles of wife and mother add to her identity in a positive way and change her autonomy by bringing elements of intimacy and positive dependency to it. As Eagleton (1988, 20) puts it, with Mr Rochester, Jane is able to find "a way of conforming to convention which at the same time draws you beyond it, gathers you into a fuller, finer self-realisation". Vanden Bossche (1999, 93) points out that what probably shocked the contemporary readers of *Jane Eyre* in the Victorian age was that Jane regards marriage as a way to achieve personal fulfillment, not merely as a social institution based on class and wealth.

This thesis attempted to build a portrait of a fictional Victorian woman. As Eagleton (2005, 129) points out, Brontë's heroines are characteristically "divided selves – women who are outwardly demure yet inwardly passionate, full of an erotic and imaginative hungering which must be locked back upon itself in meekness, self-sacrifice and stoical endurance". Shuttleworth (1996, 155), too, says that Jane constantly moves between the states of daring self-assertion and hesitant incoherence and fragmentation, which reflects the conflicting ideas of the female selfhood in the Victorian era. These descriptions capture well the contradictory nature of Jane's identity, which is influenced by the contradictory models of womanhood in the Victorian era – the notion of women as angels and demons. To recall the discussion on the coherence or unity versus fragmentation of identity as discussed in chapter two, I would suggest that Jane's identity is both unified *and* a site for fragmentation and conflicting forces, which is evident especially through her identification with

the character of Bertha. Jane's identity is, in a way, "the same, consistent self" to which she stays true throughout the novel, as well as an ever-changing and developing entity with its sometimes contradictory inner material. When further studied, *Jane Eyre* seems to be full of contradictories or contrasting elements. In the end, all of these elements seem to find their balance. I conclude by suggesting that *Jane Eyre* is an illustration of skillful psychological balancing in the individual's identity, dependency and autonomy.

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