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JANE EYRE: ROLE OF WORK IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

The Brontes sisters` works certainly had a great influence on the development of English literature, but also showed the society of that time that a woman as an author was not inferior to the work of men, and in some cases more talented and professional. That is why the works of the Bronte sisters gave the beginning for feminist literature in the 19th century. And the most brightful and famous example defending the position in society and showing that woman can also be a writer is Charlotte Bronte and her work “Jane Eyre”.

The british novelist Virginia Woolf once said: “A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction.” (Woolf, 1989, 2) In this sentence, “money” and “room” do not only mean themselves, but the realistic portraiture that there was no economic basis, no literary tradition or creative freedom for women to write works. For a long period, women, under the repressive of patriarchy culture, had been existed as “the second sex” (Lu, 2015, 100). During the Victorian period, which lasted from 1837 to 1901 year women, compared to men, still did not have not only equal rights as to education or to equal employment pay, but also the position in the society as an intelligent and high valuable person not a beauty with a lack of intellectual activity.

Writing this book, Charlotte Bronte also shows her readers how during the Victorian period the class determined what kind of life a person would live. Social class determined marriage, as people tended to marry partners within their own social class. Women were in a particularly vulnerable position, as men and their families

tended to choose a suitable wife on the basis of the woman's dowry, a sum of money that the male received from the bride's family through marriage. Therefore, women, getting married and leaving her home, were forced to attach themselves to men due to economic dependence.

In Bronte`s work it is also shown that the victim of a marriage could be a man in rare cases. Thus, the author reveals the deepest and most unmentionable Edward Rochester`s secret. A young Mr. Rochester, unaware that his future wife had a penchant for madness, married her by his father`s will.

Much of what is written in Jane Eyre is autobiographical. The author gave her heroine much of her past. She shows the readers how difficult it was for a small girl to be without a mother, her spending years at a boarding school and her period of youth, when she was working as a governess and an attitude of the rich towards her. Not only giving a part of her past but describing Jane`s appearance familiar to writer`s makes a strong believe that Charlotte Bronte wanted to reveal the problems of injustice of this world. Adding to the work the image of Blanche Ingram, the author draws our attention to how easy it was to live being a beautiful girl from a wealthy family. But the main problem of this character is that she is like a blank sheet of paper with no “spiritual” purpose other than to marry a rich gentleman. Unable to deal with her feelings for Mr. Rochester, she retorted: “Do you think I can stay to become nothing to you? Do you think I am an automaton? A machine without feelings? Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless?... it is my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed though the grave, and we stood at God`s feet, equal — as we are!” (Brontë, 240).

Analising Jane Eyre`s character, the reader can see her strong position in emotional connection in love, her believe that marriage can not be built and exist without mutual feelings of the partners towards each other and her putting a high value on equality in personality. For this reason, Jane Eyre refused Mr. St. John`s

proposal, a missionary, who needed an appropriate woman for his selfless goals. Bronte highlights Jane Eyre`s pure love, which was never mixed with selfish benefits.

Bronte hoped what deeply touched audience was Jane Eyre`s inner spirit instead of her outside [2]. So describing her plain, the author wanted the reader to focus on Jane`s high moral standing. From the beginning of the novel she fought against the unfairness of her destiny but in the end, she got the happiness which she deserved. Jane Eyre is like a warrior, never bending over and continuing to struggle for her happiness to the end.

In conclusion, this work definitely had an impact on society and made women understand that patriarchy must be changed. So Jane`s empathetic and rebellious character is considered as the beginning of feminism, where women start demanding for their rights. This work is the first and the most powerful and popular novel to represent the modern view of women`s position in society. And due to this statement after a few centuries, the book is still relevant. And also, in my opinion, the readers should learn the main message of this book: “Never give up, even if the society around you shows an open dislike for you”.

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