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"Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre:* A Secular Reading of *The Pilgrim's Progress*"

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Submitted for the Degree of M.Phil.
Faculty of Arts
University of Glasgow

Research Conducted in the Centre for the
Study of Literature and Theology

May 1996

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L.A.O.
May 1996

'The soul comes to the end of its long journey and naked and alone draws near to the Divine.'

The Ascent Into the Empyrean
Hieronymus Bosch

Jane Eyre: The Secular Pilgrimage

Charlotte Brontë uses John Bunyan's allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress* as a source for the trials and tribulations of her heroine in her novel in *Jane Eyre*. The purpose of this thesis is to explore Bunyan's religious and literary influence on Brontë's *Jane Eyre* amid the religious changes of the nineteenth century. Brontë redefines the pilgrimage of the 'self' using a language that makes profound use of Bunyan's Biblical and Puritan theology. In order to do justice to both writers the comparison will build on Bunyan's Puritan upbringing and continue with Brontë's life in the Victorian Age. Nineteenth century influences include the 'philosophy' of Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* and the theme of 'natural supernaturalism' through the 'secular' pilgrimage in *Jane Eyre*.

Brontë's own experience is the basis for the novel; thus, knowing her life in the Victorian Age is suggestive of Jane's experience in the novel. Brontë uses the heroine Jane as a romantic example; an example to invoke questions about the 'self' in her search for meaning amid the social, religious, and spiritual changes in the nineteenth century. Bunyan's religious allegory is revisited in the 'secular' context of Brontë's novel, ie. will and passion symbolize human desires in Brontë's *Jane Eyre* as opposed to their sacred reference in Bunyan's allegory. The young Jane Eyre is forced to mature quickly, overcoming the challenges of the world and yet, never forgetting her moral duty to God, but above all, her obligation to her 'self.'

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Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*: A Secular Reading of *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

INTRODUCTION.

From her father, Patrick Brontë, Charlotte inherited a love of the *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which was one of the most influential books in Haworth Parsonage. Her most recent biographer, Lyndall Gordon, suggests that 'she remade *Pilgrim's Progress*...as the trials and ventures of people who refuse to relinquish their souls to the solicitations of the circumstance' (Gordon 10).

If Bunyan's pilgrim offers his soul to God, Charlotte's 'secular pilgrim' is soul searching, seeking to establish her own identity. From her earliest days, Charlotte held in her imagination this act of forging a track through strange uncharted country becoming in her adult fiction a figure for the pilgrimage of the mind and soul. And following Bunyan as an allegorist, Charlotte 'was to reinvigorate allegory in her own terms, testing the legitimacy of vehemence, ambition, and outrage in a woman's life'...(Gordon 10).

The allegory of *The Pilgrim's Progress* provided her with a vehicle to explore and bring out the figurative meaning of her central character in her fiction: the abandoned, solitary girl. Using the experience of her own life, she both appropriates and erodes allegorical images in Jane Eyre's pilgrimage in order to reconceive the circumstances of her life. The result is not merely an appropriation of Bunyan, but also a radical representation of the traditional pilgrimage motif, a 'secularization' of the puritan tradition of her predecessor in fiction writing.

Jane Eyre is described in its title-page as an 'autobiography' begging identification with the long history of spiritual autobiographies that 'aspired to teach by illustrating one man's self-conquest amidst Vanity Fair's allurements' (Qualls 51). The theme of delineation of 'the likeness of the earthly pilgrimage of man' permeates all her fiction, as Charlotte comments in an 1849 Preface to *The Professor*:

> I said to myself that my hero should work his way through life as I had seen real living men work theirs-that he should never get a shilling he had not earned-that no sudden turns should lift him in a moment to wealth and high station; that the sweat of his brow; that, before he could find so much as an arbour to sit down in, he should master at least half the ascent of 'the Hill of Difficulty...as Adam's son he should share Adam's doom, and drain throughout life a mixed and moderate cup of enjoyment' (47).

The same could be said, no doubt, of the daughter of Eve.

The following study compares the nineteenth century 'pilgrimage' of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) with that of Christian in John Bunyan's spiritual allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678 and Part II 1684). Brontë uses the Christian allegory of Bunyan's to ask her own religious questions in the nineteenth century. Bunyan's Calvinist theology is reflected in his character's language and persona throughout his allegory, and is found transformed and transfigured in Brontë's use, an acute example of Bunyan's influence on nineteenth century fictional narrative. There is no doubt this influence is at least in part a result of the Evangelical revival under Wesley and Whitefield (in the Methodism felt through the influence of Aunt Branwell) and the subsequent Evangelical majority culture of the Victorians (Finley, 77). Bunyan, second only to the Bible, provided for many not only a model for religious formation, but, perhaps also their individual lives. Indeed, *The Pilgrim's Progress* ironically may have crucially facilitated

the shift from biblical narrative to an obsession with the person history of the individual soul, its conversion and perfection (Frei, 152-3). Deeply influenced were, among countless others, Carlyle, Ruskin, Froude, George Eliot, and of course, Charlotte Brontë, whose novel *Jane Eyre* precisely illustrates what Hans Frei has called this 'eclipse of biblical narrative'-that is its 'secularization' for the Victorian age. The comparison will build on Bunyan's own theological position as he explores it through the allegory of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, as well as looking at his spiritual autobiography *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a spiritual allegory, a narrative description of a subject, 'Christian,' who's life after conviction of sin becomes a journey, a picaresque story presented in dramatic encounters with allegorical figures. Christian in Book One is depicted as a 'pilgrim' or one who journeys to a sacred place as an act of religious devotion or one who is journeying to a future life, which is in heaven or the Celestial City. Bunyan's use of proverbial language draws power from its reference to experience that is everyday, common and immediately familiar to the reader.[1] Milo Kaufmann's essay on Bunyan's 'Shape of the Christian Quest' in Robert Collmer's collection of essays, *Bunyan in Our Time* (1989), refers to Oscar Cullman's notion of inescapable biblical history as the basis for Bunyan's language and theology. Cullman states,

> That which is so offensive for modern thought...becomes particularly clear, namely, the fact that all Christian theology in its innermost essence is Biblical history; on a straight line of an ordinary process in time God here reveals himself, and from that line he controls not only the whole of history, but also that which happens in nature (189).[2]

But Kaufmann's point is that Christian's journey is compromised in several ways. Kaufmann emphasizes that in Bunyan this linear narrative of biblical history is compromised by vacillation and retreat suggesting another level of psychological insight and realism. That is why Bunyan could be said to foreshadow the dramatic narratives of later fiction, and Charlotte precisely responds not to the simple linear progression of the 'biblical history,' but to the advances and retreats on the life-way of the struggling individual. Nevertheless, Christian's allegorical journey to the Celestial City is a sacred journey based on a Biblical theology which allows the reader his or her own experience of self-discovery. This self-discovery through pilgrimage in *Jane Eyre* is based on a Biblical narrative rather than any specific Christian theology. By Biblical narrative, I mean that it is the influence of the Biblical text and narrative not least through Bunyan with all his vacillations and retreats that shapes the history of Brontë's heroine Jane Eyre and her encounters along the journey. Brontë's narrative process is a traditional mode of writing. Mark Ledbetter, following Frank Kermode, suggests that narrative is 'not in the business of truth but meaning' (Ledbetter, 6). Brontë's romantic narrative looks back to the narrative of sacred and divine 'truths' which are the basis of Bunyan's theology. Her 'secularization' of these divine truths (that is her use of them in the personal experience of her struggling heroine) is her way of seeking meaning and asking her own questions through the narrative. Thus, Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre* can be said to be a 'secularization' of Bunyan, a narrative that appropriates and yet also erodes her won Christian upbringing against a background of Bunyan's religious allegory through language which is deeply romantic and 'secular' --in Carlyle's term a 'natural supernaturalism.'

Oscar Cullman's description of the Christian pilgrimage defined as on ' a straight line of an ordinary process in time' (yet also compromised) is a characteristic of both Jane's 'secularized' pilgrimage on earth, and Christian's sacred journey to the Celestial City. Each pilgrim's journey is a process in time through which revelation takes place and it is in this process of encounter with characters, environment, and 'nature' which Cullman suggests that 'God' (however God is defined) is revealed. It is clear in Christian's journey that his goal is eternal salvation and to reach heaven or the Celestial City. There is little doubt that by his own determination, but more through God's grace as revealed in Scripture, that Christian will achieve his goal. Through the comparisons in this thesis I will examine in detail and compare with Christian, Jane's determination of will or passion and the role of providence through the novel. Christian serves God and subsumes his own will, indeed his pilgrimage is a learning to sacrifice his own will to serve God. Instead of Jane serving God she is led by her 'passions' or 'will' to serve and realize herself. this theme of the determination of the will or passion is Lyndall Gordon's focus through her biography *Charlotte Brontë: A Passionate Life*. Gordon suggests,

> *Jane Eyre* is, above all, a pilgrimage. It follows child and woman through pitfalls en route to her new Eden: a love which unites goodness with dream of sustained passion. In this new map of the soul, the Fall is not disobedience; it is obedience-unthinking obedience...*to herself* (my italics, 145).

Charlotte Brontë 's life encompassed many characteristics of the changing nineteenth century society and culture which obviously shape the character of the protagonist heroine Jane Eyre. Just as the reader sees Bunyan's theology in Christian, one sees the Victorian Brontë exploring her own situation through Jane. Writing from the influence of Brontë's own experiences, *Jane Eyre* is a romantic Gothic novel that also

deals with the Evangelical, social, and philosophical changes of the nineteenth century. Jane is an unattractive Victorian heroine who is orphaned, dependent on herself, seeking means of financial independence. Her life exemplifies in many ways the changing Victorian experience of women. From beginning to end *Jane Eyre* it might be argued is a sort of 'feminist' *The Pilgrim's Progress*, looking to place the equality of men and women into some perspective during the nineteenth century. The novel was published on October 16, 1847 to a rapturous reception; including William Makepeace Thackeray's support of such a compelling novel. Thackeray said that the novel 'interested me so much that I have lost (or won if you like) a whole day in reading it'...(Gordon, 162). But another reader John Gibson Lockhart, the biographer of Sir Walter Scott, found Jane to be a 'brazen Miss' (ibid). Anne Mozley writing in the *Christian Remebrancer* in April 1853, six years after publication, thought that the novel was 'dangerous' and showed 'no...true insight into the really feminine nature. Such [as Currer Bell] cannot appreciate the hold which a daily round of simple duties and pure pleasures has on those who are content to practise and enjoy them' (Gordon, 162). Mozley clearly regarded the author of *Jane Eyre* as a 'man.' Elizabeth Gaskell's daughter had to ask her mother's permission to read *Jane Eyre*, but Gaskell assured her daughter that 'I am afraid I never told you that I did not mind you reading *Jane Eyre*' (Gordon, 162). Mrs. Oliphant, one of the foremost opponents of women's emancipation warned of 'grossness' and 'refined indelicacy.' 'It was often women who feared the novel, and used it as a text on which to hang warnings about a rebellious temper' (Gordon, 162-3).

Brontë was simply 'justifying the self' (Marshall, 30), so characteristic of the Victorian novel, and leading the way for women who were becoming consciously aware of the need to express themselves through literary means. The reviews that praised the author of *Jane Eyre* if written by a man, and declared the novel 'odious' if by a woman, bothered the author to the point that she declared;

> To you I am neither man nor woman--I come before you as an author only. It is the sole standard by which you have a right to judge me--the sole ground on which I accept your judgement (quoted in Gordon, 163).

Brontë's novel sets in motion questions about the status of women and the conventions that a male-dominated society sustained, perhaps persuading Brontë to submit *Jane Eyre* for publication under a male pseudonym. The background of the novel is Charlotte's life in an Anglican parsonage dominated by the patriarchal figure of her father Patrick Brontë, and the Methodism of her Aunt Branwell after the death of Charlotte's mother.[3] Brontë's religious upbringing and education was certainly deeply influential on her writing narrative, and I argue that Brontë's narrative through *Jane Eyre* echoes that religious Biblical influence, but Brontë is also a child of romanticism in spirit and her reading. This journey toward understanding the self through *Jane Eyre* is based on a religious tradition and even a Biblical framework that nevertheless remains embedded in a Victorian late-Romantic mind set. *Jane Eyre* singularly is a novel that lies in the Bunyanesque tradition and Brontë's use of scriptural allusion has multiple explanations, but clearly her use of Scripture after Bunyan involves a direct repudiation of his Calvinist theology. Brontë was simply using the narrative tradition of the Puritan autobiography for *Jane Eyre*, and her

object was to write a pilgrimage dealing with the truths of the self that could be explored still within the framework of Bunyan's spiritual allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

Charlotte Brontë instills in Jane Eyre a 'passion' so dominating that she controls many of her own situations along her journey and 'justifies the self.' In Bunyan's allegory the inner voice that is speaking to Christian throughout the journey is the voice of God. However, in Brontë's novel the text generally declines any direct reference to God. This 'natural supernaturalism' is a re-defining or 'secularization' of religious experience while retaining the structured images and motifs of theological and religious tradition. *Sartor Resartus* (1833-4) written by Thomas Carlyle uses the character of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh to see the world out of clothes (clothes being social conventions) and sees 'God' or 'nature' merely through the physical world. The logical order that Teufelsdröckh suggests is derived from the 'mythos' or the reality of the self understood through infinite and spiritual perspectives. Brontë uses Teufelsdröckh's 'natural supernaturalism' to explore her own 'mythos' through *Jane Eyre*. Carlyle's 'philosophy' overshadows the spiritual and moral questions being asked during the nineteenth century, and particularly in *Jane Eyre*. Carlyle, in a sense, redefines John Bunyan's influence on Charlotte Brontë, recasting in Romantic terms the seventeenth century Puritan theology which relied on the Biblical tradition and belief in the divine 'truths' embedded in that tradition.[4]

Considering the influences of Bunyan and Carlyle on Charlotte Brontë's spiritual pilgrimage of the self through *Jane Eyre*, this study will then look in detail at the narratives of *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Jane Eyre*. There are similarities and

dissimilarities between the spiritual pilgrim Christian from Bunyan's First Book and Jane as a 'secular pilgrim.' As I have already stated, Christian is a self-abnegating pilgrim searching for divine truth based on the Biblical text and Calvinist theology as a model and inspiration for his journey. Jane's pilgrimage however, is based on a narrative of personal quest and fulfillment with its focus on the journey's end on earth, rather than in heaven. In essence, Jane's secular pilgrimage parallels the spiritual pilgrimage that Christian has traveled. Christian's intention of reaching the Celestial City or heaven is comparable to Jane's goal to be achieved on earth. both travelers encounter obstacles, moments of retreat and defeat, as well as moments of advance and reward that illustrate the awareness or lack of awareness of the pilgrim. Both Christian and Jane will look back in retrospect on their journey to determine the significance of the pilgrimage. But is Jane's secular pilgrimage and the 'exertion of intense effort and sustained belief in the *self*' (Marshall, 130) that sets her travel apart from Christian's pilgrimage.

Chapter 1, entitled 'John Bunyan's Spiritual Autobiography' is an outline of Bunyan's life and his Puritan theology. Bunyan writes his allegory in a medieval tradition of popular literature which looks back to the late medieval and early Renaissance morality plays and above all the allegory of 'Everyman's' experience. Through *The Pilgrim's Progress* Christian is 'Everyman' who is divinely warned and sets out on his pilgrimage in search of salvation fearing the life he leads in the City of Destruction. the sacred language of Scripture and the Puritan tradition provide the call that sets Christian's pilgrimage in motion with the voice of Bunyan interceding in the story to comment about the plight of his pilgrim.

Chapter 2, 'Charlotte Brontë's Life and Religion,' builds on the influence of Bunyan and discusses Brontë's life through her writing of *Jane Eyre*. The Evangelical changes of the nineteenth century that influenced and inhibited Brontë's writing style, reflecting the pressing social problems and philosophies of a complex age. The social restraints upon her were reminiscent of the Puritan experience, and thus, Brontë's novel, like Bunyan's allegory is didactic in form.

Moving into Chapter 3, entitled 'Language and Self of the Secular Pilgrim,' I discuss the metaphorical language and distinctions between the spiritual pilgrimage defined by Bunyan in contrast to Brontë's Victorian journey toward knowing the self. It is Jane's 'providential decorum' (Vargish, 26) that clarifies human desires or intense passion in this world- a 'natural supernatural' pursuit of personal Destiny. The discrepancies between the desires of this world and providential aesthetics is a theme of Victorian fiction, and Charlotte Brontë explores these parallels through her novels. The philosophy of Thomas Carlyle's 'natural supernaturalism' assists in the explanation of Brontë's understanding of the infinite at work in the natural world.

'The Secular verses the Sacred' concludes the comparison of Christian and Jane in Chapter 4, looking in depth at the similarities and dissimilarities between the experience of Christian's pilgrimage in *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Jane's progression toward her 'Celestial City' through *Jane Eyre*. Brontë's allusions draw in specific detail on Bunyan's allegory, the Bible, and other influential works of the Victorian age. To be aware of the many influences that shaped Christian and Jane as characters, sheds light on the similar intent of both authors. Even though Bunyan's allegory precedes Brontë, the shape of the

Christian quest is recurrent, falling in accordance with design, concepts, and images of Biblical history.[5]

[1] George A. Walton, "Bunyan's Proverbial Language" in *Bunyan in Our Time*, ed. Robert Collmer (Kent : Kent State UP, 1989) 7-34.

[2] Oscar Cullman, *Christ and Time*, quoted in U. Milo Kaufmann, *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Pilgrim's Regress*: "John Bunyan and C.S. Lewis on the Shape of the Christian Quest" in *Bunyan in Our Time*, ed. Robert Collmer (Kent: Kent State UP, 1989) 186-199.

[3] Lyndall Gordon, *Charlotte Brontë: A Passionate Life*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994) 'Recent scholarship has shown that though Mr. Brontë repudiated Calvinism, his ministry was more given to awareness of hell than salvation. In September 1824, he saw an upheaval of a bog on the moors as a warning against sin. A horror of sin was the bias, too, of Aunt Branwell, despite family ties with milder Wesleyan Methodism rather than the more Calvinistic Methodism of Whitefield. She taught her nieces-especially her favourite, Anne-to distrust natural impulse as the prompting of the devil and regard independence of judgment as sin of pride' (24).

[4] Barry V. Qualls, *The Secular Pilgrims of Victorian Fiction*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982). The influence of Bunyan on Carlyle and Brontë in the nineteenth century is the focus in Qualls book. His essay 'The terrible beauty of Charlotte Brontë's "Natural Supernaturalism"' (43-84) is the origin of this comparison and will be a constant reference to the discussion between Bunyan, Carlyle, and Brontë.

[5] M.H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism*, Chapter One, section 2, "The Design of Biblical History.' Abrams states; 'The paradigm of history implicit in the Biblical canon, which was made explicit by early Christian commentators, exhibits radical differences from these classical forms--differences which were fateful for post-classical thought and culture, and for the course of history itself. As against Greco-Roman views, the Christian pattern of history has these distinctive attributes: it is finite; it has a clearly defined plot; it is providential; it is right-angled; and it is symmetrical' (35).

Chapter 1.
John Bunyan's Spiritual Autobiography.

1:1 Early Influence: Life in Bedford, England.

> So that until I came to the state of Marriage, I was the very ringleader of all the Youth that kept me company in all manner of vices and ungodliness...In these days the thoughts of Religion were very grievous to me; Bunyan[1]

John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a 'religious allegory in form' (Sharrock, 8). The story of Christian's pilgrimage is an allegorical spiritual journey, an example of a man's inward religious questioning. The fictionalized journey is dramatic and attempts to evoke an imaginative and energetic response on the part of the reader. But fully to understand the multitude of possible interpretative stances that narration invites, one must be aware of Bunyan's own tradition and the seventeenth century Puritan understanding of pilgrimage as perceived in *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners,* Bunyan's spiritual autobiography, and *The Pilgrim's Progress.*[2] This understanding of pilgrimage will be the basis for approaching the 'secular' pilgrimage as understood by Charlotte Brontë. The spiritual pilgrimage for John Bunyan and its form in *The Progress* in the seventeenth century deeply influenced literary thought in the nineteenth century and specifically Charlotte Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre.*

John Bunyan was born the son of a brazier, Thomas Bunyan, in 1628. There is no record of the exact date of his birth but, on November thirtieth of the same year John was baptized in Elstow near Bedford, England. The Bunyan's property served the family of farmers for over three hundred years and the modesty of their living was not a sign of

deprivation but still established the basis upon which John Bunyan became 'the greatest representative of the common people to find a place in English literature.'[3]
John's mother was from Elstow as was also his father's second wife. His parents chose to send their son to school to read and write hopefully instilling knowledge that they themselves lacked. John's father could not write (Hill, 42). Both parents belonged to the Church of England and Bunyan grew up in the Anglican religious discipline dictated by that church. Thomas Bunyan was not a particularly pious Christian which may have influenced John's youthful 'cursing, swearing, lying and blaspheming' (Hill, 42).

At the age of sixteen years John joined Cromwell's Parliamentary Army. He was posted to Colonel Richard Cokayne's company[4] in Newport Pagnell following the death of his mother and his father's hasty marriage to his third wife. Newport was the center of radical debates between church and state during the civil war where Bunyan served until July 1647 (Sharrock, 12). John Bunyan's military career was uneventful, yet the importance of his experience was not the events that took place, but the influence upon him of people like Paul Hobson, Henry Denne and George Fox. During these impressionable years John may have been confronted with his loneliest spiritual questions about life and himself.

1:2 Puritan Tradition.

The early religious influences on John Bunyan's life emerged out of the humble but respectable farming community of Elstow where he grew up. The life of the community revolved around the activities of the church. Conformity to the rituals of church attendance each Sunday, economic tithes, and community involvement were expected

from all members of the village. But this Anglican conformity later gave way to Bunyan's Puritan belief in the 'English Bible, and to the sturdy evangelical Christianity native to the eastern and east Midland counties' (Sharrock, 10). Bunyan's marriage in 1648 proved to be a strongly religious influence on him. His wife motivated him to read the Bible with devotion and Bunyan also read Martin Luther's *Commentary on the Galations* (1535). Later, in 1653 Bunyan became a member of a Baptist congregation in Bedford, where he clashed with the Quakers. Though Bunyan was by trade a brazier, like his father, this experience of religious conflict led Bunyan to write two pamphlets (1656 and 1657) in defense of his faith, leading him into a career as an itinerant preacher.

His Puritan beliefs stemmed from the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation in England and the influence of John Calvin's followers who believed in predestination and justification by faith. At the heart of Calvinism was the doctrine of salvation of the elect; determining whether one was among the elect to be saved by divine grace or those who were damned. The Calvinist sense of salvation was achieved by an awareness that became apparent through a period of time through a process of spiritual struggle and discipline (also apparent in the pilgrimage journey) and only finally an immediate religious conversion (which was not necessarily part of the pilgrimage journey). The Puritans believed that God spoke to the individual through the Bible, a literal interpretation of the Scripture. 'For the educated Puritan the Bible remained the key to all knowledge, human and divine' (Sharrock, 18).

1:3 *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, (1666).

In November 1660, John Bunyan was arrested while preaching in a field without a license, but having ignored the request by city magistrates to cease from preaching, he was imprisoned off and on for the next twelve years. During this period of confinement Bunyan wrote ten books to support his family. Near the end of his incarceration he also worked closely with representatives of four other churches to organize a network of preachers and teachers in northern Bedfordshire and contiguous areas in order to resist the uniformity imposed by the Church of England and thus help to ensure the survival of Nonconformity during future periods of persecution. In January, 1672 Bunyan was chosen pastor of Bedford church, although he was not to be released from prison until the following September. What followed was a period of intense ministerial activity combined with periods of imprisonment. The last twelve years of Bunyan's life were devoted to preaching in the Midlands and London, as well as further writing. The Roman Catholic monarch, James II, tried to win support by granting toleration to Nonconformists, but Bunyan was cautious, although some members of his congregation accepted positions in the reorganized Bedford Corporation. Bunyan did not live to see James deposed in the Revolution; Bunyan died in London on the thirty-first of August, 1688.

During the twelve years of occasional imprisonment Bunyan wrote among other works his spiritual autobiography, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, (1666). This spiritual autobiography became Bunyan's foundation for the 'universal myth' which Sharrock defines as follows:

> All types of Christians searching for the truth and prepared to reject a hostile society are comprehended under the figure of the wayfaring man earnestly pursuing his pilgrimage (Sharrock, 9).

Bunyan's autobiography dealt with his own religious conversion and struggle between God and Satan over his soul. The process and result of this self-scrutiny through *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* focused on the 'inner religious feelings' with little reference to other people or places (Sharrock, 11). Bunyan's intention in the autobiography was to render his spiritual history. Still dealing with this self-evaluation, Bunyan would boldly personify his psychological struggles through the voice of Christian in *The Progress* (Bunyan, 54). Brontë is like Bunyan, in that she too carries her 'inner religious feelings' through her 'autobiography' *Jane Eyre*. Both authors begin their autobiographies with a spiritual urgency, a call to the audience to listen and comprehend the pilgrimage that is about to unfold. The struggle and conflict (spiritual and physical) are important in the autobiography, assisting in justifying the 'self' through advancement and retreat. It is only through this experience that the individual comes to an understanding of his or her pilgrimage. In *Grace Abounding* Bunyan does not give the reader any detail about his actual encounters with people other than their occupation, his first marriage, [5] and his economic status. Many of the references that Bunyan makes through *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* are to the influence of books like Arthur Dent's, *The Plain Mans Path-way to Heaven* (1601) and Bishop Lewis Bayly's, *The Practice of Piety* (date of first publication uncertain: before 1613).[6] The references to these books through *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* had little impact other than evoking 'desires to Religion.' Despite the lack of detail of the chronological events of

Bunyan's life the main emphasis was not the factual realism of the spiritual autobiography but to convey a message; that the elect were saved no matter what doubts or temptations provoked their faith. Bunyan's knowledge of the Biblical text becomes his constant and direct source of justification and means of consoling his own doubts, as well as finding answers along his own spiritual journey. Roger Sharrock comments on this Calvinist theology and the Puritan belief that influenced Bunyan's thought.

> Bunyan is deeply influenced by the Puritan and Calvinist principle that any Biblical text must present a single clear and unambiguous meaning and that this must apply also to parables and similitudes (Sharrock, 8).

Bunyan addresses his faith in *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*;

> I had no sooner said it but this returned upon me, as an echo doth answer a voice, 'This sin is not unto death' (59). These words did sound suddenly within me;...that piece of a sentence darted in upon me (64-5). Suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul...(72). That word of God took hold of my heart...I suddenly felt this word to sound in my heart (80, 82).

1:4 *The Pilgrim's Progress* (Part I 1678 and Part II 1684).

'*The Pilgrim's Progress* is at many points a commentary on *Grace Abounding*' (Hill, 73). The 'universal myth' formulated in Bunyan's spiritual autobiography is different in that his journey was an isolated battle between himself and Satan. Christian's journey in *The Progress* is not a journey in isolation, but instead Christian is assisted throughout the pilgrimage, and directed safely through his journey to the Celestial City. Book One of *The Progress*, published in 1678, is the story of Christian's spiritual pilgrimage and journey to the Celestial City. Bunyan wrote Book One of *The Progress* from Bedford Bridge Gaol in 1676. The text of *The Progress* indicates that Bunyan wrote

the story in gaol and suggests that he may have been released before he finished the first book.

> As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place, where was a den; and I laid me down in that place to sleep (Bunyan, 51).

Sharrock indicates that Bunyan's language suggests where the first book could have been written (in the original text). The writer awakens halfway through his dream and says, 'Then I awoke and dreamed again.' Sharrock leans toward the suggestion that Bunyan wrote *The Progress* during his first imprisonment just after *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*.

Bunyan's intention in *The Progress* was to dramatize his own spiritual history through Christian and other characters, and to define and reiterate his own religious beliefs and experiences through proverbial language. This is not to imply that *The Progress* is also a specifically autobiographical document like *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, but I suggest that the influence of Bunyan's own incarceration for illegal preaching invoked a period of isolation and questioning through which Bunyan wrote the allegorical pilgrimage.

The urgency with which Bunyan opens *The Progress* is marked by Christian's action in fleeing his home, leaving behind his wife and children in order to 'fulfill his destiny' and reach his goal in the Celestial City. The story opens,

> As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place, where was a den; and I laid me down in that place to sleep: and as I slept I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked, and saw him open the book, and read therein; and as he read, he wept and trembled: and not being able longer to contain, he brake out in a lamentable cry saying, 'What shall I do?' (Bunyan, 51).

From this opening passage the reader accepts Christian's need of God's grace which necessitates the leaving of his family. If Christian stays in the City of Destruction he will not survive. He has no choice but to heed the apocalyptic warning that he has just dreamed and warn others, including his family, of the danger that exists in the City of Destruction.

In the opening of *Jane Eyre*, the scene is set in 'Gateshead'-Jane's City of Destruction in the wilderness of her world, a prison, confining her like an animal against her own 'will.' Not only does Gateshead signify the gate or the beginning of the journey which lies ahead, but the allegory signifies that which must be left behind. Like Christian, the reality of Jane's situation forces her to seek shelter and solitude for herself. Jane's journey is for herself, she is not provided with any family, so she looks to flee her surroundings by retreating. Like Bunyan's 'similitude of a dream' in the 'folds of scarlet drapery'...'to the right hand; to the left were the clear panes of glass, protecting, but not separating me from the drear November day' (Brontë, 39). Does Brontë paraphrase Bunyan's description of Christian's disturbed 'lamentable cry' in her revolt against her condition? Jane turns over the leaves in her book, (like Christian studying his Bible) against the 'mist and cloud,' and 'ceaseless rain sweeping away wildly before a long and lamentable blast' (Brontë, 40). Brontë's physical image of the 'rain sweeping away wildly' mirrors Jane's mental anguish, like Christian's apocalyptic warning, and both pilgrims must avoid the storm that surrounds them. Despite Christian's plea to his family to join him, they refuse to do so, and Christian must set out alone for the Celestial City.[7] Though Christian's intentions are good in the sense that there is hope that evil will not

befall him on his journey, little does he realize that he must journey through places and overcome obstacles within himself like the Slough of Despond, The Valley of the Shadow of Death, and be imprisoned by Giant Despair due to his desire to find a short cut on his pilgrimage. Christian must also encounter people who will try to deflect his purpose like Worldly Wiseman, Talkative, and will have to fight an apocalyptic monster, Apollyon. Though the allegorical names indicate the spiritual and interior nature of the journey, Bunyan is also criticizing the speciousness of one view of the nature of one's earthly journey through this world--the theory that one's good deeds of themselves will get one through the Wicket Gate for the story falls within the Calvinist doctrine of predestination. Christian must realize entirely his ultimate destiny, that by God's grace of salvation he will enter the Celestial City. The use of the allegorical names through *Jane Eyre* is also Brontë's process of establishing Jane's boundaries as well as obstacles through her journey. Moving from Gateshead, Jane moves to Lowood, a lowly place, leaving the reader with the sense that there is no alternate means of escaping the terror that Jane endures. From Lowood, she moves to Thornfield a thorny place which is yet finally a home to Jane: a home in the sense that it meets the necessities and comforts of a home that she has never had. Thornfield is a home of possible beauty, but there is a price to pay for that beauty. Jane travels through the supernatural Whitcross and then reaches Moor House, to find the abundance of a family that she has never known.

The journey and the obstacles that the pilgrim must overcome magnify the necessity of reaching the end of the pilgrimage. Endurance becomes a test of strength and desire for Christian, a trait given him by God's grace. Evangelist is one of the people who

Christian encounters along his journey when he seems to lose his sense of direction. Evangelist's character is like that of a guardian angel, someone who motivates and sets Christian aright when he is wrong, hence the name, Evangelist. Evangelist also exemplifies redemptive qualities; for example, when Christian ignores Evangelist's advice in the early part of his journey, Evangelist finds him lost after heeding the advice of Worldly Wiseman and suggests that Christian climb 'yonder high Hill,' which is Mount Sinai.[8] Evangelist is the insistent voice of the Gospel reminding Christian of what is to come. Evangelist convinces Christian of his error and Christian falls at Evangelist's feet crying,

> 'Woe is me, for I am undone', at the sight of which Evangelist caught him by the right hand, saying, 'All manner of sin and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto men; be not faithless, but believing' (Bunyan, 65).

It is only a matter of time before Christian's inability to realize potential hazards gets him into trouble again, and he escorts Hopeful along By-Path Meadow into Doubting Castle where the Giant Despair imprisons them both.

1:5 Bunyan's Allegory: medieval tradition and realism.

The allegorical names and places that Bunyan uses in the story are largely drawn from the medieval tradition of the morality plays.[9] The allegory is powerful in that the names convey the drama and importance of a given situation with simplicity. Sharrock adds that in Bunyan's 'main structure of the allegory' the use of 'Mr. No-good, Mr. Malice, Mr. Love-lust, Mr. Liar, Mr. Cruelty, Mr. Hate-light, and Mr. Implacable' (Sharrock, 18) are merely mentioned for name's sake. This form of characterization is clearly influenced by Richard Bernard's allegory *The Isle of Man* (1627)-the story of Sir

Worldly Wise, Sir Luke Warm and Sir Plausible Civil who are put on trial for their sins. Like the characters in Bernard's *The Isle of Man*, Bunyan's characters' response and characterization are their names. But the use of pure allegory through *The Progress* is not constantly maintained, for as Sharrock reiterates,

> realism is always breaking in, because the one truly binding element in the structure of the narrative is Christian's drive onward through dangerous country to the Celestial City, and stream of adventures that he encounters as a pilgrim.[10]

There are clear inbreakings of realism in the allegory, for it would be difficult, mentally and imaginatively for the reader of the narrative to sustain such a constant flow of spiritual questioning and moral bombardment. The break in the allegory is a moment of rest for the pilgrim and reader. Even Bunyan alludes to the needed rest along the Christian pilgrimage. In fact, Stanley Fish claims that the expectations of the reader are not met merely through the progression of the pilgrimage in the story line, but by the inclusion and even intrusion of pilgrims, the progressive relationship among a number of obstacles toward the intended goal, and a growing sense of accomplishment that is felt by the reader and pilgrim as the pilgrim reaches the final destination. Fish emphasizes that the reader finds that the pilgrim is traveling along a route whose landmarks and dangers vary with the pilgrim's inner state of being while traveling . Fish also points out that there is not a straight or direct relationship between the point in time and space of the final destination and that from which the pilgrim has traveled. On Fish's last point of realism in Bunyan's pilgrimage, we become aware of the backsliding and diversions that take place during the movement forward in the pilgrimage. But there is a constant motivation to move forward because death and destruction are behind Christian,[11] and God's grace is always ahead.

The 'realistic' breaks in allegorical detail allow Christian and reader the opportunity to look at the pilgrim's journey and comprehend the progression that has been made. It is through these moments of realization that true vocation of the pilgrim is recognized.

Jane pioneers and directs her pilgrimage. She builds her own journey of progression and regression through 'encrustations of language, lover's and religious cant, to see, to *see* in the sense of revelation, the destructive self-interest of persons in positions of power' (Gordon, 146). If Jane was to succumb to anyone's dominance she would lose her soul. She must continue to move forward, overcoming Mrs. Reed, and Mr. Brocklehurst as Christian fought for advancement over Obstinate and Giant Despair.

In the beginning of the pilgrimage, Christian is redeemed from his sins and his burden falls from his shoulders when he is 'given the role of his salvation' (Sharrock, 25). This is a sharp contrast to the conversion experience of Jane Eyre's. She is not 'given the role of salvation' until she reaches Whitcross, after two thirds of her pilgrimage have been completed. The 'role of salvation' is symbolic of the test of providence and the reassurance to the pilgrim of final safety. Both characters, Christian and Jane, recover from their mishaps experienced during their journey.

Many of Christian's encounters on his journey are ones that I would like to outline more clearly in comparison with Jane Eyre's pilgrimage, but it is important to realize at this point that Bunyan's background and narrative are deeply embedded in a Biblical tradition that was all too influential in a different way on Charlotte Brontë. The difference in Bunyan's narrative and textual focus is his Puritan belief, using the sacred biblical

language that emphasized the spiritual consciousness of the pilgrim. Roger Sharrock describes the literary form of this consciousness;

> The achievement of Bunyan in *The Pilgrim's Progress* which gives the work its continuing vitality is the creation, not of allegory, but of myth. Allegory is dependent on an intellectual scheme: we can connect symbol and significance neatly with an 'equals' sign, and for a purely allegorical work it should always be possible to compile a table of characters and meanings in two columns which should perform the whole work of the commentary.[12]

The 'moral significance' (Sharrock, 25) of each character, the problems, and the journey itself are all too difficult and vast fully to comprehend as mere allegory. These stories or myths of the Slough of Despond, the Delectable Mountains, and most noted, Vanity Fair,[13] have continued to influence the shape and imagination of the fictional narrative in the novel tradition. Bunyan was using his own history and traditional symbols to define a spiritual journey. 'But the image of the purposeful journey through life' (Sharrock, 26) is the most apparent of the traditional themes in Victorian literature, and specifically in Charlotte Brontë. I would like to turn to Charlotte Brontë's re-shaping of Bunyan's traditional narrative of the spiritual journey or pilgrimage through life as a basis for her own pilgrimage toward an understanding of the self and even in some sense 'God' in *Jane Eyre*.

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[1] John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, 1666 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1907) 9.

[2] John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, (Part I) 1678 and (Part II) 1684 (London: Penguin, 1987) My point of reference through the thesis is on Part One, and not Part Two of Bunyan's allegory. Any reference to Part Two is made specifically, and in order to conserve time and space I will refer to Part One of Bunyan's work as *The Progress*, unless the title is being used in a specific quotation.

[3] Roger Sharrock, *John Bunyan*, (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1954) 9.

[4] Colonel Richard Cokayne was from Bedfordshire, just outside Elstow Bunyan's birthplace. Colonel Cokayne may have been a constant reminder of Bunyan's home life during a time when Bunyan was experiencing radical religious influences.

[5] Roger Sharrock, *John Bunyan*, (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1954) 'There is no record of the marriage, and the fact that the wife used to tell her husband about the godly life of her father suggest that she may have come from outside the Bedford area' 25.

[6] Roger Sharrock, '*Life and Story in The Pilgrim's Progress*,' Friends of Dr. William's Library, Thirty-second lecture, (London: Heffers, 1978) 8.

[7] It is in Book Two of *The Progress* (1684) that Bunyan writes about the fate of Christiana, Christian's wife and family, and their pilgrimage to the Celestial City. The narrative journey is similar, but Christiana's pilgrimage is not as isolated because she is accompanied by her children and directed along her path with little to fear due to the guides along the journey.

[8] Bunyan, 63. Christian fears that he has made a mistake in heeding the advice of Worldly Wiseman after he ascends 'yonder high Hill.' The reference is to Mount Sinai from Exodus 3:1-5 where God appeared to Moses in the burning bush and later from Exodus 20, in which Moses is handed the Ten Commandments. The reference significantly foreshadows the difficult journey which lies ahead of Christian. He is like the Israelites wandering in the desert. Christian must also wander and is guided like the Israelites were guided by Moses. Evangelist, can be compared to Moses as well.

[9] Morality plays were popular in England from the middle of the fourteenth century to the middle of the sixteenth century. The morality play brought moral sentiments and religious beliefs to life by the allegorical tendencies of medieval sculpture, painting, and poetry tracing a person's life from birth and death. The masterpiece of the English morality plays, *Everyman* (c. 1500), consisted of the summoning of the central figure (called Everyman) by Death and Everyman's appeal to relatives, good deeds, and moral qualities to justify how he has lived his life. The dominant themes of the morality play are: (1) conflict between Virtues and Vices for the human being's soul; (2) the coming of Death, or calling someone to his/her death and judgment to follow; (3) and the debate of Mercy and Peace against Truth and Justice for one's soul.

[10] Roger Sharrock, Introduction. John Bunyan *The Pilgrim's Progress* (London: Penguin, 1987) 18.

[11] U. Milo Kaufmann, *'The Pilgrim's Progress and The Pilgrim's Regress: John Bunyan and C.S. Lewis on the Shape of the Christian Quest'* in *Bunyan in Our Time*, ed. Robert G. Collmer, (Kent: Kent State UP, 1989) 190-192. I believe with Kaufmann that this point Fish makes is highly debatable, keeping in mind Bunyan's Puritan tradition. It seems logical that there would be a correlation between the beginning of Christian's journey and the end. What would be the motivation in his journey if there was no intention to finish the pilgrimage with the hope of obtaining the Celestial City? I wish to include

the point for the sake of argument, and recognize both Fish's point (regarding 'realism') and his fallibility (regarding Bunyan's theological purpose). See Stanley Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts* (Berkeley: 1974, 224-264).

[12] Roger Sharrock, Introduction. John Bunyan *The Pilgrim's Progress* (London: Penguin, 1987) 25.

[13] The surplus of meaning in the allegory of Vanity Fair was very influential on the Victorian writers, for example, William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1847-8)-subtitled 'a novel without a hero.' Thackeray describes the hypocrisy, snobbery and *faux pas* of the nineteenth century British society.

Chapter 2.
Charlotte Brontë's Life and Religion.

2:1 The Brontë family.

Charlotte's life growing up in Haworth is mirrored through the characters and journey in *Jane Eyre*. Jane is a rebel fighting the temptations between living ruled by her passion or by a duty to serve others. Charlotte also questions her own spirit because her determination contradicts the rules her father had set, and differs from the expectations of the nineteenth century social norm. Lyndall Gordon points out in her biography that 'as Christian once did battle with Obstinate or the Giant Despair, so Jane must outface the deceptive faces of nineteenth-century Benevolence' (146). Charting the pilgrimage through this world 'the pilgrim must retain her clarity at all costs' (Gordon, 147). Brontë expresses her determination for clarity in her life despite tragic circumstance in a letter to her friend Ellen Nussey;

> I avoid looking forward or backward, and try to keep looking upward. This is not the time to regret, dread, or weep. What I have and ought to do is very distinctly laid out for me; what I want, and pray for, is strength to perform it. The days pass in a slow, dark march; the nights are the test; the sudden waking from sleep, the revived knowledge that one lies in her grave, and another not at my side, but in a separate and sick bed. However, God is over all (Gaskell, 361).

This tragic confession written to Ellen Nussey on January 15, 1849 noted in Elizabeth Gaskell's *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*, ambivalently expresses Charlotte's hope despite her sister Anne's illness and the previous passing of Emily. Charlotte's insistence on God's presence and control in her life, is a questionable orthodoxy during an emotional time of change and loss. But through the Evangelical changes of the nineteenth century, Brontë's claim is enlightening for her spiritual depth of character. Evangelicalism focused

on the relationship between the self and God, while rejecting the corporate of authority of the church, and placed the spiritual emphasis on the individual (Jay, 7). Brontë's religion was shaped by her father who was an Anglican minister and member of the Yorkshire Evangelicals (Jay, 31) and who single-handed brought up six children in the midst of social and religious change. Thus, it is clear that the hope that Brontë exhibits is the result of a deeply religious upbringing, despite her own personal questions about religious institutions and practices as exhibited in her novels.

The Reverend Patrick Brontë was born on St. Patrick's Day, 1777 and brought up in Ahaderg, Ireland. His childhood was spent with nine other ambitious brothers and sisters on their father's farm where Patrick was initially working in the local weaving trade. At the age of twenty-five, Brontë left to pursue a teaching career in the local parish in Drumballyroney, and entered Cambridge University only through the financial assistance of two Methodist clergyman (Lane, 21). Within four years Brontë had obtained a B.A. degree and was ordained and set to Essex where he remained for three years. During his stay in Essex, Brontë became acquainted with Mary Burder whom he wanted to marry. Supposedly Mary was forbidden by her father to see Patrick, but Mr. Brontë defended himself from social embarrassment by claiming that he did not want to enter into marriage. In order to prevent any scandal Patrick severed all relations with Mary and retreated a great distance to Hartshead in Yorkshire. There he met and married Maria Branwell from Penzance.

Patrick's handsome Irish build was in great contrast to that of Maria Branwell's small frame. She was a very meek woman from a pious Methodist family which instilled a

gentle demeanor in her. Maria Branwell's persona would in fact become a model for the characters in the novels of her daughters, Charlotte and Anne. Compliant as she was, she was a contrast to her husband's Irish temper. Before Maria and Patrick married she wrote, 'Pray much for me, that I may be made a blessing and not a hindrance to you. Let me not interrupt your studies nor intrude on that time which ought to be dedicated to better purposes' (Lane, 25). Mr. Brontë was, according to an early, nineteenth century biographer of Charlotte Brontë, 'habitually cold and distant in his demeanor towards those of his own household' (Reid, 21), and Charlotte would use her father's persona in the novel *Shirley* to create Mr. Helstone, Caroline's uncle, who's character was distant and unconcerned about the affairs of his niece. Brontë emphasizes the lack of attention that Mr. Helstone paid to his niece.

> Mr. Helstone had no suspicion whatever on his mind; for being usually but vaguely informed of his niece's movements, not thinking it worth while to follow them closely, he was not aware that she had been out at all that day...(*Shirley*, 260).

Through all of the years spent in Yorkshire, and even after his wife's death, Mr. Brontë never took a meal with any of his children, instead resorting to the isolation of his study. He went as far as carrying loaded pistols with him during the day, and when provoked he would shoot off the pistols in the back yard of the parsonage (Reid, 22).

2:2 A turbulent youth: Growing passion.

Charlotte Brontë was born the third in succession of six children on April 21, 1816, in Thornton. Charlotte was quickly followed by Patrick Branwell, Emily, and Anne. In February, 1820, the family was moved to Haworth Parsonage, a small stone house overlooking the town in the West Riding of Yorkshire. The exertions of the move and the

necessity of caring for the children proved to be more than a test for Mrs. Brontë who was sick with a form of cancer at the time. With her health failing and no energy to tend her six children, the children were forced to entertain themselves by intellectual means or walks among the heathery moors. By the age of six, Maria, the eldest of the five, became interested in literature and politics, and would read the evening newspaper about political and social events of the day. After their mother's death in 1821, the children resorted to re-enacting the great events that Maria read about; such as the heroism of Caesar, Hannibal, Napoleon, and the Duke of Wellington which would often end in an argument that had to be settled by Mr. Brontë (Gaskell, 94).

Three years after the death of Mrs. Brontë, Maria and Elizabeth were sent to Cowan's Bridge, a school in the north of England for the daughters of clergymen. Cowan's Bridge and the experience that the Brontës shared are the model for Lowood School in *Jane Eyre*. The school was overseen by the Reverend William Carus Wilson, who's belief in strict and authoritative ways were reflected in the school's code of attendance.[1] The discipline that this code of attendance enforced was never questioned under Reverend Wilson's guidance. Maria (the model for Helen Burns in *Jane Eyre*) and Elizabeth Brontë began as pupils at Cowan's Bridge in July, 1824. However, through age and deteriorating health the Reverend Wilson failed to meet the demands of the school. There was a lack of financial support causing a decline in living conditions. Many times the food prepared had aged or was left over for weeks on end. The water used to cook and drink was taken from rain tubs and contained dirt and debris. There is no evidence as to why no action was taken by the teachers to inform the Reverend Wilson as to how

poorly the food was being prepared in the school. In September of that same year Charlotte and Emily were admitted to the school by their father.

The changes that Maria, Elizabeth, Charlotte, and Emily encountered were to become the object of criticism in Charlotte's novel *Jane Eyre*. Maria was portrayed as the transcendent Helen Burns in the novel. Helen is Jane's first role model. She is a 'stainless saint' whom Charlotte defended after criticism that the persona was too perfect to be real. Charlotte insisted that Helen Burns was 'real enough. I have exaggerated nothing there. I abstained from recording much that I remembered respecting her, lest the narrative should sound incredible' (Gordon, 145). In the spring of 1825 a fever broke out at Cowan's Bridge and forty girls became sick with it, and yet there is only one recorded death from those who contracted the fever (Gaskell, 106). The Brontës escaped the fever, and as a result of the outbreak, general conditions in food preparation and health care were improved. But despite this improvement the school remained a harbor for sickness, and later in the spring Maria came down with consumption. Mr. Brontë was sent for and at the time was unaware of the extent of Maria's illness. She and Elizabeth both died within days of returning home, but despite the children's death, Mr. Brontë sent Charlotte and Emily back to Cowan's Bridge the following Fall. During that same winter both girls were sent home due to their poor health. In the years that followed Mrs. Brontë's, Maria's, and Elizabeth's deaths, Charlotte became the 'mother' of the household with the assistance of Miss 'Tabby' Branwell, Mrs. Brontë's Methodist sister. During this time the children passed the hours in writing, sewing, knitting and taking care of daily chores.

2:3 Currer Bell's novels: a quest (ion) of duty.

Here I focus on the activities that would later mold the novels that Charlotte wrote despite the objections of her father and pressures of family duty. According to Mrs. Gaskell, in January, 1840 Charlotte suffered yet another loss, the loss of an unnamed pupil. Without the support of her beloved siblings and the sense of 'isolation' of her father, she was alone and emotionally drained (Gaskell, 400). However, letters and details of Charlotte's life prior to the loss of her brother and sisters outline a time of contentment and peace when the family was together in Haworth. Charlotte spent her time between 1831-1832 studying at Roe Head, just outside York, where she returned in 1835 to become a teacher at the age of nineteen. But Charlotte's love and commitment to her family were a firm foundation for her. Elizabeth Gaskell points out in *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* that the traditional evenings of story telling were constant solace for Charlotte:

> At this time, they talked over past cares, and troubles; they planned for the future, and consulted each other as to their plans. In after years, this was the time for discussing together the plots of novels (Gaskell, 166).

The occupation of becoming a governess was a task that Charlotte disapproved of and yet she had little choice.[2] She defined her job as 'the cup of life as it is mixed for the class termed governesses' (Reid, 45). But for Charlotte the painful task was not in the task itself, but in the separation from her family. In writing from Roe Head to Ellen Nussey who was a life long friend of Charlotte's, she passively stated,

> My life since I saw you last has passed away as monotonously and unvaryingly as ever-nothing but teach, teach, teach, from morning till night (Reid, 46).

This lack of self-fulfillment led to depression for Charlotte, but she was quickly changed by her visit to Brussels as a student and as a teacher in 1842-1844. This excursion to Brussels would allow her the experience that formed the novels *The Professor*, which lay rejected by publishers, and *Villette*. But Charlotte's first intent was to educate herself with the hope of returning home to open a school of her own. For a very brief period Emily joined Charlotte in Brussels, but after a holiday at home, Charlotte returned to Brussels alone. Her infatuation with the professor Monsieur Heger in Brussels is undoubtedly the origin of Lucy Snowe's experience in *Villette* and the unrequited love of Charlotte's own experience that forced her to return home only to find the realities of home less comforting.

Upon this return home Charlotte was made aware of her father's failing eyesight and of Branwell's mental anguish. Branwell had been released from a governing position when it became apparent to his employer that Branwell was in love with his employer's wife. Branwell's decline into dependence on opium and alcohol created a strain for the entire family. Charlotte tried to provide inner strength for Branwell, despite her disapproval of his conduct, recognizing what she defined as 'his frantic folly,' (Reid, 73). Charlotte would criticize Branwell's predicament in the story of *The Professor*. Unlike Charlotte and Emily, Anne was utterly disgusted at her brother's behavior and reacted visibly to his present misfortune. Branwell's character became an embarrassment to the family, and there was little if any social interaction with friends outside the family. This lack of contact forced Charlotte to take up writing to express her deeper thoughts and questions about what was happening in her stagnant situation. As a result of this seclusion

Charlotte, joined by Emily and Anne, compiled and published an unsuccessful book of poems under the male pseudonyms of Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell (1846).

Though the volume of poems was unsuccessful, the sense of writing became a way of escaping the present conditions in Haworth. Charlotte set out to write a novel, along with Anne and Emily writing their own stories. While the authors were busy writing what would be *The Professor*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *Agnes Grey*, Mr. Brontë and Branwell went about the house totally unaware of what was occurring. The novels were submitted to a publishing company, Smith, Elder, and Co., in August of 1846, and were accepted with the exception of *The Professor*. Within some days after the rejection of her novel, Charlotte began to write *Jane Eyre*, following the advice of publishers who wanted 'something more imaginative and poetical- something more consonant with a highly wrought fancy, with a taste for pathos, with sentiments more tender, elevated, unworldly' (Preface, *Jane Eyre*, ed. Dunn, 1).

The original drafts of *Jane Eyre* have not survived. However, the original fair copy of the novel exists in the British Museum in what Mrs. Gaskell described as 'clear, legible, delicate traced writing, almost as easy to read as print.' The first draft is dated March 16, 1847, and the last date is August 19 of same year. The extreme precision and detail that Charlotte made over the accuracy of the manuscript proved ultimately to be a detriment to her eyesight.

Thus, the novel was published and appeared on October 19, 1847. The facsimile reads, *Jane Eyre. An Autobiography.* Edited by Currer Bell. In Three Volumes. The second edition was 'respectfully' dedicated to William Makepeace Thackeray.[3] One of

the initial points of clarification within 'Currer Bell's' preface to the second edition was an attempt to eliminate any assumptions that the author of *Jane Eyre* was also the author of *Wuthering Heights* and *Agnes Grey*. The pseudonyms of the sisters remained a secret and to keep their privacy Charlotte wrote to her publisher to correct any wrong assumptions about the authors.

> I think, for the reasons you mention, it is better to substitute author for editor. I should not be ashamed to be considered the author of '*Wuthering Heights*' and '*Agnes Grey*', but possessing no real claim to that honour, I would rather not have it attributed to me, thereby depriving the true authors of their meed (*Jane Eyre*, ed. Dunn, 15).

2:4 Victorian Society: Evangelical change.

With a brief outline of the influences on, and the experience of Charlotte Brontë, one should incorporate a brief mention of the social, cultural, literary, and scientific changes of the nineteenth century which without doubt influenced her writing style and the female characters throughout *Jane Eyre*. Early Victorians were moving away from Romantic acute self-consciousness looking for ways to address social changes and the decay of traditional religious ideas. The nineteenth century was the age of inventions in medicine, transportation, and communication. The figures of Pasteur, Lister, and Paget were at work advancing medical technology, and Darwin, T.H. Huxley, and Herbert Spencer in the field of natural science. There was also building of railroads, later communication by telegraph and at the very end of the century the production of the automobile. Industry was revolutionized by the application of machinery, steam, and electricity, while the art of photography was perfected. However, despite all the scientific progress, very little was accomplished in abolishing the sordid industrial slavery of men,

women and children. In spite of everything, some Victorians, and especially women were historically self-conscious and aware of the changes that were needing to take place; increasingly this was so of the status of women. Christina Crosby explains this self-awareness in *The Ends of History*. 'Consciousness is thus always historical, and just as man finds himself in and through history, so does woman. Her identity is as fully a matter of consciousness as his, and she is equally a subject of history' (116).

During the nineteenth century the Oxford Movement or Tractarian Movement[4] was the name applied to the High Church revival of Christian doctrines and practices that took place in the Church of England in the beginning of the Victorian era. It is at this time that Evangelical theology was also at its height. Evangelical thought manifested itself in practical and theological ways, and was distinguished by commitment, discipline, and the missionary zeal of the apostolic church.[5] At the time of the Reformation and in the early seventeenth and eighteenth century, the term 'Evangelical' was used to describe the Lutherans who sought to re-direct Christianity to the gospel and renew the church on the basis of God's authoritative word (Elwell, 380). The recovery of spiritual emphasis during this time resulted in three broad movements; German pietism, Methodism, and later the Great Awakening in the United States. These three movements were rooted in Puritanism with an emphasis on biblical authority, divine sovereignty, human responsibility, personal piety, and discipline (Elwell, 380). Re-newed fervor spread into the Anglican church at the end of the eighteenth century where the Evangelical party of John Newton and William Wilberforce sought social reform through the church by founding Bible and missionary societies. And in the eighteenth century it was John

Wesley's Methodist belief in preaching the gospel that established the 'revival' technique of exclaiming God's word whenever necessary.

Despite the Evangelical fear of defining a specific doctrine, Elisabeth Jay explains the main characteristics of Evangelical beliefs. The theme of pilgrimage or the 'Child of innocence served as a reminder of the fundamental conflict between Evangelical dogma and Romantic philosophy' (Jay, 1979, 55). Like *Jane Eyre*, 'The idea of the human pilgrimage from the Innocence of childhood to the Experience of adult life' (ibid) is an example of the philosophy that one must carry out a predestined plan or God's plan. For Jane Eyre, her plan or pilgrimage begins at the age of ten years, and progresses through years of experience toward maturity.

'Conversion' for Evangelicals, or the acceptance of Christ's atonement for one's sins, was a sudden experience. In the Victorian novel, the 'conversion' usually was a dramatic experience. For example; Jane's version of 'conversion' happens relatively late in the novel and is quite a rude awakening for her. Jay uses the term, 'radically diseased' and reiterates that 'Man is radically diseased, and man needs a radical cure' (Jay, 1986, 14). Jane's 'radical disease' is her own realization that she has been idolizing Mr. Rochester as her God figure; someone to worship. Dramatically Jane leaves Thornfield Hall and realizes through solitude the sin which she has committed. This acceptance and realization of her sin begins the process of forgiveness of Jane's self, which leads to the next characteristic of Evangelical religion.

The 'pilgrimage' for the Evangelical of the nineteenth century included the experience and proof of one's faith. William Wilberforce had conceived the notion that

'The tree is to be known by its fruits; and there is too much reason to fear that there is no principle of faith, when it does not decidedly evince itself by the fruits of holiness' (Quoted in Jay, 1979. Originally from *A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians*, 1797). This 'justification by faith' was freely accessible and by claiming belief or faith in Christ's forgiveness, then one's salvation is secured. Brontë uses Jane as an example of one striving to obtain 'true faith.' Through Jane's particular 'conversion experience' she is truly repentant of her sins. In Jane's solitude she proves to the reader her 'conversion.'

> Gentle reader, may you never feel what I then felt! May your eyes never shed such stormy, scalding, heart-wrung tears as poured from mine. May you never appeal to heaven in prayers so hopeless and so agonized as in that hour left my lips: for never may you, like me, dread to be the instrument of evil to what you wholly love (*Jane Eyre*, 348).

Brontë's use of religious language, themes, imagery and references in *Jane Eyre*, intentional or not, reveals another doctrinal characteristic of the Evangelicals which was the belief in the 'authority of the Word' (Jay, 1979, 69). 'The Bible, Evangelicals agreed, was the means whereby God revealed His purposes to man' as Jay suggests in *The Religion of the Heart* (70). Brontë was brought up believing that the Bible was the ultimate form of truth. The Evangelicals' focus on one's personal relationship with God suggests a powerful element in Brontë's language used to find meaning and explanation for Jane along her pilgrimage.

Another important element in Evangelical doctrine is the role of Providence. This idea of Providence was shaped in the eighteenth century and was still a deeply relevant question in the nineteenth century. The Evangelical relied on evidence in nature for belief

in the truth of the Gospel. The idea that Divine Providence *not* God, existed despite the 'good and bad' that happens to one is a constant obstacle and problem through *Jane Eyre*. The actions which Jane Eyre makes in her life are actions that are morally based according to her passions or her will, and the situation she is in at the time. Jane continually *tests* the notion of Divine Providence in her own decisions and actions. Providence is a theme that Brontë explores for herself through the novel; whether or not one's choices are one's own or choices made by Divine Intervention. Brontë finally grants Jane a tremendous 'freedom of will.'

During Queen Victoria's reign, (1837-1901) literature attempted to come to terms with the current transformations of English society. Confronted with the shift from an agricultural to an industrial society and the change and crisis in religious emphasis, the early Victorian writers held firm to the belief that literature should provide an understanding of the changing values of the new society. The novelist of the period explored the formation of one's personal identity in a world in which traditional social structures were beginning to dissolve. George Eliot's *Adam Bede* (1859) focused on the dissolution of a rural community, while Thackeray and Dicken's novels focused on the isolation of the individual within the city. Early Victorian nonfiction writing, like Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, (1833) which I will later discuss in more detail with *Jane Eyre*, is Carlyle's own 'spiritual autobiography.' Carlyle moves from the 'Everlasting Nay' through the 'Center of Indifference' to the 'Everlasting Yea,' affirming some sort of divine presence in the material world and stressing the importance of work and self-denial. In

Past and Present (1843) Carlyle argues over the re-creation in industrial England of the lost sense of community between social classes.

Bunyan's didactic allegory did not assume a major role in English Literature until well into the eighteenth century (Marshall, 31). The influence of the allegorical tale was literally true for Charlotte, and affected the child so much that she feared she too must escape the City of Destruction and flee to heaven which she called 'Bradford,' confusing the small town with that of Bedford where Bunyan wrote the pilgrimage. As a child, after walking a mile or so outside of Haworth, Charlotte came upon a dark and gloomy area in the road which she thought to be the Valley of the Shadow of Death. There she stood fearful and unable to continue her pilgrimage, when she was found along the roadside (Reid, 26). Naturally Brontë was influenced by Bunyan at a very early age, for her beliefs in religion and self were largely shaped at this tender age. It is to that focus that I would now like to turn.

[1] Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* 1847. ed. Richard J. Dunn, second edition, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1987) The Entrance Rules for the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge is outlined in this authoritative text, pages 401-403.

[2] Charlotte's first employer was a cotton manufacturer John Benson Sidgwick. The Sidgewick's saw Charlotte as an employee where as Charlotte saw herself as an equal. This was a typical situation for the Victorian governess, and caused conflict and dissatisfaction for Brontë's position due to her desire for equal treatment (Gaskell, 582). Lyndall Gordon, Charlotte's most recent biographer, points out that John Benson, Jr, was aware that Miss. Brontë had no social standing. John threw a stone at her head and when Charlotte did not betray him, the boy replied, 'I love'ou, Miss. Brontë.' Mrs. Sidgwick remarked: 'Love the governess, my dear!' (76).

[3] Thackeray wrote to W.S. Williams on the twenty-third of October 1847 responding to the novel being 'exceedingly moved & pleased by *Jane Eyre*' (*Jane Eyre*, ed. Dunn, 430). After hearing of Thackeray's approval, Brontë wrote the dedication of the second edition to Thackeray. But 'slanderous reviews brought her details of Thackeray's domestic life that, if the coincidence of her novel's dedication were misunderstood, would make the *Jane Eyre* dedication an embarrassment' (ibid).

[4] Morriss H. Needleman and William Bradley Otis ed. *An Outline-History of English Literature* Volume II: since Milton, second edition. (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1939) 524-580. the Tractarian Movement, 'initiated by John Keble's sermon at Oxford University in 1833 on national apostasy, endeavored to overcome the danger threatening the Church as a result of the political and social trends during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries'...'While it was mainly theological, Tractarianism is also associated with the restoration of symbolism and ceremonial known as ritualism and revival of conventual life. It profoundly affected the Church of England' (525-526).

[5] Walter A. Elwell, ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Michigan: Baker Book House Company, 1984) 379-380. The theological meaning of Evangelicalism stresses the sovereignty of God, the transcendent, personal, infinite Being who created rules over heaven and earth. He is a holy God who cannot countenance sin, yet he is one of love and compassion for the sinner. He actively identifies with the sufferings of his people, is accessible to them through prayer, and has by his sovereign free will devised a plan whereby his creatures may be redeemed. Although his plan is predetermined, he allows them to cooperate in attainment of his objectives and brings their wills into conformity with his will. Evangelicals regard the Scripture as the divinely inspired word of God. Though the words and imagery are culturally conditioned, God has nonetheless conveyed his eternal Word through them. In essence, Evangelical thought is synonymous with Protestant thought.

Chapter 3.
Language and "Self" of the Secular Pilgrim.

3:1 Brontë's intention?: suggested imagery.

> Conventionality is not morality. Self-righteousness is not religion (Preface, *Jane Eyre*).[1]

The language, imagery and form used in the narrative of *Jane Eyre* is Brontë's response to questions of religious thought in the nineteenth century. To use the heroine as a means of explaining the ideas of society and one's meaning and place in that society is not new. Michael Wheeler, in *The Art of Allusion in Victorian Fiction* defines Brontë's novel as the 'secular pilgrimage' (37), establishing a 'new Mythus' (Abrams, 67) which 'replaced the threadbare ideas about church and state and society inherited from the previous century.'[2] Michael Wheeler defines the characteristics of Charlotte Brontë's secular pilgrimage in relation to John Bunyan in *The Art of Allusion in Victorian Fiction*,

> Wherever the reader finds the first echoes of *Progress*, Jane's sense of alienation at the Reed's, her journey to Lowood, her discussions with Helen Burns and Miss. Temple, those characters' allegorical names, Brocklehurst's antagonistic attitude towards her, and the physical hardships of the school all suggests parallels with Christian's story when reviewed with the *Progress* in mind (37).

This influence sets the tone for the novel and it is only when the theme and characterization of the novel are examined in light of this influence that the nature of the language, journey, and the images of the secularized pilgrimage become apparent.

One of Brontë's influences other than Bunyan, was Thomas Carlyle's philosophical satire *Sartor Resartus* (1833-1834). Though there is not direct proof that Charlotte read *Sartor Resartus*, the work appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1833-34 which was one of

the many publications subscribed to by Mr. Brontë (Fraser, 240). The writing of Carlyle is classified as a 'philosophical social writing,' written under the influence of German romanticism.[3] Carlyle was born 1795 in Dumfriesshire, Scotland. His family wanted him to become a Presbyterian minister but after attending the University of Edinburgh and under the influence of the 'Scottish Enlightenment' Thomas Carlyle became a teacher. His literary work before *Sartor Resartus* includes translations from German and published work on Schiller, Goethe and *Signs of the Times* (1829).

Sartor Resartus is Carlyle's 'philosophy' written under the veil of fiction narrated by Diogenes Teufelsdröckh who's name literally translated means 'devils dung.' Teufelsdröckh's philosophy about man's tortured soul and its journey through the world is Carlyle's response to the social disturbance and industrial change of the early Victorian age.[4] The title *Sartor Resartus* meaning 'the tailor re-tailored or re-clothed' is partially autobiographical, indicating Carlyle's own spiritual struggles. Though the language is obscure at times, the work is notable for its moral satire. Carlyle defends the obscurity of his work as Barry Qualls points out;

> Carlyle constantly calls to his readers' attention the fact that his language is not 'the product of the certainty of God's truth,' as Bunyan's allegorical language was; it is rather a rendering of symbolic truths (Qualls, 18).

The philosophy of Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* suggests the movement away from the romantic thought toward a realization of the spiritual pilgrimage of the self through the physical realm. This philosophy parallels Jane's spiritual self discovery; that each individual must at some point in their life (or pilgrimage) transcend the apparent (physical realm or figuratively out of clothes) to understand the spiritual meaning of one's life (or

pilgrimage). Carlyle's language differs from the allegorical form of Bunyan's scriptural language, and instead, Carlyle, after Romanticism, relies on symbols to convey his thought, 'Language is called the Garment of Thought' (*Sartor Resartus,* 107). But Bunyan is as much a part of Carlyle's thought as he is of Brontë's. Barry Qualls suggests, 'if *Sartor* is a spiritual autobiography partly in the Puritan tradition, it is also a budding Romantic's tender tale of loss and soulful woe...'(19). Carlyle uses the 'Garment of Thought' as a physical symbol to explain the spiritual unseen. The 'Garment' or clothes are not actually clothes, but all visible things. It is the Editor, like Bunyan and Brontë, who calls to the attention of the reader the 'philosophical present' which bears the reality and meaning of one's spiritual and physical existence. Henri Talon points out Jane's resemblance of Christian in *The Progress* which can also be compared to Teufelsdröckh's philosophy;

> Jane Eyre is modeled after Christian in *The Progress* in that, in the City of Destruction (*or this world*) behavior does not count. It is the cemetery of the dying where each acts like everyone else and loses himself in the mass (*or clothes*). One may leave it if one is to become dimensional. One must fight to be worthy of a name (my italics, Talon, 142).

Like Brontë, Carlyle attempts to find his faith through his writing. But George Levine suggests that 'the faith Carlyle was working out for himself entailed the belief that where man finds himself is a physical accident, and that what matters is the underlying spiritual reality' (38). Brontë uses Jane like Carlyle uses Teufelsdröckh, and both characters exhibit a depth of emotion and sincerity through their experience of the world. Carlyle's exhibit of such sincerity is not just an attempt to show the depth of character, but rather to express the complex spirit of the individual. Thus, not only does the reader find an

underlying spiritual meaning through the experience of the pilgrim or philosopher, but some of the experiences that they encounter define their character. George Levine points out that these responses are not always a true exhibit of conscious elements of their character (Levine, 43).

From the beginning of *Jane Eyre* Brontë sets out to develop a heroine unlike the beautiful Catherine from *Wuthering Heights* or the determined Helen Huntingdon from *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. Brontë created Jane intentionally 'a heroine as plain and as small as myself, who shall be as interesting as any of yours.'[5] The image of the small plain figure stands in contradiction to Jane's all consuming passion and language. Passion is a non-rational response to the world that paradoxically Brontë is using as a driving force behind Jane's search for freedom to liberate the young woman within. Lyndall Gordon defines Brontë's 'infernal world' of passion-

> taboo for middle-class women who wished to be thought refined, and even more taboo for the clergyman's daughter who had been brought up to an awareness of the higher virtue of self-denial. Part of the shock of *Jane Eyre* when it burst on the Victorian scene in 1847, was the unmistakable pulse of passion. Could this be a woman's voice...(63). Jane Eyre finds some ground of her own <u>between</u> the opposite tyrannies of reckless license and frigid constriction..(Gordon, 337).

Even at the age of ten, Jane is having to 'fight to be worthy of her name.' The young pilgrim moves into different identities through different name tags; Jane Eyre, Janet, Joan, Jane Elliot, and finally Mrs. Edward Fairfax Rochester.[6] The secular pilgrim must fight for her identity, creating her 'new mythus' free from any familial traditions, and she is essentially responsible for herself.

All the people in *Jane Eyre* and Bunyan's allegory hold very significant meanings for the incidents and problems in which they play a part. Helen Burns is one such

example. Helen is a 'mother' to Jane at a time when Jane has not one to guide or nurture her (Gilbert, 347). Helen's paradoxical name signifies the 'burning' soul or character that Helen is. Though Helen is weak physically, she has a spirit of determination and the belief that God will carry her through any troubles that she may encounter. Helen is so to speak Christian from *The Progress*. Her answers to Jane's questions of theology are deeply religious and she uses the Bible to recall the promises that God has made. Helen reassures Jane of her belief in God. "I believe, I have faith: I am going to God" (*Jane Eyre*, 113). Jane questions where Helen is going, "You are sure, then Helen, that there is such a place as heaven; and that our souls can get to it when we die?" (ibid). Helen answers,

> 'I am sure there is a further state; I believe God is good; I can resign my immortal part to Him without any misgiving. God is my father; God is my friend; I love Him; I believe that he loves me' (ibid).

This reassurance of a future state is the identical reassurance that Evangelist gives Christian as he begins his pilgrimage towards the Celestial City. Helen is trying to explain and comfort Jane by describing God as 'father,' 'friend,' and mighty 'parent.' Ironically Helen is using language that is understandable for Jane, but the language is not customary for Jane. She has never experienced 'pure religion' thus, she does not know the meaning of heavenly 'father' or 'friend.' For Jane, the terms are examples: words that provide a meaning and understanding for the very thing(s) that Jane has never been able to see or experience.

Brontë uses the names of *Gates*head, *Lo*wood, and *Thorn*field, and *Marsh*End in the tradition of allegory. *Gates*head was a symbol of 'oppression' (Gilbert, 339). Jane was kept silent and locked-up by her Aunt Mrs. Reed. The aunt represents a society

ignoring problems within its own environment. Mrs. Reed's children, young John, Georgiana, and Eliza, were trouble makers, but Mrs. Reed always blamed Jane for any problems that ever arose because she despised Jane's intelligence and good nature.

Another barrier that Jane had to overcome was identified by Gilbert and Gubar as a 'starvation' both literal and metaphorical at *Lo*wood (ibid). The school provided a temporary escape for Jane away from *Gates*head, but it also presented another obstacle to overcome with the introduction of Mr. Brocklehurst. From one oppressive authority figure to another, Jane must learn to overlook the criticism, the loneliness, and physical illness of *Lo*wood. Despite the difficult living conditions that Jane had to endure, Miss. Temple is a symbol of a shrine or sacred place that still exists. Through the 'starvation' Miss. Temple is forced to remain silent under the hand of Mr. Brocklehurst while the school's inadequate living conditions had to be endured. Miss. Temple was the epitome of the Victorian woman, fitting the Victorian woman's persona as defined by Gilbert and Gubar as the 'shrine of ladylike virtues' (Gilbert 344-345). Nevertheless, 'it is clear enough that she has repressed her own share of madness and rage' at the hands of Mr. Brocklehurst, but like Jane 'there is a potential monster beneath her angelic exterior, a "sewer" of fury beneath this temple' (ibid).

The most disturbing characteristics of the patriarchal structure in the novel are those that take place at *Thorn*field Hall, under the hands of Mr. Edward Fairfax Rochester. There is an underlying 'evil' that overshadows the motivation of each character, the scenery, the house itself that creates the problems between Jane and Rochester. Almost as in Christian's walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, he

cannot see his surroundings. He can 'sense' the danger that lurks in the dark, but must trust God to help him through the unseen danger. However, a debatable question is whether or not the evil exists in Jane and Mr. Rochester rather then in the physical realm of *Thorn*field Hall. Despite *Thorn*field's apparent 'Eden-like' qualities, there is a 'evil' that lurks among the superficial beauty of the paradise. *Thorn*field is the only place for Jane as she begins to overlook the faults of Mr. Rochester. With *Thorn*field, Jane must endure the consequences that exist if she chooses to idolize Rochester as God. rather then believe in her 'self' and God. Jane exerts her belief in Rochester saying, "I like to serve you, sir, and to obey you in all that is right" (*Jane Eyre*, 246).

Jane is the heroine narrating her pilgrimage and she is responsible for her actions, through willful decisions moving toward fulfilling her destiny. Jane is in the process of finding her true identity and through this pilgrimage she must overcome conflicts between reason and passion to find her identity. For example, Jane defends her disrespectful actions toward her nursemaid. Immaturity can be blamed for Jane's actions, but her passion is searching for confirmation of herself, thus, resulting in unpredictable behavior. Jane confronts her nursemaid Bessie demanding to know why she is being punished unfairly.

> 'What does Bessie say I have done?' I asked.
> 'Jane I don't like cavilers or questioners; besides, there is something truly forbidding in a child taking up her elders in that manner. Be seated somewhere; and until you can speak pleasantly, remain silent.' (*Jane Eyre*, 39).

Like many Victorian protagonists, Jane is the 'caviler' to situations of injustice along her pilgrimage and moves forward as a 'questioner' looking for answers to the 'How?' and 'Why me?' of her circumstances.[7] Jane's language is defined by Margo Peters as a

'courtroom language' which parallels Jane as a defendant, or more like a fugitive in search of justification. Jane is constantly defending herself despite injustice; a theme of providence. Jane's journey is like the Christian parable of law and justice verses the law of the human and divine.[8] The 'criminal' is being followed by the reader to see what crime she will be convicted of next and the outcome of the final judgment. This conviction or insistence on moving forward takes us right back to Oscar Cullman's shape of the Christian quest which in *The Pilgrim's Progress* consists of compromise, vacillation and retreat (see Collmer, 189). This persistence falls in the Bunyanesque tradition as noted by Henri Talon.

> Before Kierkegaard, he (Bunyan) demonstrated that a man who is really alive is moving forward; he may stumble, but he gets up again; he is fervent and full of will; he is very much here but at the same time elsewhere (Talon, 142).

This movement forward in *Jane Eyre* is a movement toward paradise or the Celestial City which for Jane is her union with Edward Rochester. Jane must continue to move forward through obstacles, challenges, and overcome misplaced blame. Thornfield is a place of temporary bondage, and Jane must leave the 'City of Destruction' in order to obtain her spiritual understanding of her 'self' and the meaning of her pilgrimage. The severe conditions, abuse, and abandonment stifle Jane's self, and like Christian of *The Progress*, she would inevitably perish if she did not accept the change and movement of her experience.

The theology of providence and salvation is a theme that appears in the metaphorical description of Lowood, Gateshead, and finally in Whitcross. Brontë's analogy of the spiritual world paralleled with the physical is a form of 'natural

supernaturalism' as defined by Thomas Carlyle through *Sartor Resartus* and the bases of the philosophical spiritual pilgrimage in her search for the 'unknown father and home' (Abrams, 309). Carlyle's philosophy of clothes parallels Jane's spiritual self discovery; that each individual at some point in their life (or pilgrimage) must transcend the apparent (physical decorum) to understand one's spiritual meaning of life (or journey). Beginning with 'The Everlasting No' which declared that 'thou art fatherless, outcast,' and fitting is description, Jane moves toward maturity from a 'fatherless' existence. Though Jane comes in contact with other people who lessen the burden of her travel, i..e. Miss. Temple, St. John Rivers, and even Edward Rochester-her intended destination, they all make a profound effect on her self-growth. These meetings fall into the category of Teufelsdröckh's 'Center of Indifference,' keeping Jane from her expected journey's end. In terms of nineteenth century benevolence, all of these characters see themselves as benefactors, while Jane is seeking her freedom. The 'Center of Indifference' for Carlyle is the acknowledgment of the new age of industry and change that society was experiencing due to the industrial revolution. Through this social change man becomes separated from nature, God, and from himself (Qualls, 45). It is Miss. Temple who provides an example for Jane of the purities of nature and God and the knowledge of the 'self' that still exist in this world despite the social changes. For Jane, her work as a governess at Thornfield Hall becomes a temporary way of living in 'The Center of Indifference' and meeting the needs of her existence, and understanding of self-worth. Through her employment by Mr. Rochester, Jane gains monetary stability, a sense of fulfillment, and she moves toward her intended goal of being self-sufficient and free from Rochester's dominance.

Acceptance and denial of one's pilgrimage is part of the progression towards 'The Everlasting Yea,' which reveals the meaning of one's existence, or the acceptance that 'home was where he *or she* had been all along without his *or her* knowing it' (my italics, Abrams, 310). As Teufelsdröckh narrates his philosophy he confronts the universal question that is asked when looking for the meaning of the self in the midst of alienation. These questions are asked by Jane and Christian along their pilgrimages, similar but, in different contexts, to Teufelsdröckh's question,

> With men of a speculative turn...there come seasons, meditative, sweet, yet awful hours...that unanswerable question: 'Who am I; the thing that can say I?' (*Sartor Resartus*, 90).

Jane's search for answers begins after her re-birth into the red room of Gateshead Hall. It is in this scene that Jane involuntarily moves from childhood toward maturity. From the imprisonment of the womb-like prison she becomes the child that instinctively seeks freedom in the world.

> My heart beat thick, my head grew hot; a sound filled my ears, which I deemed the rushing of wings; something seemed near me; I was oppressed, suffocated: endurance broke down; I rushed to the door and shook the lock in desperate effort (*Jane Eyre*, 49).

Barry Qualls suggests that the correlation between the infinite philosophy that Carlyle defines and Brontë's passion in the novel is 'always from within, her one viewpoint always the inner self's effort to chart the boundaries between the private and social worlds' (Qualls, 44). An example of that boundary is the passion that is exhibited by Helen Burns and St. John Rivers. Their 'inner self' is moving in accordance with divine truths, and Brontë's creation of these two characters and their motivation of 'passion' is in contrast to Jane's determination of 'will' in the natural world. St. John Rivers is similar to

Carlyle's philosopher Teufelsdröckh; St. John comprehends that his own existence in this world is threatened by nature. St. John uses his religious thought to repress the urges of the natural world.

> To live here buried in morass, pent in with mountain-my nature, that God gave me, contravened; my faculties, Heaven-bestowed, paralysed-made useless. You hear now how I contradict myself (*Jane Eyre*, 382).

But despite St. John's love for God he can not ignore the passion inherently provoked by Jane that makes him question the nature of his 'self.'

The movement from the physical world toward death is a tragic sense of failure for Jane along the progression of her pilgrimage. Thus, the prospect of death is confronted with a refusal to consider an afterlife. In the death scene with Helen Burns little Jane questions where her dear friend is going.

> 'And shall I see you again, Helen, when I die?'
> 'You will come to the same region of happiness: be received by the same mighty universal Parent, no doubt, dear Jane.'
> Again I questioned; but this time only in thought. 'Where is that region? Does it exist?' (*Jane Eyre*, 113).

It is moments later, before the two children drift off to sleep, that Helen expresses her contentment in this life and in death which is about to come. Helen tells Jane, 'How comfortable I am! The last fit of coughing has tired me a little; I feel as if I could sleep; but don't leave me, Jane; I like to have you near me.' Jane replies, 'I'll stay with you, *dear* Helen: no one shall take me away' (ibid). 'Like Carlyle, Brontë refuses to endorse any preoccupation with "life" after death as an answer to the fears aroused by so much change' (Qualls, 45). During Jane's introduction of Mr. Brocklehurst's strict regime at Gateshead Hall, the question of death becomes a religious test of Jane's 'will.'

Brocklehurst asks, 'So you know where the wicked go after death?' Jane's childlike response is 'They go to hell.' When questioned about how she must avoid going to hell Jane responds, 'I must keep in good health, and not die' (*Jane Eyre*, 64). Jane's life is centered on this world and her place in it. She has little concept of the world to come, heaven or hell, nor does she desire an explanation of either. What interests Jane in the Bible is 'Revelations, and the Book of Daniel, and Genesis, and Samuel, and a little bit of Exodus, and some parts of Kings and Chronicles, and Job and Jonah' (*Jane Eyre*, 65). Mr. Brocklehurst questions Jane's inability to recite Psalms or Proverbs because she believes 'Psalms are not interesting' (ibid). Her reading of Biblical stories is the basis of her own belief, but it is in this process of interpretation that Brontë moves away from the direct influence of Bunyan's tradition. Jane believes in these stories, but uses them for her own hermeneutical purpose through her pilgrimage. Valentine Cunningham suggests that Jane senses the problematic attempt to marry 'female actions and female text of Judaeo-Christian patriarchy' (*In the Reading Gaol*, 344). The motto of Lowood Institution quotes the book of Matthew chapter five, verse sixteen-'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven' (*Jane Eyre*, 81).

> I read these words over and over again. I felt that an explanation belong to them, and was able fully to penetrate their import. I was still pondering the significance of 'Institution,' and endeavouring to make out a connexion between the first words and the verse of Scripture...(ibid).

3:2 Creation of a god: dis/obedience to the 'self.'

Jane's idol worship of Mr. Rochester is an element in the religious question raised by the novel. Brontë's intentions may have been pointing toward 'trusting the self,' but

his emphasis raises a question from a Christian perspective. If Jane's idolatry of Mr. Rochester is a sin, than is her extreme focus on her 'self' before God also a sin? Barry Qualls assists in defending the aim of Brontë 's focal point.

> The reality of the insight and the signal of what Brontë is doing are validated in one phrase: 'trust in God and yourself.' This 'and yourself' is the superbly Victorian addition, the phrase that takes us two centuries from Bunyan: there, in that self, is the real knowable center of the godborn (Qualls, 61).

This 'yourself' is also Kierkegaardian, and it is through Jane's 'self' that she will come to know that a God exists, and it is only through despair will she be able to understand the infinite power that exists. Jane must move toward accepting her pilgrimage despite obstacles keeping her from her journey's end. The object of Jane's journey is the fulfillment of an inner need for love while safe-guarding her new found autonomy. Though this need becomes the cause of idolatry, (for it could be argued that Jane's idolatry is of herself and Rochester) Brontë quickly moves from the object of worship to the object of human fulfillment. The description of Rochester begins with the fall from his horse riding in the moonlight along Hay Lane, toward Thornfield. Rochester 'broke the spell at once' (*Jane Eyre*, 144) as Jane remembers the Gytrash stories that Bessie used to tell her in her youth. Jane's imagination is dominated by Rochester. Despite the fact that Jane does not know the true identity of this patriarch riding high on his horse, he takes over her thoughts. He fails to disclose his true identity to Jane, and for what reason? Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar suggest that Rochester's constant disguises are due to his 'male sexual guilt' (Gilbert, 354). His sexual knowledge makes him superior to Jane but, his recounting of his sexual adventures is also a sign of the sexual inequality that exists between him and Jane. Rochester's daughter Adele, his first wife, Bertha, whom he

married for sex and money, make up Rochester's secrets. Rochester's fall from his horse is a symbol of his sexual dominance falling, and the reiteration that he is a man with a potential for making mistakes, rather than a God. Thus, Rochester and Jane begin their relationship 'as spiritual equals' (Gilbert, 352).

Christian's character is a forerunner of Jane Eyre's character in that both the characters' determination of will, or (God's will) is constantly being challenged along the pilgrimage. At many points of their pilgrimages they both would prefer to discontinue the progress. But each time determination prevails, either by fear or grace, and each pilgrim continues the journey. For Christian, his first test of determination is the confrontation of the Slough of Despond.

> The Slough of Despond: for still as the sinner is awakened about his lost condition, there ariseth in his soul many fears, and doubts, and discouraging apprehensions, which all of them get together, and settle in this place; and this is the reason of the badness in this ground (*The Progress*, 58).

Here Christian is reminded of his sin that he 'bears' and that he alone must carry the 'weight of his burden' to understand the reward that awaits him at his journey's end. The Slough of Despond is much like Lowood Hall for Jane. Lowood's imagery is dark and very deep and the intention, as in the Slough of Despond, is to break Jane's spirit. The young child must endure the seclusion of the 'walls so high as to exclude every glimpse of prospect' (*Jane Eyre*, 80). The exclusion forces Jane to look inward for understanding and meaning to her pilgrimage. In the garden of Lowood there is no sight of growth or indication of life. Jane shudders at the sight of 'wintry blight and brown decay' (ibid). Jane stands among the strong who are outside, but just behind her she hears the sound of the sick inside Lowood Institution. Jane reflects on her past, unsure of the present or the

future which is as gray and vague as the January day. Though Jane does not find merit in her thoughts, she must find merit in herself. She does not belong with the weak and sick. She is passionate and will overcome this oppressive situation. In order to overcome, Jane must understand herself, and that which makes her different from the 'pilgrims' of this world. Her test is to realize her own self worth and comprehend the importance of her pilgrimage through the places like Lowood which is the equivalent of Christian's Slough of Despond. Both pilgrims must move through the 'Wicket Gate' in order to reap the rewards of such a journey.

3:3 Sustenance for the journey: passion vs. patience.

Along Christian's pilgrimage he meets Interpreter who explains to Christian the difference between Passion and Patience. For Jane the conflict between passion and patience becomes a test of her own will. As Bunyan points out, Passion is 'of the men of this world now,' (*The Progress*, 74) and Patience is 'of the men of that which is to come,' (ibid). For Christian, Patience is symbolic of the discipline that Christian must exhibit along his way. All too many times Christian ignores his own sense of will and looses his direction. Bunyan uses a traditional religious figure like Evangelist to assist Christian back towards the Celestial City. But by comparison in Jane's journey, Passion and Patience are significant in her journey in that they are at odds trying to test her instead of providing an example. Passion is Jane' s will, rather than an example of what Christian should not become. Even when Jane must accept her fiancé's existing marriage, she must make her choice reluctantly ruled by passion.

> I wrestled with my own resolution: I wanted to be weak that I might avoid the awful passage of further suffering I saw laid out for me; and Conscience, turned tyrant, held Passion by the throat..."Let me be torn away, then!" I cried. "Let another help me!" "No; you shall tear yourself away, none shall help you:" (*Jane Eyre*, 325).

Jane's earthly pilgrimage is defined by her own will and the 'Passion' that motivates her journey. Jane is traveling for Jane and she has no one to guide her like Evangelist does for Christian. In a sense, if anyone was directly to assist in Jane's direction it would be an invasion of her learning process. Through Jane's journey she does however encounter people like Helen Burns and Miss. Temple who are instruments in her growth and understanding of herself. Jane' s friends provide her with needed support and understanding at a very important point of her journey. In Christian's meeting at the house of Interpreter, he must accept his temporary circumstances through a comparison of Passion and Patience. Christian realizes 'tis not best to covet things that are now, but to wait for things to come' (*The Progress*, 75). In the Bunyanesque tradition, Brontë uses religious language to magnify the importance of Jane's power of will in relationships and the decisions that she makes to illustrate a similar message that Interpreter conveys to Christian in *The Progress*.

One of the distinctive personal relationships for Jane is her friendship with Helen Burns. Helen's character is modeled after Maria Brontë, Charlotte's older sister. The character of Helen Burns provides a spiritual counterpart to Jane's earthly pilgrimage. For Charlotte, 'instead of turning heavenwards, an independent self rose into being' (Gordon, 21). Helen is to Jane what Evangelist or Interpreter is to Christian, and the paradoxical names that both of these characters convey are a significant reference to the importance of

their influence on Jane and Christian respectively. Helen Burns is the 'burning' spirit of God. She is a sincere reminder of goodness and purity along Jane's journey, though Helen's journey in fact is comparable to Christian's pilgrimage. Helen's concern is not with what will happen to her on earth, but instead she is concerned with going 'home' to her 'heavenly father.' In the midst of trouble and loneliness at Lowood Hall, Helen is there to comfort Jane; a source of optimism in the dismal existence that she and Jane are living. Though Helen has a 'pure religion' (Qualls, 46) she is the presence of the spiritual God, a God that Jane does not understand or know. This piety is Helen's way of introducing her knowledge of the spiritual world that Jane has no conception of, but precisely through this lack of understanding the reader can see the parallel between the spiritual allegory of Bunyan's story and that of Brontë 's secular pilgrimage in *Jane Eyre*.

3:4 'God:' the secular pilgrim's answer.

One of the prime examples of this use of 'secularized' language in Brontë 's novel is Jane's inner voice. In Bunyan's tale, Christian's 'inner voice' is felt as the voice of God. There is no question about who is in control of Christian's pilgrimage. His inner voice is universally accepted as someone or something that is of a higher power. However, Jane's voice is her own. In her voice she makes her own decisions and thus she is finally in control of her own surroundings. With this singular control Jane must create her own 'God,' since by definition, her utopian world would traditionally exist only by her creation. Jane is moving along her pilgrimage by her own determination until she meets Edward Fairfax Rochester. In one's own world a God must be created, and hence, Mr. Rochester is that 'ideal' or 'idol' for Jane.

Before I begin to make a comparison of Jane's 'God' to that of Christian's, I would like to clarify the duality that exists in the use of 'secularized' language. Not only does the language exhibit religious overtones, but it also questions the validity of such religious language. Brontë is writing during a period of struggle and question between the authority and power of men and women. The novel is written during a time of male traditions, including Biblical and theological traditions. Though the little orphaned child is motivated to speak for, with, and against many voices, she comes to understand and use her own language, derived for her own voice from the traditions she has inherited.

Like the ambivalence of her language, Brontë uses imagery to signify the presence of the 'spiritual' in the everyday world in the opening of the novel. In this scene of seclusion and potential escape from the toils of the Reed family, Jane finds comfort in the 'window seat' hoping to find secrecy and solitude.

> I mounted into the window seat: gathering up my feet, I sat cross legged, like a Turk; and, having drawn the red moreen curtain nearly close, I was shrined in double retirement (*Jane Eyre,* 39).

This imagery of color, 'the red moreen curtain' suggest Jane's degree of passion within, but more important is the significance of the window. Jane is able to sit in the window with a superior view of all that might pass inside or outside the frame, and yet she is shielded though not fully 'separated' from the elements. She continues to describe the 'drear November day' a physical description as well as a description of Jane's emotional well being. Though Jane's focus is on the window, she sits reading Bewick's *History of British Birds:* which is an important image for Brontë to use in the opening of the novel. As Valentine Cunningham notes in *In The Reading Gaol*, 'Books are not blanks...books

prove to be prophetic of life and development' (341). It is in the images of far off lands, oceans, and countries that Jane experiences a sense of potential in her existence. From her window she is safe to imagine these far off places and ignore the reality of her abandoned situation.

Another similar window scene is described before Jane's first introduction to Mr. Brocklehurst.

> I saw the gates thrown open and a carriage roll through. I watched it ascending the drive with indifference: carriages often came to Gateshead, but none ever brought visitors in whom I was interested; it stopped in front of the house (*Jane Eyre*, 62).

Jane continues to watch the 'new comer' with 'vacant attention' and takes a noted interest in a robin that is just outside the window-sill. Taking a 'morsel of roll' Jane intends to feed the hungry bird 'tugging at the sash' when she is interrupted by Bessie who is busy calling to Jane and expecting a reply.

> I gave another tug before I answered, for I wanted the bird to be secure of its bread: the sash yielded, I scattered the crumbs-some on the stone sill, some on the cherry-tree bough; then, closing the window, I replied--(*Jane Eyre*, 63).

The little hungry robin is an image of Jane's own situation. Jane is the little robin sitting just outside the window hoping to be fed, physically and spiritually, but ironically Jane is also the one that must meet her own needs. She is the one that must 'tug' and persist in finding sustenance for her life.

In this window scene there is definitely an emphasis on the reflection of the inward state of mind as seen through the window. Barry Qualls suggest that the 'great looking-glass' is Jane's image of isolation, but I would go a step further saying that the window is a reflection of isolation. The mirror--(and the window) are constantly present in Romantic

poetry and in religious emblem books, adding to the scene's significance (Qualls, 53). 'The mirror suggest entrapment, but it also suggest the way to liberation' (ibid).

Jane's imprisonment at Lowood is the epitome of isolation and need for liberty. Not only does the physical isolation exist, but Jane's need for growth and self-fulfillment searches for ways to develop. Once again Jane travels past a window.

> When I passed the windows I now and then lifted a blind and looked out; it snowed fast, a drift was already forming against the lower panes; putting my ear close to the window, I could distinguish from the gleeful tumult within, the disconsolate moan of the wind outside (*Jane Eyre, 87).*

Finally after spending eight years as a pupil, and than working as a teacher, the windows at Lowood become the image of needed escape that has always existed. Jane's language is more mature and she becomes motivated towards determining that she must leave the imprisonment. Jane's scenery has been unchanged, while all her 'vacations had been spent at school.' She has experienced the loss of a childhood friend Helen Burns, and has been forced to defend herself. Looking out of the window, Jane's language echoes the language of a pilgrim in search of change, a new beginning and an end to the past; self-reflection and the search for meaning for the pilgrim. Jane longs to 'surmount' the mountains just behind Lowood, 'I recalled the time when I had travelled that very road in a coach' (*Jane Eyre*, 117). Jane continues to remember the dull existence that she has led at Lowood, and is moved to change her surroundings that she has outgrown. 'Then,' I cried, half desperate, 'grant me at least a new servitude!' (*Jane Eyre*, 117).

[1] Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, Preface, (London: Penguin 1985) 35. In a letter to W.S. Williams in September, 1848 Brontë defended her controversial Preface to the novel saying, 'Unless I can look beyond the greatest Masters, and study Nature herself, I have no right to paint. Unless I have the courage to use the language of Truth in preference to the jargon of Conventionality, I ought to be silent' (*Jane Eyre*, Dunn, 433).

[2] Barry Qualls, *Secular Pilgrims of Victorian Fiction: The Novel as Book of Life*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1982) 44. Qualls makes reference to Friedrich Schlegel's 'new Mythus' or 'new mythology,' that is created 'out of the uttermost depth of the spirit' (Abrams, 67).

[3] The literary aim of German romanticism during the nineteenth century was the presentation of passion, regardless of considerations of traditional form. Some of the youthful writers included Goethe and Schiller who collaborated to produce works of enduring merit. But is was Johann Paul Friedrich Richter (1763-1825) who helped establish the nineteenth century German novel as a literary form. Richter signed his works using the pen name 'Jean Paul' the French form of his given name. Jean Paul's major work, *Titan* (1800-30; Engl. trans., 1862) is a four-volume novel that idealizes the life of the poor and contrasts the dreamer with the man of action. Jean Paul was a pioneer in developing the psychological novel ensuring him a place in literature. His other works include satirical essays and treatises on education and poetic theory. Thomas Carlyle's ideas were deeply influenced by Jean Paul since Carlyle's true achievement was the assimilation of Puritan ethics with German idealism and historicism and with a poor man's sensitivity to the sufferings of the poor.

[4] Thomas Carlyle, *Selected Writings*, ed. Alan Shelston (London: Penguin 1971) 17. In the early stages of Carlyle's career he was not afraid to confront the changing realities of the world around him. In *Signs of the Times*, (1829) 'There is nothing Luddite about Carlyle's definition of the age as an "Age of Machinery."' The essay appeared anonymously in the *Edinburgh Review* and can be regarded as the 'first great protest against attitudes that were to provide a dogma for Victorian materialism...' (ibid, 59).

[5] Elizabeth Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*, 1857 ed. Alan Shelston (London: Penguin 1985) 308. 'The reference is to an obituary notice by Harriet Martineau, which appeared in the *Daily News*, and is reprinted in *Shakespeare Head Brontë*, volume IV, pp. 180 ff' (ibid, 594).

[6] It is important to distinguish the narrative conventions that characterize Jane Eyre's persona as well. Jane's identity is defined through the character, narrator, and the novelist. These writing schemes are separate voices as well.

[7] Robert Bernard Martin, *The Accents of Persuasion: Charlotte Brontë's Novels* (London: Faber & Faber, 1966) 64. 'Miss. Brontë's general position is that man's hell and heaven are sufficient on earth without looking unnecessarily for them elsewhere. Religion is essential, but it is largely concerned with man's position in this world.'

[8] Margot Peters, *Charlotte Brontë: Style in the Novel*, (London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973). Peters devotes an entire chapter to Brontë's language in the novel *Jane Eyre*. Refer to pages 131-147 discussing the metaphorical use of 'courtroom language.'

Chapter 4.
The Secular vs. The Sacred.

4:1 Fate, Will and Destiny: overlapping definitions.

Jane Eyre moves through different roles along her pilgrimage searching for her identity motivated by an all-consuming passion that will not be defeated. Brontë 's passionate writing in *Jane Eyre* is the basis for the fulfillment of a human passion which to modern critics appears as Brontë 's repressed sexual passion. But Brontë intentionally is warning her readers of the dangers of such desire or passion that is all consuming, devouring the self in trying to fulfill the human need. Jane's 'fate'[1] has already been determined, and either she moves toward fulfilling that fate or she falls prey to the City of Destruction like Christian. Jane begins her pilgrimage as an orphaned child who is taken in by her uncle's wife, Mrs. Reed. Despite her accommodating situation Jane does not find happiness in her home at Gateshead. There is little appreciation of her presence in the home, as the children, John, Eliza, and Georgiana, do not care for Jane, nor do they desire to spend time with her. John Reed plays the man of the house and voices his opinion of Jane.

> 'You have no business to take our books; you are a dependent, mamma 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 mamma's expenses. Now, I'll teach you to rummage my book-shelves: for they are mine; all the house belongs to me...' (*Jane Eyre*, 42).

This opening scene is a foreshadowing of what Jane has to endure with fortitude and passion. Even after John knocks Jane on the head with the book, indicating his dominance and stature as head of the household, Jane fights to prove her innocence. 'Books, in the world in which Jane Eyre grows up, are men's stuff' (Cunningham, 343). Jane's passion

for reading is her 'freedom' and she will go to all lengths to maintain this freedom. Valentine Cunningham compares the symbol of the book to the male dominance which becomes a 'weapon' of control through the novel. Cunningham notes in *In the Reading Gaol*,

> The male book becomes a male weapon against the female who has had the temerity to appropriate it and its meanings for herself. And what an arresting array of dangerous edges or thresholds there is! Jane bleeds *with passion* at the edge where the reader is, the opening of our book...(my italics, 345).

However, it is not until years later after Jane is sent off to boarding school at Lowood that she questions her pilgrimage and the direction of her 'destiny.'[2] Her passion for freedom begins to emerge more determined than ever. Jane opens a window, symbolic of an escape from her years of sickness and loneliness spent at Lowood.

> I went to my window, opened it, and looked out. There were the two wings of the building; there was the garden; there were the skirts of Lowood; there was the hilly horizon. My eye passed all other objects to rest on those most remote, the blue peaks. It was those I longed to surmount; all within their boundary of rock and heath seemed prison-ground, exile limits. I traced the white road winding round the base of one mountain, and vanishing in a gorge between two: How I longed to follow it further! I recalled the time when I had travelled that very road in a coach; I remembered descending that hill at twilight: An age seemed to have elapsed since the day which brought me first to Lowood; and I had never quitted it since. My vacations had all been spent at school. Mrs. Reed had never sent for me to Gateshead; neither she nor any of her family had ever been to visit me. I had no communication by letter or message with the world. School rules, school duties, school habits and notions, and voices, and faces, and phrases, and costumes, and preferences, 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!' (*Jane Eyre*, 117).

Jane reflects on the loneliness that she has experienced, but at the same moment finds motivation in her drab predictable 'existence.' The only assurance of Jane's 'existence' comes from her passion or 'will'[3] from within. She believes that her experience living in Lowood Hall 'was not enough.' Though this feeling could be blamed on the obvious need for a change of scenery in Jane's youth, Brontë is emphasizing the strong 'will' that is the driving force behind Jane, the woman. (Whether this voice is spiritually motivated or not is for the reader to decide). It is important to recognize the power of the passion that Jane sustains through solitude because later in the novel Brontë magnifies the supernatural passion between Rochester and Jane. In this passage, though, Jane is young and unaware of the direction that her life is headed, so that her 'will' is apparently unsure of her own 'desires' by the use of language such as 'desired,' 'gasped,' 'uttered' and 'cried.' Jane does not know what her 'servitude' will be, but she is sure of the changes that she would like to face. But clearly Brontë herself is trying to define the overlapping effects and causes of willful decisions on fate and destiny.

The sincerity of Jane's cry is a reminiscence of Christian's opening cry as he embarks on his journey through a world of despair and destruction. Bunyan begins the allegory with spiritual urgency and a need to listen and understand the pilgrimage that is about to unfold. As I have already stated, Christian is comparable to 'Everyman' and it might be suggested that Jane is 'Everywoman.' Both pilgrims must exhibit a dynamic 'will' in order to obtain the Celestial City or end of their journey. Christian's 'lamentable cry; saying, 'What shall I do?' (*The Progress*, 51) and Jane's cry, 'half desperate, "grant me at least a new servitude!"' (*Jane Eyre*, 117) exemplify the determination of both

pilgrims. At the end of Christian's journey he gives his 'will' to God. Like Christian, (though ambiguously) Jane gives her 'will' to her 'God' here on earth; Edward Fairfax Rochester. Both pilgrims are universal examples; of the secular and the sacred, setting out on similar journeys in search of distinct goals.

One of Jane's admirable qualities (predictably similar to that of Brontë's own) is her readiness to forgive as exemplified in the deathbed scene of her aunt Mrs. Reed. Henry Bonnell describes Brontë as 'The author' who 'pities her, and makes Jane forgive her' (Bonnell, 25). I agree with Bonnell's statement in that, Brontë herself felt sorry for Mrs. Reed and Brontë feels compassion for the woman facing death. Brontë appears to use Jane's forgiveness as a means to sever any obligation that Jane may have for Mrs. Reed as a dependent or her niece. If Jane were to focus on her aunt's spiritual well being, Jane might loose sight of her own pilgrimage and the obligation to herself. Brontë instead uses this moment of sincerity as a means to inhance the depth of passion and forgiveness that Jane possesses. This is a curious scene of humility on Jane's part, but the scene may also be a reflection of Brontë's own desire to be more assertive than she was in her own life. Even after the publication of *Jane Eyre*, Harriet Martineau, a radical Unitarian writer, did not agree with the 'feminist' attitude of the novel. Martineau's response was not unusual for the Victorian woman. However, there was little disagreement as to Jane's sustained passion that is so powerfully motivating through the novel, and keeps the reader in suspense. Despite the consistent neglect that Mrs. Reed bestowed upon Jane, the young woman seeks to forgive her dying aunt. The reader can sense a Christian attitude in Jane's words of forgiveness,

> 'My disposition is not so bad as you think: I am passionate, but not vindictive. Many a time, as a little child, I should have been glad to love you if you would have let me; and I long earnestly to be reconciled to you now:--- Love me or hate me as you will,' I said at last, 'you have my complete and full forgiveness: ask now for God's; and be at peace' (*Jane Eyre,* 267-268).

Jane is 'passionate, but not vindictive.' Her responsibility to herself relieves her of any obligation to her aunt.

> An authority 'within' makes it possible to judge the claims of the authority 'without' and prepares her to meet the difficulties of the next trial. Like Christian in *The Pilgrim's Progress,* she finds that a temptation overcome is not overcome forever (Moglen, 112).

Even when Jane first attempts to leave Rochester to grant the wish of her dying aunt, Jane asks for Rochester's permission to leave. Rochester is skeptical of Jane's absence and he fears that she will not return. Rochester makes sure that Jane must return by granting her only a portion of her salary. He then insists on her 'promise' that she will return to Thornfield Hall. Jane obliges him only by a passive insistence that she 'will' do what she is 'likely to perform.'

Again and again Jane exhibits her 'passion' and strives to forgive those who have in some way slowed the progression of her journey. When the truth about Mr. Rochester's existing marriage to Bertha Mason is uncovered on Jane's anticipated wedding day, Jane forgives Mr. Rochester without hesitation.

> Reader!--I forgave him at that moment, and on the spot. There was such deep remorse in his eye, such true pity in his tone, such manly energy in his manner; and, besides, here was such unchanged love in his whole look and mien-I forgave him all: yet not in words, not outwardly; only at my heart's core (*Jane Eyre,* 326).

The danger in Jane's idolizing Mr. Rochester is apparent from a Christian perspective, and the appropriateness of allowing human affections to substitute divine attention is no doubt

one of Brontë's questions through the progression of the novel. But it is here that we find the suggestion that Mr. Rochester is to be Jane's goal of her journey, her 'Celestial City.' Mr. Rochester is Jane's 'hope of heaven,' (which is in a way synonymous with her expectations of God). As Barry Qualls suggests, Rochester 'promises a world like that in the vanity-mirror emblem, one "fairer, godlier, greater"' (Qualls, 57). She has made Mr. Rochester her idol and he has met her needs. Thus, this ideal becomes a religious obsession: Mr. Rochester is all that she desires.

Brontë is using Jane to warn the reader of the dangers of vanity and idolatry, and Jane must face her loss of self as the consequence of worshipping Mr. Rochester. This loss of self is comparable to Christian and Hopeful's wander into By-Path Meadow. It is in By-Path Meadow that one temptation makes way for another. With the stress of travel eased momentarily, Christian leads Hopeful away from their intended path to the Celestial City. Hopeful forgives Christian and as a result Christian subjects himself to the danger of the journey that lies ahead, trying to protect Hopeful. Christian's own compassion is as sincere as Jane's forgiveness. Despite Christian and Hopeful's good intentions, they fall prey to the Giant Despair and are taken prisoner to Doubting Castle. It is here that Christian realizes that he obtains the key that will give him his freedom. His key called 'promise'[4] is a power that Christian is unaware of along his journey. It is not until he and Hopeful are in the most desperate situation that Hopeful helps Christian realize his own potential and the 'promise' given by God, that Christian has contained all along their journey.

Whitcross becomes Jane's By-Path Meadow leading into Doubting Castle. It is here that Jane realizes the 'promise' that lies within herself. The nature of Whitcross reflects the inexperienced ideals that Jane possesses and also foreshadows the journey of the self that is only beginning for Jane. As Henry Bonnell reiterates, 'there is a correspondence between the outside nature and inside life' (Bonnell, 55). Jane's subconscious dialogue with herself is a foreshadowing of what is about to happen in her life. Jane notices the significant landscape;

> Whitcross is no town, nor even a hamlet; it is but a stone pillar set up where four roads meet: whitewashed, I suppose, to be more obvious at a distance and in darkness. Four arms spring from its summit...(*Jane Eyre*, 349).

The scene at Whitcross is a test of endurance. The theological overtones in nature, experience, and Jane's loneliness forces her to seek refuge, provoking a conversion experience. As Teufelsdröckh declared in *Sartor Resartus*, 'Man's earthly interest "are all hooked and buttoned together, and held up, by Clothes..."' (*Sartor Resartus*, 89). It is in Whitcross that Jane experiences the meaning of her 'self out of clothes' and away from the influence of Edward Rochester. Teufelsdröckh expresses the 'answer' that lies in 'nature;'

> The answer lies around, written in all colours and notions, uttered in all tones of jubilee and wail, in thousand-figured, thousand-voiced, harmonious Nature...(*Sartor Resartus*, 90).

Jane finds that she has 'no relative but the universal mother, Nature' (*Jane Eyre*, 349). As the night continues Jane dreads the darkness that is falling. She does not know what lies ahead, she asks herself the re-occurring questions, 'What was I to do? Where to go? Oh, intolerable questions, when I could do nothing and go nowhere!' (*Jane Eyre*, 350). Jane is by her- 'self.' At the most destitute point of her journey it is when 'man's very suffering

and his discovery of his ability to endure it that affirms the godborn within, and enables him to act' (Qualls, 62). Qualls continues his point by stating the difference between Teufelsdröckh's 'conversion' and Jane's conversion experience.

> While Carlyle seems to remain within the Puritan tradition (where salvation involves only man and his God) by showing Teufelsdröckh's 'conversion' occurring in isolation, Brontë insists that human aid and communion are vital to Jane's salvation (Qualls, 62).

Brontë uses Rochester as the symbolic goal or 'Celestial City' for the destination of Jane's pilgrimage. Naturally, Rochester beckons to Jane across the moors. It is not just a yell, but a trinity of pleas for '"Jane! Jane! Jane!"' (*Jane Eyre*, 444). Rochester is calling Jane home, to his home. But prior to this call, Rochester hints to the reader the exhausting journey that Jane is about to embark upon and makes a parallel between the Celestial City and himself. Rochester's language corresponds with where Jane is going, as well as, where she has been. 'Are you apprehensive of the new sphere you are about to enter?--of the new life into which you are passing?' (*Jane Eyre*, 307). Though Rochester at first appears to be referring to the institution of marriage which Jane is about to enter , the reason for Jane's pilgrimage begins to surface. Biblical references saturate the novel, and are apparent in the supernatural plea of Edward Rochester for Jane. Rochester and Jane discuss the spirit of their mutual passion that helped them communicate with one another despite the distance between them. Rochester declares, 'and the alpha and omega of my heart's wishes broke involuntarily from my lips, in the words "Jane! Jane! Jane!"' (*Jane Eyre*, 471). Jane becomes for Rochester the 'new Jerusalem' (Qualls, 66) as Brontë re-works the verse from the Book of Revelation , which says; "But I am the Alpha and the Omega" (Rev. 22:13, 21:6). Mr. Rochester deduces that he 'did' hear Jane's soul or spirit

responding to his desperate plea in the woods of Ferndean. Though Jane first dismisses the incident as a superstitious coincidence, she moves toward a belief in the supernatural.

> If I told anything, my tale would be such as must necessarily make a profound impression on the mind of my hearer: and that mind, yet from its sufferings too prone to gloom, needed not the deeper shade of the supernatural... 'I had difficulty in believing you any other than mere voice and vision, something that would melt to silence and annihilation, as the midnight whisper and mountain echo had melted before. Now, I thank God! I know it to be otherwise. Yes, I thank God!' (*Jane Eyre*, 472).

Jane is Rochester's savior and vice versa. In fact, it is through this supernatural episode that the roles are reversed. Rochester's plea "Jane! Jane! Jane!" is a helpless plea to 'his God.' Brontë uses the Biblical reference (and language) as an echo of idolatry which provokes and diminishes the complexity of Jane's quest. Her quest is one that moves beyond the idolatry. Brontë moves through this religious allusion toward a more complex, humane conclusion to the 'secularized pilgrimage.' Jane goes to Rochester's side in the wilderness of Ferndean, the wilderness being an emblem of temptation and repentance (Qualls, 66). It is in the wilderness of Ferndean that the savior (Jane) comes to the aid of her wandering 'child' (Rochester) in need. And it is in Ferndean that the pilgrim (Jane) comes to the end of her pilgrimage, her secular home, the Celestial City (Rochester). Barry Qualls concludes the outcome of Rochester's retreat into Ferndean as the 'acknowledgment of the need for some aid beyond the self if one is to avoid utter despair, suggests his liberation from the idolatry of self and from his sense that there is no freedom (Qualls, 66). The reader catches a glimpse of the role reversal in Jane and Rochester's relationship. Rochester begins his own journey and understanding of his 'self' through Jane's redemption, though she must constantly protect her autonomy. Their existence in

the utopic 'natural' surroundings of Ferndean provide a place for changes such as this to take place.

The progress that Jane makes along her journey is full of obstacles and retreat, but constantly moving toward her intended home and union with Rochester in Ferndean. It is in the conclusion of the story that the reader is reminded of the beginning of creation, a Genesis in the end of the novel. Jane is 'evermore absolutely bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh' (*Jane Eyre*, 476). From man, woman was created. However, ending with the Eden narrative, or reference to creation in Ferndean raises questions and even controversy about the end of the novel. Not only does the novel come to an end, but there is a new beginning for the pilgrim. The use of biblical stories, their imagery in the novel, and the significance of such stories in light of Bunyan's influence can better be understood again, through Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, and is the continuing focus of the next section.

4:2 A Fall from Grace: using the Eden narrative.

Jane Eyre's 'fate' as defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is 'that which has been spoken,' 'the principle power, or urgency by which, according to certain philosophical and popular systems of belief, all events, or some events in particular, are unalterably predetermined from eternity' (Vol. IV F-G, 95). Jane's 'fate' definitely raises questions for the Evangelical/Calvinist belief in God's preconceived plan for one's life. But Brontë incorporates fate, will, and destiny as similar faculties to criticize the Calvinist doctrine of predestination. This doctrine was a foundation of Bunyan's theology. Instead of being a character led by God's will, Jane is forced to take her fate into her own hands. She is a woman full of passion, willing to overcome all tests of fate to ultimately fulfill her

own destiny. She has very little, (if anything of value) to sacrifice along her fateful journey and thus she has no expectations or anything to lose along the journey. Instead, Jane has everything to gain. For Jane, her pilgrimage is a search for happiness here on earth. Jane knows nothing of the heavenly world and only sees what can logically exist in this world. There is no speculation or question about heaven or God, so Jane's journey through this world as we know it becomes symbolic of the journey in the next world as we would like to know it.

Jane's power of 'will' becomes a very important part of her character when she begins to take charge of her problems with the hopes of changing her oppressive situations. Her will is so powerful that at moments she acts irrationally, blinded by her own passion. For example; Jane is overwhelmed with determination when her aunt reprimands her for committing a crime that Jane did not commit. The linear progression of the novel helps explain the details that shaped, developed and educated Jane's passion or 'will' and motivated her life despite it's difficult journey. The incident with Mrs. Reed is a primary example of the treatment that Jane endured, but Jane learns to make decisions about her circumstances instead of being a product of those circumstances. Thus, 'passion' and 'will' are so close in definition that they may be used interchangeably. Jane defends herself against Mrs. Reed,

> Speak I must: I had been trodden on severely, and must turn: but how? What strength had I to dart retaliation at my antagonist? I gathered my energies and launched them in this blunt sentence- "I am not deceitful: if I were, I should say I loved you; but I declare I do not love you: I dislike you and worst of anybody in the world except John Reed: and this book about the Liar, you may give to your girl, Georgiana, for it is she who tells lies, and not I (*Jane Eyre*, 68).

Though this example of passionate behavior can be criticized as disrespect from a child to her elders, Jane already exhibits a remarkable strength. She is determined and fearless even at the age of ten which is an example of the depth of passion that exists in her character. Thus begins the need to find freedom for herself in repressive situations no matter what the consequences. Though Jane exhibits a self assertive quality that seems to control a given situation at the surface, she usually fails to control the outcome. Following the confrontation with Mrs. Reed, Jane's 'fate' had already been decided by Mrs. Reed and Mr. Brocklehurst. Jane is unjustly disciplined by being sent away from Gateshead Hall to Lowood School for girls.

Jane Eyre's 'fate' is ultimately to be united with Edward Fairfax Rochester. The movement toward this unity appears to be a love of perfection. Jane loves Mr. Rochester and sees a man who becomes her idol, her every need and desire on earth. Brontë literally returns to the imagery and religious language of Eden or 'paradise' as a way of explaining the perfect or unfulfilled love between Edward and Jane and her need for fulfillment. 'Paradise needs to be lost before it can be regained, and the paradise regained tends to have little perfection of the original innocent Eden' (Levine, 11). Paradise in *Jane Eyre* can be found in the garden of Thornfield Hall. 'Skies so pure' during the midsummer, the moon beneath the horizon as Jane walks amid the 'Eden-like' confinements of the garden. The 'sweet-brier and southernwood, jasmine, pink, and rose' establish a smell of perfection along with the sights, and sounds of the 'nightingale warbling' (*Jane Eyre*, 276-277). Among all the sensitive allurements, the reader is reminded of Jane's fear of being in the garden alone with Mr. Rochester. 'I did not like to walk at his hour alone with Mr.

Rochester in the shadowy orchard...I became ashamed of feeling any confusion: the evil-if evil existent or prospective there was-seemed to lie with me only...' (*Jane Eyre*, 278). She questions her judgment to stay in the garden and despite her fears she continues to accommodate Mr. Rochester because he has no apparent reservations of walking alone with Jane. Why should she doubt her employer who's intentions seem virtuously harmless? George Levine points out how the Victorian novelist invokes sympathy for the hero or heroine of the novel by exploring the inner world of motives and feelings, and by placing him or her in a society larger than his or her own life where they must find their place (Levine, 11). Disillusioned by Thornfield's perfect paradise Jane believes that she has found a paradise on earth. Carlyle distinguishes the underlying spiritual happiness that can be found in the physical world. Teufelsdröckh states that 'Man is spirit...he wears Clothes, which are the visible emblems of the fact' (*Sartor Resartus*, 97). As Jane begins to question her fears, she will come to understand that the surrounding comforts are an illusion. She must sacrifice such a 'paradise' or happiness to understand her own self.

The romantic imagery and the language used prior to the 'Eden-like' scene seem to connect the relationship between the sacred and the secular. It is as if Jane is trying to desperately hold on to some belief in a divine God (if she ever had a firm belief). The dialogue between Jane and Rochester is a cat and mouse game and she failingly tries to dominate the conversation by pointing out Mr. Rochester's 'fallibility.'

> "You are human and fallible."
> "I am: so are you-what then?"
> "The human and fallible should not arrogate a power with which the divine and perfect alone can be safely entrusted."
> "What power?"
> "That of saying of any strange, unsanctioned line of action, 'Let it be right'" (*Jane Eyre*, 169).

As Jane walks through the 'Eden-like' (*Jane Eyre,* 276) garden of Thornfield she is dominated by the presence of Mr. Rochester and the emotions that the romantic garden invokes. Rochester's game is sadistic as he describes his future marriage to Miss. Ingram to Jane.

> She's an extensive armful: but that's not the point- one can't have too much of such a very excellent thing as my beautiful Blanche: well, as I was saying-listen to me Jane! You're not turning your head to look after more moths, are you (*Jane Eyre*, 279).

Why does Rochester go to such extremes to torture poor Jane? It is as if Jane reads Rochester's intentions and beats him at his own game. Jane passionately responds to his antics;

> 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....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! (*Jane Eyre*, 281).

Not only does this example exemplify Jane's depth of 'will' or 'passion' but it also shows Jane's need for a sense of equality.

The lack of balance between Jane and Edward's relationship is apparent in their introduction. As Jane makes her way to the next town from Thornfield along Hay Lane it is an early evening, and her mind plays tricks on her perceptions as a result of the Gytrash stories that Bessie once told her as a child. Jane's imagination runs wild and she begins to fear the dark shadows of the evening. Jane hears someone or something bound up the path toward her and is frightened only until she sees the human image of a man riding a horse. When Jane sees the patriarchal figure, she perceives an immortal man whose

superiority is quickly diminished by the fall of his horse. Immediately Jane assists the injured man and she becomes a figure of the Good Samaritan. In fact, she will not leave the rider until she is certain that he is safe again on his horse. The man shuns any assistance from Jane at first but than gives in, and '"necessity compels me to make you useful"' (*Jane Eyre*, 146). The man leans on Jane, like a crutch and remounts his horse. Jane does not realize the identity of the stranger until she reaches Thornfield later in the evening. The stranger was Edward Rochester. Through Mr. Rochester's secrecy he rises above his embarrassing fall and places himself back in a superior position. This bizarre action is also a foreshadowing of his important secret; his wife Bertha Mason. This fall is the beginning of Jane's role as a redeemer. Jane and Rochester's relationship explores the 'theological narrative' of fall and redemption. This narrative explores Charlotte's intentions in the novel; as Lyndall Gordon emphasizes in her biography, 'Women are not simply victims; they have, within them, the agency to discover gains in the most restrictive life' (Gordon, 156-157). Rochester has degraded himself in marrying Bertha Mason, but it is Jane's 'grace of reason' that will redeem and heal him (Gordon, 157). Jane helps and provides Rochester (who has fallen) with that which he needs after his 'fall from grace.' That is precisely what Brontë is establishing between Jane and Rochester. Brontë ignores the traditional conventionalities of the man saving the woman, and instead Jane saves him.

'Necessity' turns into companionship and Mr. Rochester seeks Jane's company after a proper introduction is made following the secretive introduction in Hay Lane. Immediately Rochester establishes Jane's persona and speculates about the future relationship between himself and Jane. His definition of his companion, identifies her in

'religious' terms by comparing her to a 'pilgrim-a disguised deity' (*Jane Eyre,* 168). This religious imagery defines Jane's reason for being at Thornfield Hall, but the language is confusing and does not make complete sense to Jane. Jane points out the delusion that Mr. Rochester is referring to, and she defends a higher power of truth despite the 'human and fallible' (*Jane Eyre,* 169). Jane does not understand herself, nor does she understand the reasons why Rochester bestows such a characteristic upon her. Rochester declares that, " I have received the pilgrim-a disguised deity, as I verily believe. Already it has done me good: my heart was a sort of charnel; it will now be a shrine" (*Jane Eyre,* 168). This religious language emphasizes the admiration and kinship that Rochester feels for and with Jane. This use of such language is also a warning, an omen of the almost sacrilegious hero-worship that will take place between the two. Jane ignores the warning and thus her burden is put upon her shoulders. Like Christian, Jane is journeying up the Hill of Difficulty, and there is no turning back on the narrow path. She has sinned and now she must carry the weight of her burden.

Through Jane's pilgrimage, she begins to become unsure of, and discover at the same time, her 'self' and the center of being. By this I do not mean to imply that she lacks sufficient qualities that make up her character, but by certain situations and obstacles Jane becomes deluded about herself. This lack of self awareness exemplifies the devotion that she was exerting towards Mr. Rochester. Her passion for existence was revolving around Mr. Rochester's contentment; and not her own. Jane points out,

> I cannot deny that I grieved for his grief, whatever that was, and would have given much to assuage it. Though I had not extinguished my candle and was laid down in bed, I could not sleep for thinking of his look when he paused in the avenue, and told how his destiny had risen up before him, and dared him to be happy at Thornfield (*Jane Eyre,* 178).

Eventually her whole process of thinking becomes clouded by the expectations of the man (or God) that Jane wants Edward Rochester to be.

> I was forgetting all his faults, for which I had once kept a sharp lookout. It had formerly been my endeavor to study all sides of his character: to take the bad with the good; and from the just weighing of both, to form an equitable judgment. Now I saw no bad (*Jane Eyre*, 217).

Her idolatry or burden blinds Jane's vision of 'self' and thus she does not understand nor can she foresee the consequences of such glorification. Despite her own justification of human error, it is obvious that the passionate woman that Jane once was has been calmed by the need of love and acceptance of Edward Fairfax Rochester.

Jane leaves Thornfield after being confronted with the truth about Mr. Rochester's already existing marriage. Jane's physical paradise is shattered and forces her to abandon her comforts and ask herself '"What was I"' (*Jane Eyre*, 348) similar to the question that Teufelsdröckh asks himself, 'Who am I?' (*Sartor Resartus*, 90). Being free and aware of the darkness that she was living in while at Thornfield, Jane's process of self discovery begins,

> God must have led me on. As to my own will or conscience, impassioned grief had trampled one and stifled the other. I was weeping wildly as I walked along my solitary way; (*Jane Eyre*, 348).

The imagery of the new morning parallels Jane's re-birth of will, a baptism out of the darkness of night that she has been living, a 'weeping' cry of the tired pilgrim. Brontë continues to parallel the imagery through Whitcross as I have already suggested. Jane has finally reached the crossroads of her pilgrimage of self discovery. She finds herself and God through the purity of nature. The 'natural supernatural' image of Whitcross becomes a physical image of God. Through Mother Nature Jane encounters a definition of the

spiritual. Jane's material order of life has been diminished to make her aware of her own disillusionment about her earthly paradise. With the 'natural supernatural' at work through the novel, I would like to distinguish between the physicality of the description and the underlying spiritual meaning. The use of Brontë's religious language is a definite distinction through the novel. However, looking at Jane's natural progression and contingence with people and places, the physical and spiritual draw together. Jane begins to find her- 'self' at the center of this journey, guided by her own will and determination.

The reality of Jane's world at Thornfield is based on the circumstances and emotions that she has never felt before her encounter with Rochester. *Thorn*-field is a place of extreme beauty and simplicity. It is a place of deception that Jane does not see due to her own want of perfection and fulfillment in her life. When Mr. Rochester professes his love to Jane it is like a parody of the life in Eden; Mr. Rochester is connected with Jane, like Adam and Eve. '"It is as if I had a string somewhere under my left ribs, tightly and inextricably knotted to a similar string situated in the corresponding quarter of your little frame"' (*Jane Eyre,* 280). In the same context, Rochester plays the devil, toying with Jane's emotions by teasing her about his future marriage to Blanche Ingram. This emotional torment is sadistically maddening for Jane, and yet Rochester continues in order to get a confession of admiration from her. Rochester, like Adam, will not sin unless he knows and sees that it is permissible by Eve or Jane. These characteristics of Eden and paradise foreshadow Jane's actions and predict a certain 'fall' or sin by both Jane and Rochester. Like Adam and Eve, the reader can sense a further fall and dissension is the predictable future for both of these characters. It could be said that this story is an

inversion of the Eden story. Adam and Eve fall because they are disobedient to their God. Jane falls (initially) because she *is obedient* to her God (idol) and also to her own will and passions. She fails to be true to her- 'self.' Rochester represents Adam, the very man that gave her life 'bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh' and the very temptation that she must overcome. Just as Bunyan's Christian is trying to find his salvation, Jane is trying to find her 'self' in union with and by acceptance of Edward Rochester. The pilgrimage is an irreversible path, one that must be endured in order for Jane to understand the value of her autonomy, however that maybe threatened and finally discovered by her love for Edward Fairfax Rochester.

4:3 The Journey's end: a new beginning.

Much like the dreamer and writer that Bunyan personifies in *The Progress*, Brontë uses the same motif, 'the similitude of a Dream' (Preface, *The Progress*, 42) to open *Jane Eyre*. As Jane begins to tell her story, the reader is thrown into a dream like state through the 'folds of scarlet drapery' to the right of Jane and the 'drear of the November day' to her left (*Jane Eyre*, 39). The imagery of the 'scarlet drapery' is symbolic of the womb, born into the 'drear of the November day' or the realities of this world. Jane's dread of the day is like Christian's distemper. After Christian realizes his plight in the world he returns home to 'settle his brains' (*The Progress*, 51) and searches for an escape from his burden. Misunderstood by his wife and children Christian searches instead in sleep for the solutions to his unrest. Jane is also misunderstood and unjustly confined to the 'red-room' by Mrs. Reed for her fighting with John Reed. Christian too is shut-up, and reading his book he becomes even more distressed crying, "What shall I do to be saved?" (*The*

Progress, 52). Jane's cry is "Take me out! Let me go into the nursery!" (*Jane Eyre*, 49). Even though Jane's cry for freedom does not echo the religious context of Christian's cry there is no doubt that her determination to be free from her bondage is as passionate as that of Christian's.

The imagery that Brontë uses to convey the force of Jane's exterior surroundings can be paralleled with Christian's religious language in the opening of *The Progress*. Brontë sets Jane amid a winter storm, a symbol of divine wrath and revelation, for Jane while she peruses the pages of a book 'with ceaseless rain sweeping away wildly before a long and lamentable blast' (*Jane Eyre*, 40). While Christian is reading about his own despair, fear moves him to 'brake out with a lamentable cry; saying, 'What shall I do?' (*The Progress*, 51). The nature of Jane's scene, and the movement of Christian's cry is indicative of the restlessness and need for escape of both pilgrims. The opening scene is set for both pilgrims as they begin their journey in search of a 'new mythus' motivated by the reading of a book. Christian's reading from the Bible of course sets the divine tone of order that will be his constant guide. Christian's Biblical tone contrasts the secular focus set by Jane's reading of Bewick's *History of British Birds*[5] suggesting the realities of life, nature, and one's relation to the world.

Even before Jane begins her appeal to the 'Reader' along the journey of the novel Brontë makes apologies through the preface of the second edition of *Jane Eyre*. Making her apology in 'three quarters' Brontë is like Bunyan who sets up his apology addressing 'three audiences.' Brontë appeals to the public, the press, and the few readers who 'doubt the tendency of such books as *Jane Eyre*' (Preface, *Jane Eyre*). Brontë also addresses

and dictates her novel to the satirist, William Makepeace Thackeray, author of the novel 'without a hero,' *Vanity Fair* (1847-48), a direct reference to Bunyan's city of frivolity in *The Progress*. Finally, Brontë makes a fourth address to the common sense of individuals. This address can be connected to Bunyan's appeal to 'the man that seeks the everlasting prize' (*The Progress*, 48). In essence, any individual who is searching for a better understanding of (in Jane's case, her 'self') and (in Christian's case, 'God') will realize that they may find some remnants of truth and guidance in the stories that they are about to read.

Moving through the progression of Jane and Christian's pilgrimage, both journeys begin in despair looking for a better quality of life than that of the City of Destruction and Gateshead. Brontë does not place Jane in any urban settings, but instead Jane's progression and growth is experienced through rural areas of seclusion like Lowood, Thornfield, and Moor House. the irony of Jane's abandonment in Gateshead, and the solitude of Whitcross, symbolically in a 'cross roads' of change and a place where the supernatural is at a climax as Jane is forced to recognize her providential circumstances.

It is in the opening of *The Progress* that Christian's 'conviction of sin doth continually run' (Bunyan, 58). This 'conviction of sin' burdens Christian in the Slough of Despond and through the rest of the course of his travel he must carry this burden aware of God's grace. Like Christian, Jane too encounters the Slough of Despond in Lowood (suggestive of the dark, deep pit of despair) and emerges from it at Whitcross (suggestive of a new beginning and movement from the pit of despair). Jane arrives in Lowood spiritually starved, searching for companionship and looking for someone to fill these

needs. Ironically, Jane's needs are met. Maria Temple and Helen Burns are role models, Miss. Temple is a maternal figure, inspiring Jane to be independent and take pride in her work. The Reeds never expressed any love toward Jane, and it is Helen Burns who recognizes the miserable neglect that Jane has experienced.

> "If all the world hated you, and believed you wicked, while your own conscience approved, and absolved you from guilt, you would not be without friends" (*Jane Eyre*, 101).

Jane replies:

> "No; I know I should think well of myself; but that is not enough; if others don't love me, I would rather die than live-I cannot bear to be solitary and hated, Helen. Look here; to gain some real affection from you, or Miss Temple, or any other whom I truly love, I would willingly submit to have the bone of my arm broken, or to let a bull toss me, or to stand behind a kicking horse, and let it dash its hoof at my chest"-- (ibid).

Being denied love and affection has prevented Jane from knowing herself as a lovable person. Jane does not understand Helen's love in a religious moral context. Jane's love is only defined and conceived through the secular experience of pain and suffering.

In Bunyan's Slough of Despond, Christian 'sinks in the mire' and he is left by Pliable. Alone he is far away from any comfort of home. Christian exclaims to his guide Help that 'fear followed me so hard, that I fled the next way and fell in' (*The Progress*, 58). In the same way Jane's desperate flight from Thornfield she keeps running followed by fear of her sin/burden until she falls into Whitcross destitute and a child, prey to the supernatural; the 'universal mother of Nature' as Brontë defines it.

It is in the center of Whitcross that Brontë offers an explanation of Jane's 'self' through fear, nature, and Jane's spiritual and physical hunger. Her physical senses are prey to the elements of 'Nature' which begins to love Jane despite her feeling of

abandonment. As if a 'child,' Jane finds sustenance in the 'bilberries' provided by her 'mother.' Through 'Nature' and the overwhelming abundance of the planets and stars in the night sky Jane sees 'God everywhere' (*Jane Eyre*, 350). She kneels in prayer for the safety of Mr. Rochester and turns to thanksgiving realizing God is the 'Savior of spirits.' After another day of pleading with 'Necessity' and 'Providence' Jane is forced to admit reconciliation with 'fate to which nature cannot submit passively' (*Jane Eyre*, 356). Even in complete despair Jane will not be taken by death. Barry Qualls suggest that,

> Like Carlyle, Brontë refuses to endorse any preoccupation with 'life' after death as an answer to the fears aroused by so much change (Qualls, 45).

Falling prey to death would weaken the strength of passion that Jane obtains before she reaches her 'Celestial City,' Edward Rochester. Jane moves forward through the moor saved by a 'light.' She comments 'that is an ignis fatuus' which turns out to be quite naturally the home of St. John, Mary and Diana Rivers, relatives that Jane never knew existed. She has, in some sense, stumbled upon her lost family that she never knew that she had. This is indeed a far-fetched encounter, but it serves its purpose in rebuilding a stable ground for Jane in a moment of desolation.

It is in Moor House (suggestive of an abundance and security in the midst of the wasteland) that Jane experiences St. John Rivers and his devout religious patience trying to influence and discipline Jane's passion. Jane reaches Moor House like Christian, bereft of any family, homeless and without money. Leaving Whitcross behind, Jane has been 'purged of all human vanity' (Moglen, 132) and having endured the physical and spiritual trials, she is accepted into the Rivers' home marking the crossing of the River over which there is no bridge, like Christian in *The Progress*. The time that Jane spends in the Rivers'

home also signifies an 'entrance into the Christian community and her acceptance of social interrelatedness' (Moglen, 133) which creates religious and spiritual questions about God's role in Jane's life; something that in the final analysis she does not accept.

St. John's character is a masculine version of Helen Burns. 'Without innocence, or naiveté, he is purposeful, directed, threatening'...'In both of them the spiritual impulse is carried to an extreme: a form of sublimation which can be liberating and creative, but can also destroy' (Moglen, 136). St. John does not understand nature as the garment of God, and thus, he is rather like Christian turning his back on the 'world' (Qualls, 63). His strict religious devotion encompasses a spiritual and physical self-denial that begins to influence Jane. He is a man to be respected, but he must be ignored by Jane if she is to remember the reason for pilgrimage. St. John refuses any relation with Rosamond Oliver, the very woman that he is attracted too. His physical denial feeds his spiritual desire, in denying any passion or love for anyone other than his God, which would be a mortal sin. Instead, St. John sees Jane's 'passion' for living comparable to his religious zeal. He sees Jane as a potential servant, worthy of God if Jane is willing to abide by St. John's demands upon her. St. John proposes Jane's future;

> You have but one end to keep in view-how the work you have undertaken can best be done. Simplify your complicated interests, feelings, thoughts, wishes, aims; merge all considerations in one purpose: that of fulfilling with effect-with power-the mission of your great Master. To do so you must have a coadjutor: not a brother-that is a loose tie-but a husband... (*Jane Eyre*, 431).

St. John continues to pressure Jane into submitting her heart and talents to 'God' because St. John claims that 'it is all I want' (*Jane Eyre*, 432). Again Jane encounters a form of self-threatening danger along her pilgrimage. The temptation is to leave her new found

family, forget her love for Rochester, to accept St. John's noble offer, and ultimately to deny herself and her 'sexuality' (Moglen, 137). For the Victorian female, to give up one's sexuality was a duty. All of Jane's anxiety rushes in like sexual passion, 'I was tempted to cease struggling with him-to rush down the torrent of his will into the gulf of his existence, and there lose my own' (*Jane Eyre*, 443). Again, if Jane gives in, she will fail to meet the end of her journey. Her 'will' reasserts itself.

Somewhere a voice cries out 'Jane! Jane! Jane!' (*Jane Eyre*, 444). Jane calls to God for explanation, fleeing St. John, running, desperate to understand what she has heard. Her supernatural experience falls in line with Teufelsdröckh's philosophy that certain answers are 'committed to the wind.'

> Then again, amidst what seems to be a Metaphysico-theological Disquisistion, 'Detached Thoughts on the Steam-engine,' or 'The continued Possibility of Prophecy,' we shall meet with some quite private, not unimportant Biographical fact. On certain sheets stand Dreams, authentic or not, while the circumjacent waking Actions are omitted. Anecdotes, oftenest without date of place or time, fly loosely on separate slips, like Sibylline leaves.[6]

'Since it is Rochester which calls, however, our temptation is to suggest that the world of passion displaces the traditional religious creed' (Qualls, 64). Brontë is trying to emphasize the complexity of such passion. The voice is not merely a voice, but above all a natural (supernatural) sign and answer to Jane's excited plea to heaven for the path and direction that she should take. Could the voice also be an answer to St. John's prayers? 'Jane oscillates between increasingly subtle temptations to live by passion or duty alone' (Gordon, 258). Thus, her temptation would be to give in, run to India and ignore the prophetic call. But she will not ignore her duty to her-self. Unlike Christian who crosses the River of Death, Jane 'will not' cross over to St. John Rivers.

The turbulent relationship between Jane and St. John is reminiscent of Christian's encounter in the House of the Interpreter who shows Christian the difference between 'Passion' and 'Patience.' Brontë instills 'Patience' in St. John and of course, Jane's will is characteristic of 'Passion.' Interpreter helps Christian understand that 'Patience' is the one with the best wisdom and 'Patience' (like St. John) waits for the glory of the next world. 'Passion' however, (like Jane) must have his enjoyment first, right here and now, without worry of the world to come. Jane's impatience is apparent when she questions St. John about potential work that she can obtain. 'What is the employment you had in view, Mr. Rivers? I hope this delay will not have increased the difficulty of securing it' (*Jane Eyre*, 379). St. John calmly replies, 'Oh, no; since it is an employment which depends only on me to give, and you to accept' (*Jane Eyre*, 380). This type of relationship is not suited for Jane; it is 'Rochester who offers passion without marriage, and Rivers who offers marriage without passion' (Gordon, 158). Brontë uses St. John as an example which poses a question she may be asking: Is a man so distant from his own emotion really living? St. John's pompous religion and ideal of patience is a religious discipline that Jane cannot understand, and it is therefore deeply questioned by Brontë. Despite St. John's good intentions he merely obscures Jane's 'self-knowledge' that will define her relation to the world as an individual (Qualls, 45).

The resolution of *Jane Eyre* occurs in two parts; first the union of Jane and Rochester in the utopian surroundings of Ferndean, (a place evident of growth) and second, a letter from St. John Rivers. In the words of the narrator, Ferndean was 'quite a desolate spot' (*Jane Eyre*, 455) but the location suggests fertile soil that will nurture the

growth process that Jane has experienced. Jane is united with Rochester, she has reached her Celestial City in Ferndean. Consumed with grief and repentance, Rochester must cross the river, like Jane and Christian. Rochester's confessions are to a 'God of this earth just now' suggestive of Jane's similar journey in this world. Rochester confides his repentance in Jane.

> Jane! you think me, I dare say, an irreligious dog: but my heart swells with gratitude to the beneficent God of this earth just now. He sees not as man sees, but far clearer: judges not as man judges, but far more wisely. I did wrong: I would have sullied my innocent flower- breathed guilt on its purity: the Omnipotent snatched it from me. I, in my stiff-necked rebellion, almost cursed the dispensation: instead of bending to the decree, I defied it. Divine justice pursued its course; disasters came thick on me: I was forced to pass through the valley of the shadow of death. *His* chastisements are mighty; and one smote me which has humbled me for ever. You know I was proud of my strength: but what is it now, when I must give it over to foreign guidance, as a child does its weakness? Of late, Jane--only--only of late--I began to see and acknowledge the hand of God in my doom. I began to experience remorse, repentance, the wish for reconcilement to my Maker. I began sometimes to pray: very brief prayers they were, but very sincere...I supplicated God, that, if it seemed good to Him, I might soon be taken from this life, and admitted to that world to come, where there was still hope of joining Jane (*Jane Eyre*, 471).

Like Jane, Rochester's death would be a failure. Instead, Rochester's repentance casts him equally beside Jane. He has been marred by his sinful past, he can not see (physically) but rather he sees spiritually the 'new Jerusalem that awaits him!' (Qualls, 66). Two years after Jane and Rochester's marriage 'the sky is no longer a blank to him-the earth no longer a void...God had tempered judgement with mercy' (*Jane Eyre*, 476-477). The critics Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar conclude that the existence of Ferndean provides a haven for equality between Jane and Rochester.

> Similarly, Rochester, 'caged eagle' that he seems (chap. 37), has been freed from what was for him the burden of Thornfield, though at the same time he appears to have been fettered by the injuries he received in attempting to rescue Jane's mad double from the flames devouring his house. That his 'fetters' pose not impediment to a new marriage, that he and Jane are now, in reality, equals...(Gilbert, 368).

Jane is in a real sense independent of Rochester and this is marked by two events. Her uncle left her money leaving her financially stable, and the death of Bertha Mason allows Jane the final 'pilgrimage to selfhood' (Gilbert, 367). Rochester is also free from his burden of Thornfield but is reminded of his burden through his mutilated hand and damaged sight, and in regaining his sight he appears to have atoned for his sin. In Ferndean nothing else is significant. Jane comments on the marriage saying, 'No woman was ever nearer to her mate than I am: ever more absolutely bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh' (*Jane Eyre*, 476). Jane has reached the goal and the end of her pilgrimage. The novel ends much 'like the Bible and *The Pilgrim's Progress*' (Qualls, 68). St. John's letter of 'exacting...ambitious...sternness of the warrior Greatheart' (*Jane Eyre*, 477) are the 'still small voice within' (Qualls, 69) a 'voice' coming from the author who is skeptical of ending with St. John Rivers religious certainties. This reference to *The Pilgrim's Progress* is an 'irreligious redefinition, almost a parody, of John Bunyan's vision' (Gilbert, 370). Brontë makes clear that St. John's 'denial of himself' is his way, but it is not Jane's. Jane determines her 'own' way by returning to Ferndean and goes through the 'apocalyptic marriage because the modern Christian's very struggle in a world which seems godless has been validated' (Qualls, 68).

The end of Christian's pilgrimage ends in mortal conflict and fear as he makes his way across the 'River.' On the other side of the 'River' is the Celestial city, but to enter

Christian and Hopeful must leave behind all 'mortal garments' (*The Progress*, 212). The pilgrims are reassured of what lies ahead.

> There you shall not see again such things as you saw when you were in the lower region upon the earth, to wit, sorrow, sickness, affliction, and death, for the former things are passed away (ibid).

Christian's conflict at the hour of his death scares him and he fears that he will not make it across the River (the river that Jane will not cross) to the Celestial City. But Hopeful reminds him of Jesus Christ's promise that 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee' (*The Progress*, 211). Christian finds firm ground and makes it to the other side of the river. The trumpets sound 'as if Heaven itself was come down to meet them' (*The Progress*, 214). Christian has moved from the City of Destruction, through the Slough of Despond, Vanity Fair, up the Hill of Difficulty, across the Plain called Ease, and finally through the dark river of Death. Christian's journey moves toward an intended life that is far better than the one he is living now. This journey is the Christian journey of 'Everyman.'

[1] *Oxford English Dictionary*, Volume IV F-G, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978). Fate is defined as 'that which has been spoken, to speak, primary sense of the word is a sentence or doom of the gods...originally meaning only a person's 'lot or portion' (1) the principle power, or urgency by which, according to certain philosophical and popular systems of belief, all events, or some events in particular, are unalterably predetermined from eternity (2) That which is destined or fated to happen' (95-96).

[2] *Oxford English Dictionary*, Volume III D-E, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978). Destiny is defined as 'that which is destined or fated to happen; predetermined events collectively. (one's) appointed lot or fortune; what one is destined to do or suffer' (259).

[3] *Oxford English Dictionary*, Volume XII V-Z, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978). Will is defined as 'desire, wish, longing, liking inclination disposition (to do something) to do as one pleases' (129-138).

[4] 'The theological point is made, though with some detriment to the effect of the adventure story: Christian had no need to despair of his salvation: Scripture showed that the promises of God's covenant with him prevented his repentance from being rejected' (Sharrock, Notes. *The Pilgrim's Progress*, 396).

[5] Thomas Bewick's *A History of British Birds* (1797, 1804). The book was in two-volumes. Bewick was a British engraver and illustrator. He was responsible for the nineteenth century revival of wood engraving and the introduction of white-line engraving on wood, which made possible the use of light and shade. A keen observer of nature, his books and illustrations met with great success.

[6] Thomas Carlyle, *Selected Writings*, ed. Alan Shelston (London: Penguin 1971) 111. 'like Sibylline leaves: In Greek mythology the answers of the Cumaean Sybil were given on leaves which were committed to the wind' 366.

CONCLUSION.

Lyndall Gordon defends Charlotte Brontë's intention(s) in *Jane Eyre* in her biography *Charlotte Brontë: A Passionate Life.* Brontë's intent is unveiled in the Victorian tradition; '*Jane Eyre* is, above all, a pilgrimage' (Gordon, 145). Above all, the novel is the pilgrimage of the self. Jane's persona is defined by her journey and the experience therein. But more importantly Jane is motivated by an all-consuming passion that seeks justice in her trials, and rules every step of her journey. Charlotte drew this heroine from actual women in her own life in order to create a realistic 'new figure' (Gordon, 145). The result is a 'creative truth: not woman as she is, but as she might be *in this world*' (ibid, my italics). Brontë develops a language throughout *Jane Eyre* indicative of spiritual and religious significance through vocabulary, imagery, reference and theme. The use of names, places, details of environment and images are names that are significant in the Biblical and Bunyan tradition. Jane is a pilgrim moving from the child of innocence to maturity unsure of herself or when she will come to this realization. She observes and is guided by the behavior of people along her journey like Miss. Temple, Helen Burns, Miss. Fairfax, St. John, Mary and Diana Rivers, and finally Edward Fairfax Rochester. Never, at any time does she follow her peers, though she may heed their counsel, for Jane must proceed along her journey asserting her own determination. She is unlike Christian in *The Progress* who follows the advice of 'Worldly Wiseman' and loses his sense of direction. It is Jane who is responsible for the progression of her journey by determination of 'will' ruled by passion.

Brontë also uses a proverbial poetry that foreshadows many of the encounters that Jane may face along her journey. Jane's experience is like that in the House of the Interpreter; Christian is faced with potential hazards along his journey. Interpreter asks Christian, "Hast thou considered all these things?" Christian replies,

> 'Here I have seen things rare, and profitable;
> Things pleasant, dreadful, things to make me stable
> In what I have begun to take in hand:
> Then let me think on them, and understand
> Wherefore they showed me was, and let me be
> Thankful, O good Interpreter, to thee' (*The Progress*, 81).

Bessie sings a song that is indicative the potential journey that Jane is about to embark upon.

> "There is a thought that for strength should avail me;
> Though both of shelter and kindred despoiled;
> Heaven is a home, and a rest will not fail me;
> God is a friend to the poor orphan child'(*Jane Eyre*, 54).

Jane realizes that the song is about her journey even while Bessie is singing. Immediately Jane is saddened to tears because she comprehends the lack of direction in her life, and more importantly the path that Jane takes is one that will be traveled alone. There is no guided path for Jane to follow, unlike Christian's 'fence on either side with a Wall, and that Wall is called Salvation' (*The Progress*, 81). Instead, Jane must look inward for the strength and sense of direction and simply follow her urges to do what is right.

From Helen Burns and St. John's 'pure religion' Jane is surrounded by individuals who are responding to 'God's call' whereas, Jane is trying to respond to 'Jane's call.' Barry Qualls defines the goal of Brontë's intent;

> The goal of this quest is not for Brontë that substituting of "self" for "soul" which marks a crucial difference between Romantic and Puritan self-scrutinies; (Qualls, 51-52).

Jane tells her own story according to her past experience. Thus, her voice is her 'will' and not from God. Being moral is being true to one's self and one's own understanding of 'self.' And in Jane's world and knowledge of herself she creates a *idol* in place of God, hence Edward Rochester. She fails initially because she is obedient to her idol. Jane must learn independence (will and passion) through initial disobedience to Edward. Just as Christian moves toward the Celestial City, religiously devoted to his journey, so does Jane. The novel, is according to Lyndall Gordon,

> Prophetic in Jane's search for independence, and above all in its claim of her right to feeling of her own. She finds, in the end, the domestic union society approves, but in the process she has refused to violate her nature. *Jane Eyre* was a triumphant assertion of the inviolability of the individual soul (163).

Jane Eyre moves toward Edward Rochester determined to 'justify herself.' This is the meaning and reason for her pilgrimage. Unlike Christian, Jane remains on 'this side' of the River. Christian overcomes his fear and subjects all to his belief in God in order to reach the Celestial City. Jane sacrifices her innocence and recognizes the significance of knowing herself in order to stand firm in her re-union with Edward Rochester. Jane expresses her contentment in her new life and self-discovery with Edward Rochester, stating 'Reader, I married him' (*Jane Eyre*, 474) asserting that 'all that is right' is within her-*self*.

This thesis has proposed that Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* is a secular reading of John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The beginning chapters examine the lives and literary environments of John Bunyan and Charlotte Brontë. The thesis moves on to examine in detail the language that Jane Eyre uses as a response to the questions of

religious thought in the nineteenth century. The influenceof Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* also contributed to the journey of the self through Jane Eyre's narrative. This self-realization is motivated by an all-consuming passion that will not be defeated. Jane's will is unfaltering in the face of fate and in the realization of her true destiny, to be true to her*self*.

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