Love and Social Differences in Samuel Richardson's *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* and Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*

Kristine Syvertsen Berg

A Thesis Presented to
The Department of Literature, Area Studies and European Languages
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http://www.duo.uio.no/

Trykk: Reprosentralen, Universitetet i Oslo

Abstract

This thesis aims to show all the similarities found between Samuel Richardson's *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* from 1740 and Charlote Brontë's *Jane Eyre* from 1847 in order to find evidence of intertextuality.

Although the novels were written a little over a hundred years apart, the events in them are quite similar. Pamela is a lower class girl who by overcoming many obstacles is able to marry her master, Mr B, who she loves, and thus climbs the social ladder. Jane is a poor middle class girl who eventually has the fortune of marrying the man she loves, her master Mr Rochester. The fact that Pamela and Jane marry up in society does not change their social consciousness, and they both continue to hold true to themselves and their religious beliefs after they are married. Both Pamela and Jane are at one point given the offer to live with Mr B and Mr Rochester without marrying them but they refuse to do so because doing this would interfere with their moral values. And both novels provide a cautionary tale against affairs outside of marriage showing what could happen to Pamela and Jane if they had given into the offers by Mr B and Mr Rochester.

These are only a few of the similarities in the two novels. This thesis concludes that there is sufficient evidence to support the claim that Brontë used Richardson's novel for inspiration when writing her own.

Acknowledgements

This thesis started out with a vague idea, which was received with great enthusiasm by Professor Tone Sundt Urstad who became my supervisor. I am grateful for her valuable input, unwavering positivity and patience.

I would also like to thank my friends and co-workers for their willingness to listen to me in my times of frustration.

A special thank you goes to my family, who probably have had to deal with more frustration and late night calls than most but who always believe in me and help me in every way possible. Their love and support are never-ending, and their encouragement is what gets me through my studious days.

Contents

1 Introduction

In the autumn of 2010, I read Samuel Richardson's *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*[1] for a course at the University of Oslo. In working on the novel, I realized that it had many similarities with Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*,[2] which I had read many years earlier. Re-reading *Jane Eyre*, I found more and more similarities between the two. Even the storylines seem very much alike. They are both about a young girl who is of a lower class than her prospective husband. In order to be with the men they love, they have to overcome certain difficulties but in the end, they marry and thus climb the social ladder. Discovering the similarities between the two novels, I decided to do a comparison of these two for my master thesis.

In the opening chapter of *Jane Eyre,* Jane tells us about life in the house of her aunt. We learn about Jane's difficult relationship with her cousins, and about the ways in which the days in the house were spent. In one passage, Jane talks about how the children were sometimes gathered around the maid, Bessie, who, while doing her chores

> ...fed our eager attention with passages of love and adventure taken from old fairy tales and older ballads; or (as at a later period I discovered) from the pages of *Pamela*, and *Henry, Earl of Moreland* (15).

As we see, this passage names two other literary works: Samuel Richardson's *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* from 1740 and John Wesley's *Henry, Earl of Moreland* from 1781, an abridged and modified version of Henry Brook's *The Fool of Quality* from 1766. *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* is a story about a young lower class girl who becomes victimized by her master's attempt to seduce her and her struggle to free herself, which ultimately facilitates her marriage and subsequent rise in social status. *Henry, Earl of Moreland* is the story of a young earl being raised by a neighboring gentleman who teaches him to be good to others and to help those who are less fortunate. The novel also

[1]Samuel Richardson, *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Thomas Keymer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
[2]Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, ed. Michael Mason (London: Penguin Books, 1996).
All further references to these novels will be given parenthetically by page number in the text itself. If there is any doubt which novel is referred to, the author's last name will be included in the parenthesis.

shows all the good deeds the gentleman does for the people who come through his life. The introduction of these two novels suggests that Brontë in writing *Jane Eyre* drew upon other works of literature. The quote indicates that there could be evidence of intertextuality between *Jane Eyre* and the other two novels. After reading *Henry, Earl of Moreland*, it is clear that it shares few similarities with *Jane Eyre* except for the emphasis on the virtue of being good to others. For this reason, the thesis will not deal with *Henry, Earl of Moreland*, but will concentrate on *Jane Eyre* and *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* only.

This thesis will demand a great deal of close reading in order to find and show the similarities between the two novels. The examples discussed will be of two different types. For one, some of the examples will show how some of the events and situations in the two novels are similar. Other examples will show how Charlotte Brontë in *Jane Eyre* has taken quotes from the other novel and has incorporated them into her new text.

The thesis will make use of intertextuality theory. The idea is that a text is not a single entity but is made up of other texts that it draws on and quotes. As Roland Barthes explains it the author might not be aware of this but the phenomenon is still present in all works of literature (more on intertextuality below).

I have chosen to structure this thesis by looking at the two novels thematically. The remainder of this introductory chapter will take a look at the historical context the novels were written in before presenting the authors and the two novels. Having placed the novels in their social contexts, I will go on to explain the term *intertextuality,* and quickly outline the evidence of this in the two novels. The following chapters will then deal with the areas that I believe will show the similarities between the two novels most clearly.

Chapter 2 will deal with the social differences as they are portrayed in the two novels. The differences in social status between Pamela and Mr B and between Jane and Mr Rochester will be discussed, as will the difficulties these pose when it comes to the society around them. Further, the chapter will look at how the other women belonging to the social sphere of Mr B and Mr Rochester behave towards and think about their marriages to Pamela and Jane who are both of a lower social group than their husbands-to-be are.

In Chapter 3, the different relationships in the two novels will be dealt with. The chapter will look at the relationships between Pamela and Jane and the two clergymen they come to know, and the proposals by the clergymen in both novels. The chapter will further look at the proposals by Mr B and Mr Rochester, and also their offers to live together as if they were husband and wife when marriage was impossible or seen to be impossible, and the responses to these offers by Pamela and Jane. Lastly, the chapter will look at the earlier relationships of Mr B and Mr Rochester, and the result of these relationships; the children of Mr B and Mr Rochester.

Chapter 4 will take a look at the three instances of verbal echoes found in the two novels. I will outline the scenes where the echoes are found and show the different functions they have in the two novels.

Finally, in the Conclusion, the evidence of intertextuality will be summed up.

1.1 Society in 18th and 19th Century England

Life in 18th and 19th century England was to a large extent governed by the class system. Who you were in this society was determined by your birth and your property, if you were a man that is. For a woman, the social ranking would be determined by her male provider. When married, a woman would inherit the social ranking of her husband; before marriage, the father's social status dictated the ranking of the daughter.

As the social status of a woman was decided by her husband, the women of the 18th and 19th centuries would have no reservations in marrying a man from a higher class. The only consequence for the woman was a rise in social status. The other way around, for a woman to marry below her was, however, almost unthinkable. The way social status was determined meant that a woman marrying beneath herself would lose her social status to that of her husband.

The goal of most women, and their families, was, then, to find a suitable husband. The parents of the girl, and the boy, were involved in this process and had veto power over the children's choice. If the family was able to contribute to the marriage financially, they also wanted to have a say in the choice of spouse. Arranged marriages were common. The union was made on the basis of how good a social match it would be. The qualities looked for in a spouse differed in the social classes. For the upper and middle classes money played a role. In the lower classes, the skills of the woman, which could be used in the family business or potentially bring in some income, played an important role. Not until 1800 did it become somewhat acceptable to marry for love.[3]

A married woman of the upper class had four responsibilities in life. She was to obey her husband and bear his children. Once the child was born, however, it usually became the responsibility of a wet-nurse or a governess. The parents had little to do with their children on an everyday basis, and the relationship between parents and child was somewhat formal. The married woman was also expected to run the household, a responsibility which included governing the servants and entertaining guests, to provide food and organizing the kitchen staff. The fourth responsibility was to be ladylike. This included dressing appropriately, being able to carry a conversation, singing and playing an instrument, and taking care that the house was decorated according to certain standards. The married woman, then, had her everyday life filled by the duties in the house.[4]

The public sphere was for the most part inhabited by men. There were men-only clubs, men were the only ones becoming lawyers, magistrates, explorers and so on. Women belonged to the domestic sphere. They were wives, mothers, housekeepers, maids and governesses. Because the social standing of a woman was decided by the man who had the responsibility for her, it was important for a woman to marry. A woman who failed to marry often became a burden to her family. Her father would have to take responsibility for her, and when the parents passed away, a brother (if she had any) would have to assume the responsibility for his sister. The only other real option for an unmarried woman of the upper or middle class was to go out and get work as a governess or a lady's companion and thus live life not as part of a family but not really as a servant either. For a

[3] Robert B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850: the Emergence of Separate Spheres?* (Harlow: Longman, 1998), 95.
[4] Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 27-28.

woman of the working or lower classes, however, being supported by your family was rarely a possibility. These women had to find work whether they were married or not. If they were married, they had to help in providing an income for their family. If they were not married, they had to provide for themselves. These women for a great part worked as servants for the higher classes.[5]

Theoretically, it was possible to climb the social ranks in England but it was not a common occurrence. While it was not so difficult to work your way up inside your social group, actually jumping to another, higher, social group was more difficult and rarely achieved if not by a fortunate marriage, as in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, or a lucky inheritance, like in *Jane Eyre*. But however difficult, people did try to climb the social ladder, and in order to do this they studied the behaviour of their superiors.[6]

1.2 The History of the Novel

In the early 18th century, there was what amounted to a literary revolution. The reading public expanded dramatically. Now, both upper class women and the middle class started reading more and the demand for print culture rose. The new modes of production, the new readers that it was now possible to reach and the belief that the traditional forms of writing were too constricted turned writing in new directions. The literary revolution came in two waves. The first appeared as early as the 1690s. This wave had little demand on form and lacked a sense of direction. In the 1740s, a claim was made for a new species of narrative fiction. While the early wave of the literary revolution received little attention except for the negative reactions of the already-established writers, the 1740-wave was recognized more widely. The critics were divided into two groups: the pros and the cons. The cons worried about slipped standards and lack of values, and they worried that the changes would destroy everything that was honorable in the traditional way of writing. The people who were for the new literary mode saw fresh opportunities and a challenge of

[5] Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*: 22-26.
[6] Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*: 50-52.

creativity. Samuel Richardson was one of the forerunners for the new genre. He suggested the moral possibilities of the novel and together with Henry Fielding showed that whole careers of writing now were possible. From the 1740s and 50s there was a dramatic increase in fiction. Johnson said in 1750 that "the works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world." [7]

The new genre, then, the novel, was completely different from the romances that had been common earlier. While the romances were fabulous tales of adventure and love, the novel was more concerned with showing life as it was. Some of the criteria of this genre were that the story should, according to Clara Reeve, appeal to the readers by placing emphasis on keeping the stories in the "now," or at least not far in the past. It was to be probable that the events in the story could happen, and the storyline needed to be familiar to the readers, who should be able to relate to the characters, and the events.[8] The two novels being discussed in this thesis, then, clearly fit into this genre, as we shall see.

1.3 Samuel Richardson and *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*

Samuel Richardson was born in 1689 into a middle class family. He was supposed to join the ministry but his father could not afford sending him to school after he was 15 years old. Instead, Richardson chose to take an apprenticeship at a printer's. He worked his way up and became a successful printer himself. At the end of the 1730s he was approached by two booksellers who asked him to compose a book made up of examples of letters for different occasions. These were to be called *Familiar Letters on Important Occasions* and were published in 1741. It was during his work in this field that he came up with the idea for his first novel, *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded,* and started working on it. He produced

[7] Paul Hunter, *Before Novels. The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth Century English Fiction* (New York: W.W.Norton Company, Inc, 1990), 22.
[8] Hunter, *Before Novels:* 23.

the novel in only two months and published it anonymously in 1740. He was then in his fifties. The continuation of *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, *Pamela in Her Exalted Condition* (below referred to as vols III and IV) was published in 1741. He later published two more novels; *Clarissa* in 1747-48, and *Sir Charles Grandison* in 1753-54.[9]

Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded is the story of a young girl who is tried time after time by her master, Mr B. He is the son of Pamela's former mistress and takes a liking to her. Mr B tries to seduce the young, poor Pamela and she protects herself the best she can. Not being able to seduce his servant Mr B under the pretence of helping her get home to her parents kidnaps her. She is taken to his Wiltshire estate where she is kept under the watchful eye of the horrible housekeeper, Mrs Jewkes. Pamela protects her virtue throughout the novel even after she finally realizes that she has fallen in love with Mr B. After many attempts to seduce Pamela, Mr B also realizes that he cannot live without her. They become married and Pamela shows herself to be quite the lady. She fulfils her duties just as well as any noblewoman would.

Pamela's story is written as an epistolary novel. The genre became popular in the 17th and the 18th centuries and is recognized by its use of a series of letters, or journal entries, to drive the story forward. The letters are written by one or more of the main characters. At the end of the 17th century, Aphra Behn produced one of the first epistolary novels, *Love Letters Between a Nobleman and his Sister* (1684-97) but many consider *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* by Samuel Richardson to be the first true epistolary novel. The strength of this type of novel is that it adds a realistic aspect to the story, and the point of view offered by the letters gives the reader insight into the character's thoughts and feelings. The author becomes invisible and the plot inevitably becomes more dramatic. There are also problems with the epistolary novel, however. The reader is reliant on the protagonist to tell us everything we need to know, and the protagonist, like Pamela in Richardson's story, has the disadvantage of having to be in every situation.[10] In *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, the letters are for the most part written by Pamela herself. This limits our view of the story. Every event is told by the young girl herself, and only rarely do we find a

[9] Mark Kinkead-Weekes, "Defoe and Richardson - Novelists of the City," in *Dryden to Johnson*, ed. Roger Lonsdale (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1971), 240-241.
[10] Chris Baldick, *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 114. ; "The Epistolary Novel," http://www.enotes.com/literary-criticism/epistolary-novel. (Accessed 22.10.10)

letter written by her father, Mr Williams, or of Mr B. This means that in order to tell the story Pamela has to rely on others to tell her about the events that take place when she is not present.

The novel instantly became a huge success. However, Richardson continued working on his novel, and published a revised edition of *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* in 1741 containing 841 changes. These revisions were somewhat based on input he had gathered from his friends and family. Most of the revisions are corrections of the language. Richardson continued to make changes to his novel and the novel was revised and published eight times during Richardson's own life. *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* was published in seven duodecimo editions and in one octavo during Richardson's lifetime. Shortly after his death a duodecimo edition containing all four volumes appeared, and was called the "eighth edition." Most of the revisions in the third and fourth editions are corrections of the language. By September 1741 the fifth edition was published. This edition contained major revisions. This time most of the revisions were changes in phrasing as opposed to earlier editions where grammar had been the focal point. Richardson not only made changes to the language but added the passages portraying Pamela's reading and her correspondence to Miss Darnford. Also, the 'Preface by the Editor' is revised and so are Pamela's verses of leaving Bedfordshire. The sixth edition, the octavo published in 1742 containing all four volumes, contained major changes. Several of the letters from volume II were moved to volume I. This meant that the break between the volumes now took place at the time when Pamela leaves the Lincolnshire house. But this edition also contained a few more important changes: the conclusion at the end of volume II was taken out since volumes III and IV now made it superfluous, and the introductory letters were cut. These changes were not followed in the following duodecimo editions. The next major revision to *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* came in a four volume publication in 1801. This edition follows the changes from the octavo but it also contains numerous changes believed to be of Richardson's own hand. Scenes were added and rewritten. Almost every sentence was altered. And even though many of the corrections were grammatical, in many places Pamela's language was cleaned up. For instance, "my Heart went pit-a-pat" became "my heart fluttered". The novel as a whole was made somewhat more respectable. Mr B now only puts his hand in Pamela's bosom

in one scene; the other scenes have been rewritten. Then, in 1810 a final edition was published based on the revisions, believed to have been made by Richardson's daughter, on the 1801 publication.[11]

In their article "Richardson's Revisions of *Pamela*", Duncan Eaves and Ben Kemper concludes that:

> A double-column *Pamela* containing the text of the first edition…and the text of the 1801 edition…would doubtless best serve the scholar… but for anyone who simply wants to read *Pamela* for enjoyment, we believe that the text of the first edition should be the one reprinted. It is closer to the Pamela whom Richardson actually imagined, whereas all succeeding texts try to approach the Pamela he thought he should have imagined.[12]

Even though the last edition known to have been revised by the author himself is usually the one studied, I have for the purpose of this thesis chosen to use a reprint of the first edition. The reason for this is that I think that this was probably the edition drawn on by Charlotte Brontë in her novel as I have found corresponding scenes in this edition which are taken out of the reprint of the text from 1801.

1.4 Charlotte Brontë and *Jane Eyre*

Charlotte Brontë was born in 1816, one of five children of Patric Brontë and Maria Branwell. At the age of five, Charlotte lost her mother, and she and her sisters were taken care of by their aunt. At the age of eight, Charlotte was sent to school with three of her sisters. The time at the school inspired her imagination and it resulted in Jane Eyre's stay at Lowood School, and the creation of Helen Burns who dies at the school was a result of the deaths of Charlotte's two older sisters. After five years at home, Charlotte was sent to another school in 1831. Four years later, she began teaching at this school. In 1842, Charlotte, with her sister Emily, went to Brussels. She stayed two years as a pupil,

[11] T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, "Richardson's Revisions of *Pamela*," *Studies in Bibliography* 20 (1967), http://www.jstor.org/stable/40371439. (accessed 03.06.11)
[12] Eaves and Kimpel, "Richardson's Revisions of *Pamela*". 88.

learning French and German, and as a teacher. In 1846, the sisters, Charlotte, Emily and Anne, published a volume of poems together under their pseudonyms: Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell. This was the starting point of the writing careers of the three sisters. Charlottes' first novel, *The Professor*, was rejected but she was encouraged by the publishing house to write *Jane Eyre*, which was published in 1847 under the name Currer Bell. Two years later Charlotte was forced to give up her anonymity when publishing *Shirley*. In 1853 *Villette* came out, her last novel. In 1854, Charlotte married, against her father's wishes. She died a year later. [13]

According to Wendy A. Craik, "*Jane Eyre* is Charlotte Brontë's nearest claim to perfection."[14] It is the story about an orphaned young girl whom we first meet in the house of her aunt who does not really want to have her there. The aunt sends her to a school for poor girls in order to get rid of her. Jane stays at this school for eight years, first as a student then as a teacher. At the age of eighteen, she decides she wants to try work as a teacher in a private household. She is lucky and gets employment teaching a young French girl. After a while here, she finally meets the master of the house, Mr Rochester. Mr Rochester and Jane both develop feelings for each other and decide to marry. They are stopped, however, when it turns out that Mr Rochester is already married. Mr Rochester then proposes to Jane that they move to France and live as if they were married. Jane actually considers this but decides that the moral rules are there for a reason. She leaves Mr Rochester but returns when she hears him telepathically calling for her and discovers that there has been a fire and that Mr Rochester has been injured. She visits him only to find that his wife has died in the fire and that Mr Rochester is left paralyzed and partially blind. As he is now free from his first wife, Jane and Mr Rochester marry.

[13] Wendy A. Craik, "The Brontës," in *The Victorians*, ed. Arthur Pollard (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1970), 140-145.
[14] Craik, "The Brontës," 148.

1.5 Intertextuality

Writers have always had to relate to other, earlier texts, and they have always borrowed from them. Only in later years has the phenomenon been put into a system and named *intertextuality*. The rough idea is that no text exists independently of other texts, they all have elements of other texts in them:

> …by means of its open or covert citations and *allusions*, its repetitions and transformations of the formal and substantive features of earlier texts, or simply its unavoidable participation in the common stock of linguistic and literary conventions and procedures that are "always-ready" in place and constitute the discourses into which we are born.[15]

The term was made popular by Julia Kristeva. She argues that texts are made on the basis of other texts. The phenomenon is impossible to escape. Every text made, comes into existence by its author's experience from other texts, and the relationship between the texts is what allows the reader to make sense of and understand the text. Authors do not pull their stories from thin air but use earlier texts to develop their own. According to Kristeva all texts comprise other texts and as the texts meet and cross each other a series of changes take place. She says that in this way every text is a testament of other texts in that the earlier texts are absorbed and answered by the new. [16]

Intertextuality, then, stands in great contrast to New Criticism. Where New Criticism states that every literary text is to be treated autonomously without regard to who has written it or when it is written, intertextuality says that a literary work has meaning not by itself but because of the texts that precede it. The use of earlier texts in the writing of the new becomes necessary and is not a negative thing. In the way that New Criticism turns away from the social contexts in which a literary work is produced when interpreting it, the theory of intertextuality tries to find the earlier text which is the basis for them. [17]

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[15] M. H. Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2009), 364.
[16] Malan Marnersdóttir, "Intertekstualitet," in *Om litteratur: metoder og perspektiver*, ed. Leif Søndergaard (Århus: Systime, 2003), 154.
[17] Marnersdóttir, "Intertekstualitet," 155.

For Roland Barthes it is not the authors that create literature, it is the texts themselves that create. His expansion of this field to include not only quotes that can actually be found, but anonymous quotes as well, makes it even more complex. He believed that the text is a compository of quotes, allusions and echoes, and that the origin of a text's quotes is not only not possible to find, it is not supposed to be found. He felt that what was important was to accept that any text is put together with the help of an infinite number of other texts. Jonathan Culler presented a more narrow comprehension of Barthes' intertextuality. He believed that we can only talk of intertextuality if the text itself points to the other texts.[18]

But intertextuality is also used about relationships between texts that the author himself might not be aware of but which the reader finds during the course of the reading process. The meaning of the text, then, is not to be found inside the text itself but is the product of the reader's ability to connect the text with other texts in existence.[19]

As shown, one type of intertextuality is called allusions. This is "a passing reference, without explicit identification, to a literary or historical person, place or, event, or to another literary work or passage."[20] Allusions work because the author and the readers have a common frame of reference. If the readers do not have knowledge about the literary work referenced, the meaning becomes lost because the new literary work uses the earlier text in order to get the meaning across.[21] Allusions, then, make clear the connection between texts, and such connections to accomplish a change in the meaning of the new text. It uses the meaning of the earlier text and makes use of it in the new setting. What is interesting is that allusions do not only rely on what the author intended when writing the text. The readers might also find allusions, connections, which the author was not aware of during the writing process.

What is interesting about the theory of intertextuality is that even though the events and quotes are lifted from the earlier work they do not necessarily have the same function. The

[18] Marnersdóttir, "Intertekstualitet," 156-157.
[19] Marnersdóttir, "Intertekstualitet," 156.; William Irwin, "Against Intertextuality," *Philosophy and Literature* 28, no. (28:2) (2004), http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion&rft_id=xri:lion:rec:mla:R03526440 http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/philosophy_and_literature/v028/28.2irwin.html (accessed 27.10.11)
[20] Abrams and Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms:* 11.
[21] Abrams and Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms:* 12.

knowledge about the earlier work referenced is used to underline the meaning from the earlier work even though it is now found in a different situation.

In the case of *Pamela* and *Jane Eyre* we have a clear connection between them as *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* at one point is actually named in *Jane Eyre*. The similarities between them further this connection, as we will see in the following pages and chapters.

1.6 An Introduction to the Similarities Found in the Two Novels

Reading *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* and *Jane Eyre*, two types of intertextuality are evident. The likeness of certain events in the two novels is one of them. Take for instance the scenes including a fortune teller in both novels. When Pamela is being held at the Wiltshire estate they are one day visited by a gypsy-like fortune teller. She comes to the gate and offers to read their palms. After reading Mrs Jewkes' palm, she proceeds to Pamela but says "I cannot tell your Fortune; your Hand is so white and fine, that I cannot see the Lines..." (223-224). To darken the palm and make the lines come out she bends down and takes a handful of dirt from the ground. After the fortune teller has gone Pamela goes back to the gate and, thinking that the turning of the soil holds a message, bends down and finds a note. The note warns her about a sham marriage Mr B is planning. In the other novel, Jane also encounters a gypsy fortune teller. The gypsy here too tries to read the young girl's palm. The result is the same: "'It is too fine,' said she. 'I can make nothing of such a hand as that; almost without lines…'" (223). The fortune teller in this novel then proceeds by inquiring into Jane's personal thoughts about her employment and about Mr Rochester. As it turns out the gypsy woman is really Mr Rochester himself and his plot is to find out if Jane has any feelings towards him. This dress-up of Mr Rochester's brings us to another common event in the two novels. Mr Rochester does not only dress up like a gypsy but as a gypsy woman who "had on a red cloak and a black bonnet: or rather, a broad-brimmed gipsy [*sic*] hat, tied down with a striped handkerchief under her chin…" (221). In *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* there is also a scene where Mr

B dresses in women's clothing. He one night dresses in the clothes of one of his maids and pretends to have fallen asleep in the chair in the bedroom. Pamela refers to the incident in a letter explaining that she after having said her prayers she, in her return to bed, passed by the sleeping wench: "But Oh! little did I think, it was my wicked, wicked Master in a Gown and Petticoat of hers, and her Apron over his Face and Shoulders" (202). As Pamela undresses and goes to bed, he "awakens" and stumbles to the bed to lie down beside her. This scene ends with, at least as Pamela sees it, Mr B attempting to rape her, something he later denies. The appearance of the fortune teller in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* is used as a warning, while in *Jane Eyre* it is used as a way to get into the thoughts of the young girl. The latter is also the function of the dress-up of Mr Rochester. He dresses up as the female gypsy to be able to question Jane about her feelings. For Mr B, the dress-up serves another function. He dresses up as his maid in order to force himself on Pamela, and subsequently have her succumb to his will. More on this will be found in Chapter 4.

In both *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* and *Jane Eyre* we also find the appearance of a clergyman. Pamela, when she is at the Wiltshire estate, meets Mr Williams who pities her situation. He tries to help her by appealing to the gentlemen in the area but without success. He then proposes marriage to her as an attempt to help her out of her situation. Jane too meets a clergyman, Mr Rivers, after leaving Mr Rochester. He is going to India to be a missionary and wants Jane to go with him as his wife. Neither clergyman proposes marriage out of love. Mr Williams does so out of a felt obligation to Pamela and to help her escape her master. Mr Rivers proposes to Jane because of his belief that she should serve God by being a missionary and that it is his responsibility to see that it happens. Both Mr Williams and Mr Rivers are turned down. The clergymen represent a likeness between the two novels in more than one aspect. For one, the clergymen represent the possibility of finding another life for the two protagonists. They give Jane and Pamela the opportunity of getting away from the situations they are in. But the clergymen also appear as representatives of the religiousness in the two novels. Both Pamela and Jane are deeply religious and the two clergymen are the worldly representatives of this and of the values the two girls hold. The appearance of the clergymen will be dealt with further in Chapter 3.

Another similarity in the two novels is that both protagonists express a need to get away from their masters. Pamela makes this clear through the whole novel, while Jane needs to do this after she learns that Mr Rochester is married. Up to this point she is content with her life and her position, her only wish is that she be excused from her post before he marries Miss Ingram. As a turn of events we learn that it is actually Jane Mr Rochester wants to marry. Before they can marry it is, however, made clear that he already is legally wed to the mad woman in the attic. After this Jane decides that she cannot stay with him and at the same time keep her pride and virtue intact. She runs away from him to protect her virtue:

> Not a human being that ever lived could wish to be loved better than I was loved; and him who thus loved me I absolutely worshipped: and I must renounce love and idol. One drear word comprised my intolerable duty – Depart! (354).

Pamela states over and over in her letters that she wished to get away from her master who she feels threatens her virtue. Her father also expresses his wish for her to get away in one of his letters. Pamela never manages to escape her master. In the beginning she may be excused because she might be too naïve to fully understand Mr B's intentions. As the novel progresses, however, this cannot be said to be true. During her captivity she has at one time the opportunity to escape from the back of the garden. She even manages to get outside the gate without anyone seeing her. But Pamela remembers that one of the maids has been attacked by a bull in that field some weeks earlier, so she manages to convince herself that she sees a bull in the field and goes back to her prison:

> To be sure, there is Witchcraft in this House; and I believe *Lucifer* is bribed, as well as all about me, and is got into the Shape of that nasty grim Bull, to watch me! – For I have been down again; and ventur'd to open the Door, and went out about a Bow-shoot into the Pasture; but there stood that horrid Bull, staring me full in the Face, with a fiery Saucer Eyes, as I thought. So, I got in again; for fear he should come at me. Nobody saw me, however. – Do you think there are such things as Witches and Spirits? If there be, I believe in my Heart, Mrs. *Jewkes* has got this Bull on her Side. But yet, what could I do without Money or a Friend? – O this wicked Woman! to trick me so! Every thing, Man, Woman and Beast, is in a Plot against your poor Pamela (152).

Pamela talks about escaping her master on more than one occasion. She understands that she needs to escape Mr B to protect her virtue and wants to return to her parents. In the

end, Mr B gives up his attempts to pursue her and sends her home. This escape actually facilitates the later marriage. The escape from Mr B actually makes Mr B realize and admit that he is in love with his mother's young waiting-maid. The end result is that he begs her to come back and they get married. Like Pamela, Jane runs from Thornfield. She does this to get away from the moral dilemma she is in and sees that in order to stick to her decision she has to escape. Like for Pamela, the escape made possible the later union between Jane and Mr Rochester. The time apart from each other changes the situation for both of them so that they become closer in social status and their marriage is facilitated.

Looking further at the two novels we learn that both Mr B and Mr Rochester have a past one would not necessarily be proud of. Pamela is apparently not the first young woman Mr B has tried to seduce and after he and Pamela are married we are introduced to the product of this affair. When visiting a boarding school for girls Pamela meets a girl who refers to Mr B as "uncle." Pamela is convinced, and rightly so, that the young girl is actually Mr B's own daughter. In *Jane Eyre*, Jane comes into the house of Mr Rochester to be the governess for the young French girl Adèle. Mr Rochester tells Jane that when he was younger he had an affair with a French woman and that he after she died was given custody of the little girl. The woman Mr Rochester had an affair with apparently told him that the girl was his but Mr Rochester is not convinced of this himself. Nevertheless, he has taken her into his home.

The appearance of the child of Mr B and that of Mr Rochester seems to have the same function in both novels. They show the reader the faults of the gentlemen and at the same time the kindness and love of Jane and Pamela as they both wish to take care of their respective husbands' illegitimate child. But the appearance of the children and their stories also show what could have happened to Pamela and Jane had they chosen to give in to the wishes of their masters and accepted the sham marriages proposed to them. The two young girls of Mr B and Mr Rochester function as a warning of what could happen to women who let themselves be taken advantage of. In *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, we get the story of Mr B's earlier transgressions, and the story of the young mother of his child. The story goes that when he was young he started an affair with a young lady and after her family found out and tried to trick him into marriage, they continued their relationship in secret and the girl's pregnancy followed. The young girl was sent away to

have her child, and later asked Mr B to care for it as she did not want the child to take part in her shame. Mr B's sister, Lady Davers, cared for the child while the young girl fled the country and pretended to be a widow in order to avoid the shame of her indiscretion. By giving us the story of this affair, and its consequences, the fate of an unmarried woman falling into temptation is put forward as an explanation for why it is so important that Pamela had the strength to stand up for herself against Mr B's attempts to seduce her. This is quite clear in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* as we are given the tragic story of the young mother's life both before and after she had her child but it is also evident in *Jane Eyre* when we hear the story of Mr Rochester's child. This will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

The social differences between the young girls and their future husbands are different and at the same time similar. The fact is that the two girls are of a lower status than their men, a social gap that is not easy to overcome. In the case of Pamela and Mr B, the social differences never change until they marry. Pamela remains a poor girl until the day she marries Mr B and inherits his social status: "my greatest Concern will be for the rude Jests you will have to encounter with yourself, for thus stooping beneath yourself" (262). In the other novel, the social difference between Mr Rochester and Jane does change through the story. Jane and Mr Rochester have the fortune of being closer socially when they finally marry. Jane inherits a small fortune ("My uncle in Madeira is dead, and he left me five thousand pounds" (483).), and Mr Rochester is disfigured and handicapped from the fire. The social differences in *Jane Eyre* and *Pamela* will be thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2.

Yet another similarity is to be found. Both Jane and Pamela are very class conscious. Pamela shows this many places for instance in her speech to Mr B where she says: "… if you was not rich and great, and I poor and little" (69). This shows how strongly she feels about the class differences. But her consciousness is also shown by the fact that she, when married, no longer accepts to be treated as an inferior by Lady Davers. She has risen to a new station in life, one that she feels does not tolerate Lady Davers' treatment of her. For Jane, this is probably best portrayed when Mr Lloyd, the apothecary, asks the young Jane if she would choose to stay with relatives if it turned out she had any, however poor. Her

answer: “No; I should not like to belong to poor people” (32), shows that she even at a young age was aware of the different social groups in society.

This consciousness also shows when Pamela and Jane accept the proposals by Mr B and Mr Rochester to be married. As the wedding approaches, Mr B wants Pamela to start using the fine clothes she gave up when she believed she was returning to her parents. Mr Rochester, similarly, makes Jane go out to buy new outfits for her, and to by jewellery. He also sends for the family jewellery to bestow on her. Both girls resist this. They do not feel that it would be fitting for them before they marry. Pamela and Jane’s class consciousness will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Both Mr B and Mr Rochester propose to their ladies that they should live together as man and wife without actually being married. Mr B proposes this for the simple reason that he sees the difference in social status as a reason that a real marriage is impossible. For Mr Rochester the proposal is a result of his marital status. He, as a young man, was tricked into a marriage, and is still married to the crazy woman in the attic. He regards this solution as the best one. If our two heroines had accepted the proposal to live with their men as man and wife in everything but name, they would probably, up to a point, have been able to live quite happy lives with the men they love. However, both Pamela and Jane dismiss these proposals as impossible. Pamela believes that living together without being married is a sin and that Mr B should not make her do anything that would go against her virtue. Jane, however, debates with herself in trying to come to a conclusion. Jane refuses to stay with the man she loves because she wishes to hold true to her belief in the religious laws. More on marriage and the proposals to live together as man and wife will be found in Chapter 3.

The other type of intertextuality present in these two novels is verbal echoes. Verbal echoes are a form of intertextuality where the writer has a character, more or less openly, cite a character from another novel. The verbal echoes, like all other forms of intertextuality, point back and make the reader aware of the influence of the earlier text on the text at hand. One example of this is when Jane uses the word “master” (289) when talking about Mr Rochester. This is the word Pamela uses all though Richardson’s novel when talking about Mr B, she actually never stops using the word in relation to her

husband. Even after the marriage has taken place, she refuses to stop using this title. Jane too uses the word "master" when talking about Mr Rochester. The fact that she chooses this word clearly points back to the relationship between Pamela and Mr B. At one point Jane even says, when describing the physical features of Mr Rochester: "…but they were more than beautiful to me: they were full of an interest, an influence that quite mastered me" (198). The fact that Jane chooses to use "mastered me" clearly points back to *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* where the situation, unlike for Jane, is that Mr B really is the master of Pamela and that she really is at his mercy. For Jane, this is not quite as clear. Mr Rochester is not Jane's master in the same way as she is not fully dependent on him. But Jane, nevertheless thinks of him as someone who has the means of being her master.

Another verbal echo is to be found in the utterances of the two fortune tellers quoted above. The two say almost the exact same thing about the appearance of the girls' hand. In *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* the fortune teller says: "I cannot tell your Fortune: your Hand is so white and fine, that I cannot see the Lines..." (223-224). The conversation is then lifted by Charlotte Brontë as the fortune teller in her story says: "'It is too fine,' … 'I can make nothing of such a hand as that; almost without lines…'" (223).

These are the two most clear verbal echoes to be found in the two novels. There is, however, yet another, only more subtle, echo. In a conversation between Jane and Mr Rochester about Jane's future at Thornfield, Jane says:

> Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain and little, I am soulless and heartless? – You think wrong! – I have as much soul as you, - and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty, and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you. I am not talking to you now though 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!' (284).

This passage clearly points back to Pamela's speech to Mr B:

> You do well, Sir, said I, to even your Wit to such a poor Maiden as me! But, Sir, let me say, that if you was not rich and great, and I poor and little, you would not insult me so in my Misery! – Let me ask you, Sir, if you think this becomes your fine Cloathes! and a Master's Station? … Let me alone! I will tell you, if you was a King, and said to me as you have done, that you are no Gentleman: And I won't

> stay to be used thus! I will go to the next Farmer's and there wait for Mrs. *Jervis*, if she must go: And I'd have you know, Sir, that I can stoop to the ordinary'st Work of your Scullions, for all these nasty soft Hands, sooner than bear such ungentlemanly Imputations (69-70).

Looking at the two young girls' speeches it becomes evident that Brontë used Richardson's novel for inspiration when writing her own. This echo is not quite as clear as the other echoes found but it does work in the same way as the other ones. What these verbal echoes and other similarities do is to show how Brontë has made use of another novel for inspiration when writing her story. More on the verbal echoes will be found in Chapter 4.

2 Social Differences

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the English society was built on a strong class structure and the different classes knew their places in society. Even though it was possible to move from one class to another, this was rarely done. For women the only two ways this could be done, were by marriage or by a lucky inheritance. When it comes to the two novels, *Jane Eyre* and *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, a social jump is made by the heroines. The novels, however, do this in different ways: Pamela climbs the social ladder by marrying Mr B, while Jane inherits her uncle and moves upwards in society and Rochester's insane wife dies.

When deciding to marry, it was preferred that one stayed within one's own class, or at least did not stray too far. A woman marrying a man from a higher class would be elevated to his level. This is not to say that the other members of the class would accept them without some protest. Transitioning from one class to another was not an easy task. Even though, as a woman, you would belong to your husband's class, the other members did not necessarily think of you as one of their own. Considering your new station they would have to be civil, and show you respect in social gatherings but they would probably talk behind your back and look at you as inferior. For men marrying a woman from a higher class, the rules were different. The class of the woman could never be inherited by her husband. This meant that the woman marrying beneath her would lose her rank in society. The class affiliation always followed the husband.

In *Jane Eyre* and *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, the social differences between the young girls and their future husbands are different and at the same time similar. The fact is that the two girls are of a lower status than their men, a social gap that is not easy to overcome. In the case of Pamela and Mr B, the social difference does not change until they marry. Pamela remains a poor girl until the day she marries Mr B and, up to a point, inherits his social status. For Jane and Mr Rochester, the situation is slightly different. They start out being somewhat separated by the social order just like Pamela and Mr B but Jane is higher socially than Pamela is. Jane, even though she does not have the monetary funds, is born

of a middle class family and is educated, so socially she is closer to Mr Rochester than Pamela is to Mr B. And as Jane inherits, they become even closer socially.

This chapter will discuss the social differences present in the two novels, and what becomes of these social differences once the marriages of Jane and Mr Rochester and Pamela and Mr B have taken place.

2.1 Pamela's Social Status verses that of her Husband

The young Pamela is of one of society's lower classes. Born into a poor family, she was at the age of 12 sent to be the waiting maid for a rich woman. Pamela is very fortunate with her mistress who takes her in and teaches her to write and do needle work, and gives her as Pamela says "other Qualifications above my Degree" (11). It was not common in that time for a young, poor girl to be able to read and write, and this qualification is something her master comments on and praises her for on occasion. The education Pamela has received from her late mistress puts Pamela in a slightly different position than her fellow servants. The skills taught to her by Mrs B are not the skills of a common maid, and as Pamela herself points out, she does not really have the knowledge needed to be a lowly servant. The education she has received from Mrs B, dancing, singing, drawing and doing needlework, has not prepared her for the poor life she would lead if she were to return to her parents. The education Pamela has, then, is more that of a lady of the house than that of a lowly maid. She has been taught to read and write, she sews and plays the harpsichord. All these are skills taught to the women of the upper class, and they were activities the ladies used to occupy themselves. Even the dresses Pamela wears are above her social standing, she wears silk dresses. When moving to her mistress's house she was given the clothes that are more fitting for someone of a higher social group than her own. Pamela at one point says herself "Be sure I had better, as Things stand, have learn'd to wash and scour, and brew and bake, and such-like" (76). She even tries her hand at scouring but "blister'd [her] Hand in two Places" (77). All these things indicate that

Richardson has given Pamela the tools needed to be able to fulfil her later role as Mr B's wife.

There is one more thing indicating that Richardson wished to prove that Pamela deserved, and was equipped, to becoming Mr B's wife. The history of her family also raises her somewhat from the common servant. We learn, during the course of the novel, that her father was not always as poor as he is now. He used to own, and run, his own school, and taught the children in the area but he was unlucky and the school had to close. Even though both of Pamela's parents now work hard, this contributes to the feeling that Pamela meets some of the requirements needed to become elevated.

Mr B differs from Pamela in many ways. For one thing, he is very well educated. He is a lawyer and therefore has the trust of being Magistrate in the area. He is also a Member of Parliament. With this comes a lot of power. Mr B is also a very wealthy man – he owns multiple properties. His position in society is one of high standards. The people in the area look to him as a high standing member of their community and trust that he knows right from wrong. Their unwillingness to contradict him, or even involve themselves in his business, we shall see below.

The difference in social status is addressed by Pamela on many occasions. At one point she says "if you was not rich and great, and I poor and little" (69). This clearly demonstrates the fact that her master holds a great deal of power, and that she really does not. She scolds him for trying to take advantage of someone very much below him, and someone dependent on him for her well-being. If he is not satisfied with her, he has the ability to send her back to her parents and a life in great poverty, a life she is very much fearful of. Nevertheless, Pamela continues to scold him for his behaviour towards her, and in his replies, it becomes evident that his social superiority is quite clear to him and that he does not truly tolerate her obstinate behaviour towards him. He, a member of the aristocracy, believes in the order of things and truly believes that he has the right to Pamela whether she agrees to it or not, something that becomes evident in the rape scene. It is only her fainting-fits that help her out of this episode along with so many others.

The fact that Pamela is under the direction of Mr B further underlines the difference in social status. Mr B has the power to keep her with him. He alone decides if she can go

home, and even after he promises her that she can leave, he adjusts the timing of her returning to her parents by deciding she should wait until he has checked with Lady Davers whether Pamela can get a post with her. Pamela has no say in these matters. The only thing she can do is to try to express what she wishes but she does in no way have the ability to do anything about her situation as long as Mr B does not comply. If she tries to run away Mr B potentially can accuse her of stealing and have her arrested. She will have to stay with him and make the best of her situation because she does not have the standing in the community necessary to defend herself and do something about her situation.

The reactions by the society to certain events also underline the huge difference in their social statuses. When Mr Williams, in an attempt to help Pamela, goes to the other gentlemen in the area in hopes that one of them will interfere and rescue Pamela from Mr B, it becomes clear that there is none that is willing to help. The answer from one Sir Simon shows how little regard the rich had for the poor in the society:

> Why, what is all this, My Dear, but that the 'Squire our Neighbour has a mind to his Mother's Waiting-maid? And if he takes care she wants for nothing, I don't see any great Injury will be done her. He hurts no Family by this (134).

This statement illustrates the belief in the English society that people of the lower classes were not to be considered along the same lines as the middle and upper classes. According to the latter the lower classes had no family name to protect and were therefore not to be defended on the same lines when a situation like this arose.

Mr B is clearly not the only one thinking that his will is what matters in the relationship between him and Pamela. Others do not step in and help Pamela because they believe that Mr B is in his right and that the lowly Pamela should succumb to his will. She really does not have any rights of her own and her parents "have no power at all"[22] and are therefore unable to help her with her situation. This shows just how much power the wealthy had in society, and how low the status of a waiting-maid really was. Mr B can do whatever he wants with Pamela because of the low status of her family. The scene where her father, Mr Andrews, comes to Mr B inquiring about his daughter also shows this. Mr Andrews, when asking Mr B how his daughter is, is told that she has been sent to another post with a

[22] Morris Golden, *Richardson's Characters* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963), 59.

bishop and that she is well, but Mr B refuses to give him the name of Pamela's new employer. Mr B, at the persistence of Mr Andrew's. says:

> May I not have my word taken? Do you think, once more, I would offer any thing to your Daughter! Is there any thing looks like it? – Pr'ythee, Man, consider a little who I am, and if I am not to be believ'd, what signifies talking? (96)

But Mr Andrews is not willing to give up and Mr B at last agrees to arrange for Pamela to send a letter where she can confirm that she is alright and well cared for. Mr Andrews, having no other choice, agrees to this. The incident underlines how little say the poor had in society, even when it involved their own family.

When Pamela and Mr B finally admit to their love for each other and decide to get married, they are no closer socially than they were before. Their depending marriage, therefore, entails more than a social climb for her. Mr B's peers might not tolerate his choice for a wife, something Mr B seems quite conscious of:

> But you must know, *Pamela*, that she [Lady Davers] is much incensed, that I will give no Ear to a Proposal of hers, of a Daughter of my Lord – who, said he, neither in Person or Mind, or Acquirements, even with all her Opportunities, is to be named a Day with my *Pamela*. But yet you see the Plea, my Girl, which I made to you before, of this Pride of Condition, and the World's Censure, which, I own, sticks a little too close with me still. For a Woman shines not forth to the Publick as a Man, and the World sees not your Excellencies and Perfections: If it did, I should intirely stand acquitted by the severest Censurers. But it will be taken in the Lump; that here is Mr. *B* – , with such and such Estate, has married his Mother's Waiting-maid; not considering there is not a Lady in the Kingdom that can outdo her, or better support the Condition to which she will be raised, if I should marry her. And, said he, putting his Arm round me, and again kissing me, I pity my dear Girl too, for *her* Part in this Censure; for, here will she have to combat the Pride and Slights of the neighbouring Gentry all around us. Sister *Davers*, you see, will never be reconciled to you. The other Ladies will not visit you; and you will, with a Merit transcending them all, be treated as if unworthy their Notice. … For, as to me, I shall have nothing to do, but, with a good Estate in Possesion, to brazen out the Matter, of my former Jokes on this Subject, with my Companions of the Chace, the Green, and the Assemblée, stand their rude Jests for once or twice, and my Fortune will create me always Respect enough, I warrant you. But, I say, what will my poor Girl do, as to her part, with her own Sex? For some Company you must keep. My Station will not admit it to be with my common Servants; and the Ladies

> will fly your Acquaintance; and still, tho' my Wife, will treat you as my Mother's Waiting-maid (261-262).

This statement made by Mr B clearly shows how their marriage could prove to be more of a burden to Pamela than a blessing. The neighbours and friends of Mr B do not really have the opportunity of excluding Mr B from their company as he holds a high position in the community. He owns too much property, he is too wealthy, and as he is a lawyer and a magistrate, excluding him is not a possibility. Pamela, however, is a different matter. As Mr B points out, the ladies of the upper class will with all probability not want her company. Even though Pamela by marriage will belong to the gentry, Mr B's peers might not tolerate the union, and thus ostracize her. Pamela, considering what Mr B says, replies:

> [M]y greatest Concern will be for the rude Jests you will have to encounter with yourself, for thus stooping beneath yourself. For as to me, considering my lowly Estate, and little Merit, even the Slights and Reflections of the Ladies will be an Honour to me: And I shall have the Pride to place more than half their Ill-will, to their Envy at my Happiness (262).

Being from the humble background that she is, Pamela understands that she might not be accepted. She believes, coming from her poor background, that it is not to be expected that they will fully include her. Pamela's position can be related to the social ranks in the English society of her time. The social groups of the 18th century worked because the people of the time believed in them. The gentry loved their position, and the lower class knew their place. The class you were born into was the class you belonged to. When considering this, it is not strange that Pamela accepts her new position in life with all that it entails. She believes that she is inferior to the gentry, and that even though she by marriage is one of them, she is never really going to be their equal.

Pamela shows over and over again how class conscious she is. She respects those who are of a higher class than her, and she is quite aware of how low her status in society is. She has become quite used to the life she has led in the house of Mrs B but she nonetheless says: "altho' I have liv'd above myself for some Time past, yet I can be content with Rags and Poverty, and Bread and Water, and will embrace them rather than forfeit my good name" (15). She by saying this shows that she remembers, and accepts, who she is and where she comes from. But her class consciousness is shown by many things during the

novel. When she believes she is to go back to her parents she packs away the clothes she has become used to wearing because she feels they do not belong in the humble setting to which she is to return. She instead buys fabric she feels is more appropriate for someone of her social standing and makes herself a new dress.

Later, when she is to be married to Mr B, and Mr B wants her to go back to using the fine clothes she used before she thought she was to return to her parents, Pamela replies: “I will beg of you, Sir, not to let me go fine in Dress; but appear only so, as that you may not be ashamed of it” (265). Pamela, then, even though she will be elevated to the upper class does not seem to think she deserves to show this too well. She again remembers the humble background she comes from.

Lastly, she again shows her awareness of the social classes after she is married. She no longer accepts being treated as an inferior by Lady Davers. However, she also shows that she has not forgotten where she comes from by being willing to do chores that are beneath her current social standing as we will see in chapter 2.2 when her relationship with Lady Davers is discussed more extensively.

2.2 Pamela and the Women of the Upper Class

Being poor as she is, it is not surprizing that not everyone thinks her marriage to Mr B is a good idea. As we have seen above, the poor were by some (or perhaps most) not even regarded as having the same rights as the gentry. One good example of how society regarded Pamela is set forth by Mr B’s own sister, Lady Davers.

This event takes place after the marriage of Pamela and Mr B but the union is not widely known. As Mr B is away on a business trip Pamela is left in the mansion and is expected to meet up with him for dinner at a friend’s house. As Pamela is getting ready to leave, Lady Davers shows up demanding Pamela’s company. As Mrs Jewkes, the housekeeper, wants to save Pamela from the meeting with Lady Davers she warns Pamela of her arrival. Lady Davers, however, does not appreciate being kept waiting and cries out to the

servants to find Pamela. "*I will see the Creature*" and "*Bid the Wench come down to me*" (380) are not exactly the most caring ways to address someone and show clearly how Pamela is regarded by Lady Davers. She feels superior to Pamela, and the names by which she calls her are a way of stating just how little regard she has for Pamela. In the first quote she seems to take Pamela out of the human sphere and in a way places her down with the animals. She refuses to stop addressing Pamela in this way, and continues even after she learns of Pamela's marriage. Pamela has no other option but to go down to Lady Davers where she finds herself being verbally attacked and ridiculed for hours. Lady Davers believes that Pamela has lost her virtue and lives in sin with Mr B and she does not care for the way Pamela treats her. Pamela on her part wants to avoid telling Lady Davers about the marriage but at the same time is not willing to compromise her new station (380-398).

Pamela, in this scene, shows that even though she is quite aware of the fact that she will not be accepted fully into the upper class, she will not accept being treated badly. She can live with not being invited into the social sphere of the other ladies, but she will not be ridiculed by them in what is now her home. By marrying Mr B, she has become a member of the gentry and she will not be treated as an inferior. This is shown by how Pamela refuses to answer some of the questions set forth by Lady Davers, and by her sitting down in Lady Davers' company even when she is not asked to. The fact that Lady Davers sees this as an affront to her, does not change how Pamela behaves. Moreover, her new station in life gives her the right to do these things.

Lady Davers in this scene gives us a taste of how society regards Pamela. Being inferior to the people in the upper class, she is obliged to answer their questions. The poor girl does not have the privilege to resist. In this scene, however, Lady Davers does not believe Pamela to be married to her brother, not even after Pamela sees no other way out than to tell her. Lady Davers is sure her brother has finally won through in his attempts to seduce her and that Pamela has just convinced herself that they have married to justify herself in her own mind. Mr B himself swears to his sister that the marriage is for real. The result is, in his own words:

> She is out of all Patience about it, and yet pretends *not* to believe it. Upon that I tell her, Then she shall have it her own way, and that I am *not*. And what has she to do with it either way? She has scolded and begg'd, commanded and pray'd, bless'd me, and curs'd me, by Turns, twenty times, in these few Hours. And I have sometimes soothed her, sometimes storm'd at her, sometimes argued, sometimes raged; and at last I left her, and took a Turn in the Garden for an Hour to compose myself, because you should not see how the foolish Woman ruffled me; and just now, I came out, seeing her coming in (418).

When Mr B later is able to convince Lady Davers that the marriage has taken place, her tone does not really change: "But, Brother, said she, do you think I'll sit at Table with the Creature? … I cannot, I wo'not sit down at Table with her, said she: *Pamela*, I hope thou dost not think I will?" (427). She seems unwilling to let Pamela partake in the benefits of her own class. For Lady Davers, accepting Pamela as one of her own is an impossibility. The class of a person does not change overnight, and Lady Davers does not have the ability to comprehend that someone that she considers so very much below herself can suddenly be one of her own relations.

And Pamela, being the sweet girl that she is tries to make the situation easier for Lady Davers by suggesting that "if your good Brother will permit it, I will attend your Chair all the time you dine" (427). This clearly shows that Pamela, even though she seems to accept her new social standing, also remembers the place she came from and has an understanding of how her rise in the social order might be difficult for some. What is really interesting about this is that even though Pamela does not tolerate being treated as an inferior, she does to some extent put herself in an inferior position at times (even though she on this occasion is stopped by Mr B as he finds it unacceptable for his wife to wait upon his sister).

However, Lady Davers is not the only representative of the gentry. When Pamela and Mr B finally admit their feelings for each other and decide to marry, Mr B also introduces Pamela to some of his neighbouring friends, Lady Darnford and her daughters, Sir Simon, Mr Peters and Lady Jones. These have a different view of Pamela. Mr B invites this group of people to his house, and introduces them to Pamela. They are taken by her beauty and grace, and welcome her to their company. She is included in their games and conversations, and they seem quite interested in her story. These people show a

completely new side to the people of the upper class. Unlike Lady Davers, they accept Pamela as one of their own. They delight in discovering the marriage and they take Pamela under their wings, so to speak.

These two different ways of relating to Pamela are quite interesting. On the one hand, we find Lady Davers who probably best relays the sentiment of her time. Moving outside of your own social group was possible, but not common or even really tolerated. People should stay within their boundaries, and know their place. For Lady Davers, Pamela's social climb was non-existent and Pamela would never be able to rise to her new position. This view of Pamela probably represents the most common view in contemporary England. On the other hand, we have Mr B's neighbours and friends. These women and men, include Pamela in their group at once, no questions asked. They are happy about the union and welcome Pamela into their company.

What is also interesting when it comes to *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* is the fact that Richardson decided to place the marriage of Mr B and Pamela in the middle, and not at the end of his novel. The second half of the novel concerns itself with Pamela as an upper class wife. It describes how she embraces her new role, and how she fulfils her duties as the wife of Mr B. This is clearly done to justify the marriage and show that Mr B's choice of wife was the right one.

2.3 Jane's Social Status versus that of her Husband

Jane, like Pamela, is of a lower class than her master. The orphaned Jane is originally from a middle class family. After her family dies she is taken in by her wealthy uncle, and his wife promises she will continue to care for Jane when he dies. From early childhood she is reminded of her low status by her aunt, Mrs Reed. She is constantly reminded that she does not belong to the family, and she is often ridiculed by the young Mr Reed, her cousin. She does not have the status of the Reed family but neither is she considered one of the servants. "[Y]ou are less than a servant", says Miss Abbot, "for you do nothing for

your keep" (19). The fact is that Jane does not fit into either group in the household. When Jane then goes to Lowood School for girls she is once again reminded of her low status in society by Mr Brocklehurst, and later in the company of Mr Rochester's party, she is yet again cut off from the good company. She is now an educated but poor woman.

Jane's low status is underlined throughout the novel by what John G. Peters calls the labelling of Jane. By this is meant the ways in which the other characters refer to Jane, as summed up by Peters, as: *little castaway*, *alien*, *angel*, *cat*, *sprite*, *imp*, *fairy*, *fiend*, *beggar*, *rat*, *thing*, *unnatural*, *creature* and *it*. Peters argues that this way of labelling Jane is a way for the other characters to exclude her, both from their own social group and from the human race. She is not really one of them, and to show this they in different ways keep her at a distance. The only places in which this exclusion does not occur is when Jane is at Lowood, even though Mr Brocklehurst in the beginning tries to exclude her, and at Marsh End. Here Jane is included as she is somewhat equal to the others. They are poor but cultivated like her.[23]

Even as a young child, Jane is aware of the differences between the classes. She shows this when recalling the time in her aunt's house when Mr Lloyd talks to her about going to live with other relatives who might be poor:

> 'If you had such, would you like to go to them?'
> I reflected. Poverty looks grim to grown people; still more so to children: they have not much idea of industrious, working, respectable poverty; they think of the word only as connected with ragged clothes, scanty food, fireless grates, rude manners, and debasing vices: poverty for me was synonymous with degradation.
> 'No; I should not like to belong to poor people,' was my reply.
> 'Not even if they were kind to you?'
> I shook my head: I could not see how poor people had the means of being kind; and then to learn to speak like them, to adopt their manners, to be uneducated, to grow up like one of the poor women I saw sometimes nursing their children or washing their clothes at the cottage doors of the village of Gateshead: no, I was not heroic enough to purchase liberty at the price of caste (32).

[23] John G. Peters, "Inside and Outside 'Jane Eyre' and Marginalization through Labeling," *Studies in the Novel* 28, no. 1 (1996), http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA18440991&v=2.1&u=oslo&it=r&p=LitRC&sw=w. (accessed 28.05.11)

She clearly shows that even at a young age she was quite clear about the different classes in the society around her, and she has strong feelings towards people of a lower class than her own.

Nevertheless, Jane does not want to appear above her station either. When she has accepted Mr Rochester's proposal, he tells her

> 'This morning I wrote to my banker in London to send me certain jewels he has in his keeping, - heir-looms for the ladies of Thornfield. In a day or two I hope to pour them into your lap: for every privilege, every attention shall be yours, that I would accord a peer's daughter, if about to marry her' (290-291).

He goes on to say how much he will enjoy dressing her in all these fine jewels but Jane does not feel she deserves this, as she is not married to him yet, and answers:

> 'And then you won't know me, sir; and I shall not be your Jane Eyre any longer, but an ape in a harlequin's jacket, - a jay in borrowed plumes. I would as soon see you, Mr Rochester, tricked out in stage-trappings, as myself clad in a court-lady's robe; and I don't call you handsome, sir, though I love you most dearly: far too dearly to flatter you. Don't flatter me' (291).

However, Mr Rochester does not seem to take notice of her and continues to urge her to go out and buy new, fine clothes, and he wants to buy jewellery for her. Mr Rochester wants Jane to dress as someone of his own class would, even though, he has never seemed to care about the fact that Jane belongs to a slightly lower class than himself before. Jane, however, does not want to dress as someone other than herself:

> Glad I was to get him out of the silk warehouse, and then out of a jeweller's shop: the more he bought me, the more my cheek burned with a sense of annoyance and degradation (301).

Jane knows who she is and she cannot stand to be treated this way by Mr Rochester, as she does not feel that the way he dresses her up is right for her and her station.

Mr Rochester, like Mr B, is a wealthy man. He originally did not inherit from his father. The whole estate was left to his brother but after his brother died, he inherited the family fortune. Having the high social standing that he has, it is expected that he marry within his own class, but he chooses otherwise. Instead of proposing to the beautiful Miss Ingram, who belongs to his own social group and whom everyone expects him to marry, he

decides Jane is the one he wants. Neither Jane nor Mr Rochester considers much the social gap that exists between them; they fall in love and wish to live together.

Even though Jane is originally from a middle class family, her social standing seems much lower than Mr Rochester's. The fact that Jane has no money in some ways pushes her further down the social ladder. As she has no family or husband to support her, she has been forced to go and find work. For Jane, this does not seem a problem; she is content being a governess. Nevertheless, it does mean that she is not her own mistress. When in Mr Rochester's house, she is under his rules. She has to follow, to some extent, his schedule. When he asks for her in the evenings, she has to come, when she needs to go see Mrs Reed on her deathbed she has to go to Mr Rochester to beg leave and to have some money for her journey as she has not had any salary yet. And when Mr Rochester has company, Jane has no other option but to come down even though she really does not want to. The social gap between Jane and Mr Rochester is probably most clear, however, when they talk about what will happen to Jane when he marries Miss Ingram:

> I consider that when a dependant does her duty as well as you have done yours, she has a sort of claim upon her employer for any little assistance he can conveniently render her; indeed I have already, through my future mother-in-law, heard of a place that I think will suit: it is to undertake the education of the five daughters of Mrs Dionysius O'Gall of Bitternutt Lodge, Connaught, Ireland (282).

Of course, Mr Rochester means this ironically. The description of Jane's new station could probably not be worse: she is to take care of no less than five children, to go as far west in Ireland, and thus as far away from Thornfield, as possible, and even the names of her new mistress and the house, O'Gall and Bitternutt Lodge, are as negative – and comic – as it is possible to make them. The reader sees this and is amused by it. Jane, however, does not see that Mr Rochester is not being serious. For Jane, the knowledge of the inferior position she is in to Mr Rochester, and the way someone of her social standing is reliant on having employment, is so overwhelming that she has no other option than to believe him when he tells her that he has found her a new position. She, therefore, believes everything he says and so this passage makes it clear that Jane belongs to a different social group than Mr Rochester. If he is to marry there is no longer a place for

Jane to be there, and he as her employer has made arrangements for her to have another post.

But for Jane and Mr Rochester, the social gap that exists between them does change through the story. When Jane is away from Thornfield and lives with what turns out to be her cousins, she learns that she did have an uncle but that he has died and left her his entire fortune. Being the woman that she is, Jane shares her inheritance with her cousins. Returning to Mr Rochester, Jane tells him: "My uncle in Madeira is dead, and he left me five thousand pounds" (483). This event in Jane's life has to some extent closed the social gap between Jane and Mr Rochester. But another event has also taken place. While Jane has been away, there has been a fire at Thornfield. The fire claimed the life of Mr Rochester's wife, so that he is free to marry if he wishes. The fire also left him disfigured and blind. The changes to his appearance and the fact that he is barely capable of taking care of himself also help, symbolically, to close the gap between them. The "injuries from the fire are necessary to humble him, bring him to religious susceptibility, reduce his power, and make Jane more his equal."[24]

What these events do is to make sure that when we finally get the marriage of Jane and Mr Rochester, they can marry on equal terms; Jane now has her own fortune and is independent:

> 'Ah, this is practical – this is real!' he cried: 'I should never dream that. Besides, there is that peculiar voice of hers, so animating and piquant, as well as soft: it cheers my withered heart; it puts life into it – What Janet! Are you an independent woman? A rich woman?'
>
> 'Quite rich, sir. If you won't let me live with you, I can build a house of my own close up to your door, and you may come and sit in my parlour when you want company of an evening.'
>
> 'But as you are rich, Jane, you have now, no doubt, friends who will look after you, and not suffer you to devote yourself to a blind lameter like me?'
>
> 'I told you I am independent, sir, as well as rich: I am my own mistress' (483).

For the first time, Jane now can truly decide her own life. She has enough of a fortune to keep herself, and she does no longer need to rely on someone else. For Jane, this change is enormous. She can for the first time in her life truly live the life she was born into. Her

[24] Peters, "Inside and Outside 'Jane Eyre'", unpaginated

newfound fortune gives her the security women in the 19th century looked for. As we explored in the introductory chapter, women of the middle class needed to marry to have the security a husband brought with him. As Jane has lived life so far having to go out and support herself through work as a teacher and then a governess, the fortune constitutes a big change, and unlike other women of her class, she does not need to find a husband to secure her financially.

This inheritance puts Jane back in the manner to which she was born. Jane has heard during most of her upbringing how poor she is and that she does not deserve to live in the house of her aunt. However, she one day overhears two of the maids talking and learns that

> …my father had been a poor clergyman; that my mother had married him against the wishes of her friends, who considered the match beneath her; that my grandfather Reed was so irritated at her disobedience, he cut her off without a shilling (33-34).

Jane's mother, then, was originally an upper middle class lady but chose to marry beneath her social standing. As we have seen the social status followed the men, and not the women, and as Jane's grandfather did not accept the marriage, Jane's mother chose a life in poverty. By inheriting this money and thus becoming self-sufficient, she again enters the place in society she was born into.

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2.4 Jane and the Upper Class

Jane, like Pamela, is regarded as a lower being by the women of the gentry. In Jane's world these are represented by Miss Ingram, and her mother. As Mr Rochester is entertaining local friends in his home, Jane is expected to join them in the living room with Adèle after dinner. Jane keeps her distance from the others as best she can but is still able to hear everything they say. One evening the topic of governesses comes up. Miss Ingram turns to her mother and asks her opinion of them. "My dearest, don't mention governesses; the word makes me nervous. I have suffered a martyrdom from their

incompetency and caprice; I thank Heaven I have now done with them" (200) is the answer. She then looks at Jane and says: "I noticed her; I am a judge of physiognomy, and in hers I see all the faults of her class" (200). When Miss Ingram is asked to explain what her mother means she exclaims "Oh, don't refer him to me, mama! I have just one word to say of the whole tribe; they are a nuisance" (201).

Another example of how Miss Ingram regards Jane is found in this quote:

> It required some courage to disturb so interesting a party; my errand, however, was one I could not defer, so I approached the master where he stood at Miss Ingram's side. She turned as I drew near, and looked at me haughtily: her eyes seemed to demand, 'What can the creeping creature want now?' and when I said, in a low voice, 'Mr Rochester,' she made a movement as if tempted to order me away. I remember her appearance at the moment, - it was very graceful and very striking she wore a morning robe of sky-blue crape; a gauzy azure scarf was twisted in her hair. She had been all animation with the game, and irritated pride did not lower the expression of her haughty lineaments.
>
> 'Does that person want you?' she inquired of Mr Rochester; and Mr Rochester turned to see who the 'person' was (250-251).

It is quite clear that Miss Ingram does not appreciate being disturbed by the young governess. As we have seen, she does not have a high regard for governesses and the fact that Jane continuously is asked by Mr Rochester to join them is hard enough to swallow without the interruption to their billiard game. And seeing someone she believes to be her inferior take Mr Rochester's attention away from herself does in no way make Miss Ingram more friendly towards Jane.

But for Jane, the biggest opponent in the upper class is neither Miss Ingram nor her mother; it is the aunt Jane is in the care of during her young years. Mrs Reed is a formidable woman, who, even though she has promised her late husband to take on Jane as her own, detests Jane and does everything in her power to make sure Jane knows she is inferior to Mrs Reed and her own children. Not only does she make it perfectly clear to Jane how she feels but her own children are also told how inferior Jane is and how she should not be regarded as family. In the following quote, in the voice of Mrs Reed's son John, Mrs Reed's feelings towards Jane come through quite well:

> You have no business to take our books, you are a dependant, mama says; you have no money; your father left you none; you ought to beg, and not live here with gentlemen's children like us, and eat the same meals we do, and wear clothes at our mama's expense (17).

Mrs Reed detests the niece of her late husband and when Jane falls sick we get another example of how she is regarded: "I knew him; it was Mr Lloyd, an apothecary, sometimes called in by Mrs Reed when the servants were ailing: for herself and the children she employed a physician (26)," Jane says showing how the mistress of the house does not even see Jane as family enough to get the same medical care as her own children. The incident shows both to Jane and the servants, as well as to the reader, what low regard Mrs Reed has for her.

When Mrs Reed is approached by the apothecary after this visit about the possibility of sending Jane to school, she sees, and takes, the opportunity to get rid of Jane. But many years later Jane is asked to come see Mrs Reed on her deathbed. She has not changed much over the years, and still hates the little baby her husband took a greater interest in than of his own children. Jane is told yet again how her aunt feels about her and of her mother:

> I had a dislike to her mother always; for she was my husband's only sister, and a great favourite with him: he opposed the family's disowning her when she made her low marriage (260).
>
> I hated it the first time I set my eyes on it – a sickly, whining, pining thing! It would wail in its cradle all night long – not screaming heartily like any other child, but whimpering and moaning. Reed pitied it; and he used to nurse it and notice it as if it had been his own: more, indeed, than he ever noticed his own at that age (260).

Just how much Mrs Reed detested her niece becomes clear when the reason why she wanted Jane to come see her on her deathbed is revealed. Several years earlier, Mrs Reed had received a letter from John Eyre, an uncle of Jane's, wanting to come into contact with his niece. Mrs Reed says that in replying to the letter,

> I took my revenge: for you to be adopted by your uncle and placed in a state of ease and comfort was what I could not endure. I wrote to him; I said I was sorry for his disappointment, but Jane Eyre was dead: she had died of typhus fever at

> Lowood….You were born, I think, to be my torment: my last hour is racked by the recollection of a deed, which, but for you, I should never have been tempted to commit (268).

Despite Mrs Reed's need to confess to Jane on her deathbed, her feelings for her have not changed at all. And Jane is painfully aware of this fact:

> Poor, suffering woman! it was too late for her to make now the effort to change her habitual frame of mind: living, she had ever hated me – dying, she must hate me still (269).

But Jane does have a friend in Mrs Fairfax, the housekeeper at Thornfield. She is a distant relative of Mr Rochester and her late husband was a clergyman. Mrs Fairfax, then, actually belongs to the poor aristocracy but changes in her circumstances meant she had to take a job. She is a well-grounded woman who considers herself an ordinary housekeeper. She is quite happy to have Jane come to stay at Thornfield so that she will have someone to talk to. For, as she says:

> I am so glad you are come; it will be quite pleasant living here now with a companion: To be sure it is pleasant at any time; for Thornfield is a fine old hall, rather neglected of late years perhaps, but still it is a respectable place; yet you know in winter time, one feels dreary quite alone, in the best quarters. I say alone – Leah is a nice girl to be sure, and John and his wife are very decent people; but then you see they are only servants, and one can't converse with them on terms of equality: one must keep them at due distance, for fear of loosing one's authority (112).

Mrs Fairfax is really the first person in Jane's life who sees her as an equal and speaks of it. And this extract shows more than anything the different classes at work. Being housekeeper and governess is higher on the social ranking than the servants are, in that they serve a function and have responsibilities beyond that of the common servant. And, of course, the roles of housekeeper and of governess were usually filled by a woman of the middle class who needed to support herself whereas the servants were of the lower class.

Looking at Jane's relationship with the members of the upper class, it becomes evident that they (apart from Mr Rochester himself) do not really consider her at all. She is both for Mrs Reed and the Ingrams almost considered a disturbance in their lives. They do no

really want anything to do with her and they use labels like “creature” to keep her at a distance.

However, the women of the upper class are not alone in excluding Jane, she too excludes herself from them. When observing the company of Mr Rochester, and Miss Ingram in particular, she notes:

> Miss Ingram was a mark beneath jealousy: she was too inferior to excite the feeling. Pardon the seeming paradox: I mean what I say. She was very showy, but she was not genuine: she had a fine person, many brilliant attainments; her mind was poor, her heart barren by nature: nothing bloomed spontaneously on that soil; no unforced natural fruit delighted by its freshness. She was not good; she was not original: she used to repeat sounding phrases from books: she never offered, nor had, an opinion of her own (210).

With these words, Jane actually makes Miss Ingram to be her inferior. Furthermore, she raises Mr Rochester to her own level and removes him from the people of his own class:

> …he is not of their kind. I believe he is of mine; - I am sure he is, - I feel akin to him, I understand the language of his countenance and movements: though rank and wealth sever us widely, I have something in my brain and heart, in my blood and nerves, that assimilates me mentally to him (199).

These words by Jane about Miss Ingram and Mr Rochester show that she seems to assert “her equality based on character, not birth.”[25] For Jane, your birthright is inferior to your character and the values you hold high.

2.5 Concluding Remarks

The social differences between Pamela and Mr B, and between Jane and Mr Rochester come clearly through in the two novels. The two heroines are painfully aware of their low status but neither of them will let their statuses hold them back.

[25] Peters, "Inside and Outside 'Jane Eyre'", unpaginated

In the end, it is Jane's belief that the values a person holds count higher than their birthright, which makes her relationship to Mr Rochester possible. And maybe, can the same be said for Pamela. Like Jane, she too, holds moral values high. And by her insistence on her own virtue and condemnation of those who, in her view let go of their moral values in order to assert themselves over others, Pamela lifts herself, to some extent, above others in her life who have a higher social standing than she does.

But this is not enough when it comes to the relationships between Pamela and Jane and their future husbands. For Mr B to realize and accept his love for Pamela and be willing to make her his wife, Mr B has to recognize other values in Pamela than those of birth. Early on he comments on her writing, saying that she writes " a very pretty Hand, and spell[s] tolerably too. I see my Mother's Care in your Learning has not been thrown away upon you" (12-13). Already, the young girl has been given abilities that belong to someone of a higher standing. But this is not enough. Her master has to recognize her moral values, her devotion to her virtue, as something that can count towards her deserving to be elevated to his station. Apparently, he sees this in her, as we have seen above, and chooses her as his wife. For Mr Rochester, there is no need for this.

> Despite the fact that Rochester accepts the traditional role of nineteenth-century women, he does not fit the stereotypical mold of the nineteenth-century male. His openness concerning his continental affairs, his willingness to engage in bigamy, and his desire to marry a woman so far below his social standing all show that Rochester rejects many of the social conventions of his day, and his willingness to move outside the social mores explains why his relationship with Jane becomes possible.[26]

The social gap between Jane and Mr Rochester is therefore closed before they marry, while for Pamela and Mr B the gap does not close until they are married, and not really even then.

The social inferiority of the two heroines is probably best portrayed by their relationships to the other women of the gentry. For Pamela, Lady Davers, as we have seen, is the greatest opponent. She, as a noble woman, makes a great effort to show how the lower classes were thought of by the gentry. The abuse of Pamela is quite severe, Lady Davers

[26] Peters, "Inside and Outside 'Jane Eyre'", unpaginated

"storms, beats Pamela, calls her names, threatens to strike her down at her feet."[27] But this is before Lady Davers knows that Pamela has married Mr B. This knowledge, however, does not change how Lady Davers views Pamela; she still is referred to as a "creature". Lady Davers does everything possible to prove Mr B's reservations true: Pamela will not be accepted, and her life as a gentlewoman might quite possibly be a lonely one.

In *Jane Eyre*, we have two women showing their superiority over poor Jane. First, we find the aunt, who excludes Jane from her family, forbidding her to play with her cousins. The lady even goes so far as to say that Jane is dead when approached by a relative of hers. And even when Jane has grown and Mrs Reed is on her deathbed she is unable to let go of her hate of Jane and forgive her existence. In her adult life, Miss Ingram, and to some extent her mother, are responsible for keeping Jane well inside her own social group and denying her a place among the gentry. Her comments on governesses in general and of Jane explicitly are made to make the invisible line that exists between the social standing of Jane and the others visible. Miss Ingram's continued comments on Jane to Mr Rochester can be seen as nothing more than a wish to remind him of Jane's low standing as opposed to her own high standing in society.

[27] Golden, *Richardson's Characters*: 48.

3 Relationships

Marriage of course plays an important part in both *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* and *Jane Eyre*. The two novels, in a sense, centre on the thought of marriage. Considering when the novels were written this is not surprizing. Marriage was expected and for a woman marriage was necessary. As women did not usually inherit, they needed the protection and support of their husbands. A woman of the upper class was the exception. Their families usually had enough of a fortune so that the daughter would be supported should she not marry. In the few instances this did not happen, the unmarried woman would need to find a way to support herself; this usually meant that she would find work as a paid companion for another lady of the upper class. This meant that they lived with an upper class family, and their days were spent keeping company with the lady of the house and doing little things for her. For the women of the middle class who did not marry, finding work was often a necessity. They did not have a family fortune to support them, and if no one else in the family could take them in and support them, they would have to find a way to support themselves. The women of the middle classes, then, could find work as governesses and housekeepers. For the women of the lower class marriage did not exclude the necessity of working. They would have to do some work to help support their families even after they married.

As we have seen in Chapter 1, an important goal in a woman's, and a man's, life was to find a suitable spouse and the social ranks were seldom crossed in this search. The families looked for matches to their status both socially and politically, rather than searching for someone their child could love.

When searching for a spouse, the innocence of the young girl also played an important role. The women of the 18th and 19th centuries were not to have had any affairs before they married. For men, however, this was not true. It was somewhat expected in some circles that a man had affairs before he settled down. Despite these double standards, many women did have affairs before and after they married. The difference between a man and a woman was that she had to be more discrete than the man was. If the relationship

became known, it would bring her and her family shame. Another consequence of these pre-marital affairs was the inevitable appearance of children born out of wedlock. The children, representing the loss of virtue for the woman, would either be used to pressure the man into marriage, or, if that did not work, would be placed with someone else in order to hide the affair and protect the woman's reputation.

These rules apply, then, to our two heroines. Both being from a lower class than their prospective husbands, and Pamela being from one of the lowest classes, they would if married rise to the class of Mr B and Mr Rochester. Consequently, they would have to deal with the knowledge that the society around them might not accept the new recruit to their social level. In their company, they would be treated politely and as part of the group but there would be whispering behind their backs. The other members of the upper class would probably never completely see Jane and Pamela as one of their own.

This chapter will take a look at the different proposals in the two novels, and how the girls chose to reply to them. I will also look at the marriages of Jane and Pamela, and at the earlier relationships of Mr B and Mr Rochester.

3.1 Proposals and marriage in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*

In *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, when she is taken to the Wiltshire Estate, Pamela meets one Mr Williams, the clergyman in the area. He befriends Pamela, and wishes to help her. They also start writing secret letters to each other, putting them under a stone in the backyard so no one will know that they are in contact. Mr Williams pities Pamela, and promises her that he will find a way to help her out of her situation. He goes around the neighbourhood trying to find someone willing to stand up for Pamela and get her away from Mr B. Nevertheless, Mr Williams is ineffectual in his attempts to save Pamela, and is

even unable to persuade the vicar to help her.[28] He is told that the vicar is unwilling to go against Mr B. Mr Williams is accused of having selfish reasons for wanting to help Pamela, and that with the power Mr B holds in the community, the vicar is unwilling to put himself in harm's way. Finding nobody willing to help her, Mr Williams proposes to Pamela that they should be married, because, as he says, he knows

> but one effectual and honourable Way to disengage yourself, from the dangerous Situation you are in. It is that of Marriage with some Person that you could make happy in your Approbation. As for my own part, it would be, as Things stand, my apparent Ruin; and, worse still, I should involve you in Misery too. But yet, so great is my Veneration for you, and so intire [*sic*] my Reliance on Providence, on so just an Occasion, that I should think myself but too happy, if I might be accepted (144).

Mr Williams sees that for Pamela to be free of her situation, this is all he can do to help. By doing this, he goes against the wishes of one of the most powerful men in the area, who also happens to be his benefactor, and would lose all his standing in society but he is nonetheless willing to risk this to help Pamela. His motives are not completely selfless, though. He does to some extent have feelings for her but the situation she is in is the main reason he proposes marriage to her.

Pamela, upon receiving his letter with the proposal, writes to her parents for guidance. She explains to them that she does not really want to marry at all but that she would if she saw it as the only way to protect herself. She then writes a letter to Mr Williams turning down the proposal.

> …I cannot think of your Offer without equal Concern and Gratitude; for nothing but to avoid my utter Ruin can make me think of a Change of Condition; and so, Sir, your ought not to accept of such an involuntary Compliance, as mine would be, were I, upon the last Necessity, to yield to your very generous Proposal. I will rely wholly upon your Goodness to me, in assisting my Escape; but shall not, on your account principally, think of the Honour you propose for me, at present; and never, but at the Pleasure of my Parents, who, poor as they are, in such weighty Point, are as much intitled [*sic*] to my Obedience and Duty, as if they were ever so rich. I beg you therefore, Sir, not to think of any thing from me, but everlasting Gratitude…(144-145).

[28] Golden, *Richardson's Characters*: 30.

She says that she will not take anything from him except his help to escape, and that she will not marry him, or anyone, except with her parents' blessing. She does not want to be the wife of Mr Williams, something that becomes evident in the days that follow. Mr Williams one day receives a letter from Mr B saying that he will set him up with the life of the late Mr Fownes. Mr Williams will then have a small rise in standard and he will be more independent. Mr B also says that if they both agree he will allow Mr Williams and Pamela to be married. He states that with Mr Williams' new position Pamela will have the life that she has become accustomed to over the last years. Mr Williams is happy about the letter, and is glad that he already has proposed to Pamela. She on the other hand is more reserved. She cannot help but think that this is another trick from Mr B. Even though Mr Williams is an honourable man and even though he would morally and socially be a great match for Pamela she holds firm that she does not yet wish to marry but still sends a letter to her parents asking for their advice. Mr Williams being as excited as he is by Mr B's letter confides in Mrs Jewkes and tells her everything that has passed between himself and Pamela.

The fact is that Mr B's intention when blessing the union between Pamela and Mr Williams was probably not honourable at all. It is quite easy to come to the conclusion that what he wished to achieve was to have someone ready to take responsibility for Pamela, and a possible child, once – and only then – he should manage to make Pamela succumb to his attempts to seduce her. In the end, everything explodes when Mr B hears about the relationship Pamela and Mr Williams have had behind his back. Mr Williams is put in jail and Pamela remains confined to the estate with Mrs Jewkes. Mr B here makes a point of believing Mr Williams to be a rival and he has no problem squashing his competitor when he wants to. He has no moral dilemma when it comes to having Mr Williams jailed for a small amount of money he had no plans of collecting in the first place.[29]

However, Mr Williams' proposal is not the only one found in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*. There are two more. First we have Mr B's proposal to live together as if they were married, second the actual proposal by Mr B and the following marriage. Mr B is attracted to the young maid left in his care by the death of his mother, but marriage is out

[29] Golden, *Richardson's Characters*: 30.

of the question; she is after all a poor girl of the lower class. Mr B pursues his young maid. Every chance he has he uses to persuade her to let go of her virtue and succumb to his will. But Mr B is in for a tough fight. The moral compass of the young girl is strong and she has many friends among the other servants who want to defend her. As a result of this, he grows impatient and abducts Pamela. Taken to the Wiltshire estate and placed under the watchful eyes of the horrible housekeeper Mrs Jewkes, Pamela continues to defend her virtue. As a last attempt to get Pamela to succumb to his will and become his lover, Mr B at one point proposes the illusion of marriage to Pamela. In a letter to Pamela containing seven points he wants her to consider he has included the following:

> VII. You shall be Mistress of my Person and Fortune, as much as if the foolish Ceremony had passed. All my Servants shall be yours; and you shall chuse any two Persons to attend yourself, either Male or Female, without any Controul of mine; and if your Conduct be such, that I have Reason to be satisfied with it, I know not (but will not engage for this) that I may, after a Twelve-month's Cohabitation, marry you; for if my Love increases for you, as it has done for many Months past, it will be impossible for me to deny you any thing (191).

This passage in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* tells the reader two things. For one, Mr B finally admits to being in love with Pamela. Secondly, he is not willing to marry her, or even commit to marrying her at a later time. The reason for this is, of course, the social gap that exists between them. It is simply frowned upon to marry beneath oneself. Nevertheless, it is clear that the possibility of marrying Pamela has been deliberated on in his mind. For Pamela this proposal is an impossible one. For her, her virtue is the most important point, and this proposal goes against what she believes in. Her answer reflects this:

> …Give me Leave to say, Sir, in Answer to what you hint, That you may, in a Twelvemont's Time, marry me, on the Continuance of my good Behaviour; that this weights less with me, if possible, than any thing else you have said. For, in the first Place, there is an End of all Merit, and all good Behaviour, on my Side, if I have now any, the Moment I consent to your Proposals. And I should be so far from expecting such an Honour, that I will pronounce, that I should be most unworthy of it. What, Sir, would the World say, were you to marry your Harlot? – That a Gentleman of your Rank in Life, should stoop, not only to the base-born *Pamela*, but to a base-born Prostitute? – Little, Sir, as I know the World, I am not to be caught by a Bait so poorly cover'd as this! (192)

This answer by Pamela once again shows how much emphasis she puts on her virtue. She is not willing to compromise herself by giving in to Mr B's wishes. However, her answer also gives us something more. It becomes evident that Pamela in turning down this proposal also takes into account the great difference in social status between them, and how this would later reflect badly on them should she agree to be Mr B's mistress. She shows that she was conscious that her status, should she agree to the affair with Mr B, would move down the social ladder, and this is not something she is willing to do.

During almost the entire first half of the novel, Pamela expresses a need for herself to get away from Mr B. She constantly says that she would rather go back to her parents. She plots with Mr Williams for him to aid her in her escape, and she tries to sneak out from the garden but as we have already seen in the introductory chapter she goes back to her prison when she sees a cow that she thinks is a bull in the pasture. These are all great examples of Pamela's expressed need to escape Mr B. But there is one more example of this. She at one point actually decides to drown herself in the pond in the garden. After walking to the pond, however, she reflects and changes her mind. She decides to go back again because she believes that it is not her decision to make when it comes to what she can bear when it comes to the trials in her life, it is God alone who has the right to decide over life and death.

But in the end, Pamela does manage to escape Mr B. He understands that he will not be able to seduce her, and sends her back to her parents. This is what in the end facilitates the marriage between Pamela and Mr B. He realizes that he cannot live without her, and she finally admits that she does love her master

Finally, we have a real marriage proposal by Mr B. After Pamela turns down his invitation to be his mistress, she is sent back to her parents. On the way there, she receives a letter from Mr B saying that he is in love with her and asking her to come back:

> If you are the generous *Pamela* I imagine you to be, (for hitherto you have been all Goodess, where it has not been merited) let me see, by this new Instance, the further Excellency of your Disposition; let me see you can forgive the Man who loves you more than himself; let me see by it, that you are not prepossess'd in any other Person's Favor (250-251).

Pamela, reading his words to her, realizes that she really does love Mr B and decides to return to him. The two of them now start enjoying each other's company and they decide to be married. The ceremony takes place in a little chapel on the estate. It is a small wedding, only Mr Peters and Mrs Jewkes are present and Mr Williams performs the wedding ceremony, which takes place in secret.

Some time after the wedding, Mr B presents Pamela with 48 rules dictating her behaviour in the marriage. She recaptures these 48 rules alongside her own thought about them in her journal. The rules state that Mr B wants his wife to comply with him even if she thinks him to be wrong, to be flexible and to take their children's education seriously. He wants Pamela to show that he comes before everyone else, that she will do as he asks without hesitation and do so even if he is wrong without dispute. Mr B says that if he should be angry with someone else Pamela will not interfere unless he asks her to. He further feels that his wife should not discuss with him unless it is for his own good, that she should never say anything negative about him in the company of others and that she should overlook any faults he might have. He further expects her to be on her best behaviour with anyone he brings into their home, and in the company of others show him respect and love for her own reputation's sake. When it comes to taking care of their children, he wishes that their education will be overseen so that they are educated in the right manner, that they are not to be spoiled but that they should learn to live with disappointment (448-451).

Pamela looks at these rules and thinks of many of them as good guidelines of how she should behave in her marriage. Many of the rules she seems to accept. She seems, for instance, to agree when it comes to the children's upbringing and education. Other rules she completely disagrees with. When it comes to how he dictates her behaviour if she thinks him to be wrong or if he is in an argument with someone, she finds that these are rules that will be hard to comply with. She even comments on them in her journal saying that he probably does not quite mean this himself. When it comes to the rules stipulating that when in company she should show that she loves him, hide his faults and be on her best behaviour, she does not have any comments. It is in the rules that talk about her obeying him without question and always supposing that he is in the right, that the wilful Pamela we have come to know though the novel shows herself. She will try her best to do what is expected of her but not at the expense of going against herself. For this reason she

looks at some of these rules with humour and decides for herself that they are more guidelines than rules for her to live up to (448-451). She has never been afraid to tell Mr B what she means and she does not intend to stop that now. Pamela continues to be true to herself after she is married. She shows this in more ways than discussing Mr B's rules. She also wants to use her new position in life to help others. She asks Mr B for money that she can give to less fortunate people. Her insistence on helping others shows once again her good manners and proves that even the rich can be good people. Mr B seems to admire this about her.

These events involving proposals and marriage show that marriage to a large extent plays a big part in the story about Pamela. Even though Pamela on more than one occasion states that she does not want to marry, and that she would rather go back to her parents, she in the end is quite happy with the decision to marry. When it comes down to it, Pamela does not have anything against marriage. She knows that in order for her not to be a burden to her parents she needs to find a way to take care of herself. For a woman of Pamela's social standing, marriage was the way to accomplish this. What she seems to reject is the idea that someone should marry because they make a good match socially. The moment she has the opportunity of marrying someone she loves, she does not even consider turning it down.

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3.2 Earlier Affairs in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*

During the story of Pamela, we also learn a lot about Mr B's past. As many men of his time, he was not above having affairs. Pamela is not the first woman he has attempted to seduce, she is however the first to withstand his attempts. This is hinted at throughout the novel, for instance by Lady Davers' "*Ah! brother!*" (21) when Mr B decides to keep Pamela at his house instead of letting her be Lady Davers' waiting-maid. Lady Davers knows her brother too well, and sees his sexual interest in Pamela. The story of one of Mr B's earlier indiscretions is revealed to Pamela, and us, after they are married. One day they stop at a boarding school for girls. One of the girls there calls Mr B "Uncle" (477).

Pamela, realizing that this cannot be true, as his only sibling is Lady Davers who does not have any children, says: “O my dear Sir, tell me now of a Truth, Does not this pretty Miss stand in a nearer Relation to you, than as a Niece?” (478) Mr B confirms Pamela’s suspicions; the young girl is his child from an earlier affair.

When he was young, Mr B met a young lady who was of his own class, and a beauty. He fell in love with her, and she with him. As they started their relationship, her mother found out but instead of cautioning them and keeping them apart, she encouraged the affair. When she surprised him in her daughter’s bedroom, she tried to threaten him into marriage. He resisted and continued the affair in secret, with the result that the young girl became pregnant. After this, the girl was sent out of town to have her baby in secret, and because neither Mr B nor the girl would take care of the girl, Lady Davers took her in and raised her until she could be sent away to school. The child never learned who her father and mother, were (447-487).

This story clearly shows how affairs were conducted in Pamela’s time. Children born out of wedlock were kept hidden to protect the reputation of young women, and men. However, they were also used to persuade someone into marriage. The story, however, also shows something else: the pureness of Pamela and her kindness to others. When Pamela learns who the girl really is, she wants to take her in and have her live with them. Instead of turning away from her, she decides she wants to take care of the child.

The story of Mr B’s earlier affair reflects what went on in society at the time; it is also a parable of what might happen to a young girl who is not as careful as Pamela is. As we have seen earlier, men were almost expected to have some experience with women before they married. The appearance of the child too points back to real-life 18th century England. These secret affairs often resulted in pregnancy, and the child was often hidden away to avoid shame. Because of this, the women often moved to get away from the shame and reputation while the man could continue his life like before.

3.3 Proposals and Marriage in *Jane Eyre*

Like Pamela, Jane too encounters a clergyman. When she leaves Thornfield, Jane stays at Marsh End. She here meets Mr Rivers, a clergyman. Through her friendship with Mr Rivers, Jane sees that he is in love with Miss Rosamond and that she loves him back. Jane tries to convince him that he should court Miss Rosamond but he refuses. He wishes to go to India and become a missionary, and he believes that if he follows this heart and marries Miss Rosamond, thus giving into his worldly desires, this would interfere with his work for God. As a turn of events, however, he proposes to Jane instead:

> ’God and nature intended you for a missionary’s wife. It is not personal, but mental endowments they have given you: you are formed for labour, not for love. A missionary’s wife you must – shall be. You shall be mine: I claim you – not for my pleasure, but for my Sovereign’s service’ (448).

This proposal cannot by any means be said to be romantic. Mr Rivers says that his choice of wife is made on the basis of who would best suit his work as a missionary, and his proposal is based solely on practical reasons. He believes that Jane could fulfil the role of a missionary’s wife. Jane considers this proposal and she says that she will go with him to India but not as his wife. She will come with him as his sister. Mr Rivers, however, refuses this as a possibility. He says that this will not be an option because Jane then would not have the security and respectability of being married. Jane tries to convince him that this could work anyway but Mr Rivers holds firm that if she is to go with him it has to be as his wife. In the end, Jane rejects the proposal. She considers it and finds that a marriage to him will go against the values she believes in and she thus comes to the conclusion that a marriage to Mr Rivers is impossible “not because she rejects the value of missionary work but because she would have to surrender her self in so doing,”[30] And for Jane, the most important thing in the world is to hold true to your own values and to your self, and she does not want a marriage without love.

Like in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded,* there is more than one proposal during the novel. Before Jane leaves Thornfield and meets Mr Rivers, she and Mr Rochester fall in love

[30] Peters, "Inside and Outside 'Jane Eyre'": unpaginated

with each other. They admit this to themselves early on but their relationship takes a while to develop. For a long time Mr Rochester makes everyone, including Jane, believe that he is to marry Miss Ingram. He goes to great lengths to make Jane believe this and the two of them even discuss what she will do after he is married. During one of their conversations about this, Mr Rochester is convinced that Jane loves him back and asks her to marry him:

> ‘And your will shall decide your destiny,’ he said. ‘I offer you my hand, my heart and a share of all my possessions.’(285)

Of course, Jane does not believe him at first so he continues:

> ‘But, Jane, I summon you as my wife: it is you only I intend to marry.’ (285)

After a little convincing that he truly does love her, Jane accepts his proposal and their wedding is planned. In the middle of their wedding ceremony, however, it is revealed that he is already married to the mad woman in the attic. However, Mr Rochester does not love his wife; he is in love with Jane and wishes to spend his life with her. He tries to convince Jane that they are meant for each other and that they should be together despite the fact that he is married to someone else. In an attempt to keep Jane in his life, he proposes that they should live together as if they were married:

> As to the new existence, it is all right: you shall yet be my wife: I am not married. You shall be Mrs Rochester - both virtually and nominally. I shall keep only to you so long as you and I live. You shall go to a place I have in the south of France: a white-washed villa on the shores of the Mediterranean. There you shall live a happy, and guarded, and most innocent life. Never fear that I wish to lure you into error – to make you my mistress. (342)

Mr Rochester has no problem asking Jane to live with him; his only thought seems to be that he does not want to lose Jane. He wants her to pretend to the world around them that they are married and asks her to come with him to another estate he owns. He even tries to purify what he is asking her to do by emphasising the white colour of the house. By explaining that the house is white-washed he in a way tries to make the shame of what he is asking of her go away, saying that it will not be such a sin because they do love each other. Mr Rochester, then, proves that he rejects some of the thoughts of his time. He is quite willing to marry someone beneath him on the social ladder; in fact, he does not see this as a problem at all. But he is also willing to live a life in bigamy. He, by doing this,

rejects the thought of being a typical 19th century male. His beliefs move him away from the norms of his society, and this in the end facilitates the marriage between himself and Jane.[31]

Jane debates with herself in trying to come to a conclusion about what she should do. She is tempted to accept Mr Rochester's proposal. In the end, she refuses to stay with the man she loves because it is more important to her to hold true to her belief in the religious laws.[32] She concludes:

> *I* care for myself. The more solitary, the more friendless, the more unsustained I am, the more I will respect myself. I will keep the law given by God; sanctioned by man. I will hold to the principles received by me when I was sane, and not mad – as I am now. Laws and principles are not for the times when there is no temptation: they are for such moments as this, when body and soul rise in mutiny against their rigour; stringent are they; inviolate they shall be. If at my individual convenience I might break them, what would be their worth? They have a worth – so I have always believed; and if I cannot believe it now, it is because I am insane – quite insane: with my veins running fire, and my heart beating faster than I can count its throbs. Preconcieved opinions, foregone determinations, are all I have at this hour to stand by: there I plant my foot (356).

For Jane, the suggestion from Mr Rochester that they should live together as man and wife without being married is never really a possibility. She holds her belief in the religious laws too high, and she realizes that if she was to agree to his suggestion she would go against everything she believes in. And this, she is not willing to do. Like she turned down Mr Rivers' proposal in order for her not to go against her own beliefs, she has to say no to Mr Rochester's offer to live with him as his mistress because it would mean that she gave "up her values and her self in order to belong."[33] Jane has lived her whole life as an outsider, as shown by the other characters' labeling of Jane. The fact that they put these labels on her has kept her outside of every company, and she too uses labels on herself, placing herself on the outside. She places greater emphasis on character and values than she does birth, and for this reason, she could never accept the proposal of Mr Rivers, nor the offer from Mr Rochester to be his wife in anything but name. The acceptance of either

[31] Peters, "Inside and Outside 'Jane Eyre'": unpaginated
[32] Peters, "Inside and Outside 'Jane Eyre' ": unpaginated
[33] Peters, "Inside and Outside 'Jane Eyre'": unpaginated

of these would mean that she would have to compromise her own values, and this she would never do.

Jane, then, like Pamela, in a way escapes Mr Rochester. She leaves Thornfield because she cannot remain in a situation where she feels she goes against her beliefs. This time away from Thornfield makes possible the later marriage with Mr Rochester. Jane inherits her uncle, and is now capable of taking care of herself. She finally has the means necessary to live the life she is meant for. At the same time Mr Rochester becomes injured and his wife dies so that he is now able to marry Jane. The fact that he has become blinded makes him reliant on Jane. All these events make possible the union of Jane and Mr Rochester and, in the end, when Jane comes back to Thornfield a self-sufficient woman and finds Mr Rochester in his new condition they do marry. The events in their lives have, as we have seen in Chapter 2, taken away the social gap that once existed between them, and they marry on equal terms. They had a small wedding: only the parson and clerk were present. No one else even knew about the marriage taking place until she informs them of it after the ceremony. After the marriage has taken place, Jane goes to see little Adèle who has been sent to school. Seeing that the girl does not like her school, Jane takes her home and wants to be her governess again. She explains, however, that seeing as her husband now takes up all of her time, she finds this impossible and sends the girl to another school, closer to where they live. The summary at the end of the novel where Jane explains this, clearly shows that their marriage takes the form of a typical marriage at the time. As shown in Chapter 1, the wife when married had four main duties. These include obeying and taking care of her husband and the house. Jane does this with pleasure. She is content to take care of Mr Rochester and managing their house, and when their children are born, she takes responsibility for them too.

3.4 Other Love Connections in Jane Eyre

There are other love connections in *Jane Eyre* in addition to the ones we have seen above. Two of them include Mr Rochester, and I will focus on them. Jane comes to Thornfield to

be governess for the little girl Adèle. She lives under the care of Mr Rochester but it takes a while before Jane learns how it came to be that he is Adèle's caretaker. During a picnic in the gardens, Jane and Mr Rochester talk and Jane is told the story of little Adèle. Mr Rochester tells the story about a French dancer with whom he had an affair. His feelings for her were so strong that he set her up with her own apartment and servants. It became clear, however, that she had only used him for his money and that she had continued dating other men without his knowing. He left her in a rage but some years later heard that she had abandoned her daughter which she previously had sworn was his child. He felt sorry for the girl and decided to take her in so that she could "grow up clean in the wholesome soil of an English country garden" (164). He is quite clear, however, that he does not believe Adèle to be his child for he sees "no proofs of such grim paternity written in her countenance" (164).

Young Adèle's story, then, reflects how a group in society supported themselves and was seen. Mr Rochester, after telling the story, says to Jane:

> but now you know that it is the illegitimate offspring of a French opera-girl, you will perhaps think differently of your post and protégée: you will be coming to me some day with notice that you have found another place – that you beg me to look out for a new governess, &c. – eh? (164-165)

But Jane would never do this. She does not consider Adèle to have part in the shame of her mother, as was common in society at the time. She believes that the girl should not be weighed down by the faults of the mother, and being an orphan Jane decides to take even better care of her. Once again, then, Jane rejects the common sentiments of the time. Usually the child would bear an equal share in the shame of her mother.

What this story shows was a common situation in the 19th century. Women who worked as actresses, or in this case dancers, did not make enough money to support themselves. For this reason, they would latch on to wealthy men, being a sort of luxury prostitute, a woman kept by a succession of men. This was not unusual and as with any affair, pregnancy was a real risk. The women and their children if they had any, then, had to bear the shame in society.

This is not the only woman who has passed through Mr Rochester's life. The mad woman who lives at Thornfield under the constant guard of a servant is also a link to Mr Rochester's previous life, and the story is one he would rather forget. As a young man, his own father and the girl's family tricked Mr Rochester. The girl's family wanted a husband for their daughter and offered a substantial dowry, and Mr Rochester's father, having decided that the whole family fortune was to go to Mr Rochester's brother, wanted to find a way of securing him enough of a fortune that he could be self-sufficient. After they were married, it became clear that the woman was mad. She became increasingly mad, up to the point where she needed to be locked up under constant supervision for her own, and others' protection (434-439).

Mr Rochester's unfortunate marriage is yet another example of how society worked. It was not only women who needed to marry, but also younger sons of upper class families who were not to inherit, who often married daughters from wealthy families who would bring money to the union.

3.5 The Religious Convictions of Jane and Pamela

The events surrounding marriage and proposals in *Jane Eye* and *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* shows how strong the girls' belief in God really is. The decisions they make and the answers they give to the men in their lives are all rooted in their religious beliefs.

Pamela shows this on many occasions. One of the strongest expressions of this is when she goes to drown herself in the pond, but reflects:

> …who gave thee, presumpuous as thou art, a Power over thy life? Who authoriz'd thee to put an End to it, when the Weakness of thy Mind suggests not to thee a Way to preserve it with Honour? How knowest thou what Purposes God may have to serve, by the Trials with which thou art now tempted? Art *thou* to put a Bound to God's will, and to say, Thus much will I bear, and no more? And wilt thou *dare* to say, that if the Trial be augmented, and continued, thou wilt sooner die than bear it? (173).

This event clearly shows her religious convictions. But there are many other instances as well. Pamela's religious beliefs are present in everything she does. When she turns down the proposal to live together as if married, it is because it goes against her religious belief about what only belongs to the married state.

By refusing to succumb to Mr B's attempts to seduce her, she also shows how strong her convictions are. In a letter to her parents she says:

> But that which gives me most Trouble is, that you seem to mistrust the Honesty of your Child. No, my dear Father and Mother, be assur'd that, by God's Grace, I will never do any thing that shall bring your Gray Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave. I will die a thousand Deaths rather than be dishonest any way (15)

It also becomes clear where her religious convictions come from. Her father writes her:

> If you love *us* then, if you value *God*'s Blessing, and *your own* future Happiness, we both charge you to stand upon your Guard; and, if you find the least Attempt made upon your Virtue, be sure you leave every thing behind you, and come away to us; for we had rather see you all cover'd with Rags, and even follow you to the Church-yard, than have it said, a Child of ours preffer'd worldly Conveniencies to her Virtue (14).

Both Pamela and her parents, then, hold their belief in God and the importance of Virtue higher than anything in their lives.

In *Jane Eyre*, the religious convictions also come through quite clear. When considering the proposal to stay with Mr Rochester even though they cannot be married, Jane says: "I will keep the law given by God…I will hold to the principles received by me when I was sane…" (356). She truly believes that the laws of God are there for the times when you would rather they did not exist, more than they are made for times without temptation. Her resolve is also shown in her answer to Mr Rochester:

> Do as I do: trust in God and yourself. Believe in heaven. Hope to meet me again there (355).

For Jane, like for Pamela, it is not up to her to decide what principles to hold firm. It has already been decided by God and it is not her place to go against them.

3.6 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has pointed to many similarities between *Jane Eyre* and *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*. When it comes to relationships between men and women, society had not changed all that much in the hundred years that divide the two novels. Take for instance the appearance of the daughter of Mr B and that of Mr Rochester, and these men's previous affairs. For both Mr B and Mr Rochester, their past is not something they boast about. The fact that they have had affairs was not quite shocking, and even though they as men got out of these relationships with their reputations intact, it is not something one would put forth and tell everyone about. Their stories show common events in their time. It was usual to have secret affairs. Pregnancy was a common result and the women were the ones having to bear the shame should the affairs become known. Their stories share many similarities. Mr B tells the story of a love affair that ended with a pregnancy and with the woman moving away in shame. Mr Rochester's story is about an earlier love of his who had a child she insisted was his. When she moved to another country, he felt obliged to take care of the child even though he does not believe he is her father. Their stories also contain the fact that there is an attempted trick to get the women in them married. If we compare Mr B's story with the story about Mr Rochester's wife, we see that in both cases there was some outside pressure to get married. In Mr Rochester's case, the pressure worked and he married a woman he did not really know. For Mr B, this turned out differently. Even though the woman's mother tried to make him marry her daughter he, nonetheless, refused to be married.

Another example of the similarities between the two novels is the appearance of the two clergymen. They both offer marriage to Pamela and Jane respectively, though not necessarily out of love, or at least not primarily. Mr Rivers proposes in order to fulfil what he believes to be God's will: to give Jane the opportunity to serve God by being a missionary. Mr Williams, on his side, proposes to Pamela because he can see no other way for her to escape her captivity. Furthermore, the professions of the two men, Mr Williams and Mr Rivers, also happens to hold another similarity between the two novels; both men represent the divine, as they are both clergymen.

Religion is, then, a common theme in the two novels. As we have seen both Pamela and Jane place great emphasis on their religious convictions even when they are tempted to do otherwise.

The proposals from the clergymen also show that both Pamela and Jane have values that are more important to them than the security of a marriage. Seeing this together with the opportunity they have of living with the men they love as – at least it will appear to outsiders – actually married, their coinciding values are made clear. For Pamela the proposed arrangement by Mr B is impossible because of her belief that her virtue is her most valuable asset, and her expressed claim is that she would rather go back to her parents and be poor than compromise her virtue. When it comes to Jane, she seems to struggle more with her decision not to live with Mr Rochester. Jane, like Pamela, loves her "master"; in fact, she has already agreed to marry him. However, as marriage now has become impossible her choice of running off with him and living with him is appealing. Her final decision, however, could not be any different. Her reply is founded on the laws of God, just as Pamela's are. Both girls have no choice but to decline the proposals by the clergymen and the offers to live as if married because they hold their beliefs in God and the rules of society higher than their own wishes. If they were to agree to either of these men, they would go against what they believe in, and neither Pamela nor Jane is willing to do this.

In the end both girls, of course, get to marry the man they love. Like Cinderella, they overcome the obstacles in their lives and are rewarded with the best possible life. Pamela, in her marriage, shows that she is ready to embrace all that society expects of a wife, but she also lets us see that she does not intend to lose herself. If Mr B thinks that he has tamed her he is wrong, if Pamela does not agree with him she will stand up for herself just as much as she did before they were married. Jane's married life we learn little about. What she does tell us is that she finds great pleasure in being everything to her husband and taking care of him but we also learn that she does not give up her self in so doing. For instance she still insists on taking the best care she can of little Adèle. The two women, then, both accept what is expected of them in a marriage but do not abandon their values in so doing. It is still important for them to be true to themselves.

4 Verbal Echoes

The examples given so far in this thesis show similarities in the events of *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* and *Jane Eyre*. However, the events are not all that they have in common. The novel *Jane Eyre* contains what can only be called verbal echoes from *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*.

As I explained in the introductory chapter, the term intertextuality includes "open and covert citations and allusions."[34] Verbal echoes is one way in which the author references another literary work. In this chapter I will look at the verbal echoes found in Jane Eyre and what they do to the novel.

4.1 "Master"

The first verbal echo, and probably the most prominent one, is the way in which both Jane and Pamela address their future husbands. The word "master" is widely used by both girls. For Pamela the title, which she uses throughout the novel, shows how very much below him she is on the social ladder. By using the word "master" for Mr B, she shows how much respect she has towards people of the upper class. This respect is almost without condition. Pamela believes that their higher position in life entitles them to the respect of someone of her own social standing. At one point, however, Pamela writes to her parents:

> O this Angel of a Master! this fine Gentleman! this gracious Benefactor to your poor *Pamela*! who was to take care of me at the Prayer of his good dying Mother; who was so careful of me, lest I should be drawn in by Lord *Davers*' Nephew; that he would not let me go to Lady *Davers*'s: This very Gentleman (yes, I must call him Gentleman, tho' he has fallen from the Merit of that Title) has degraded himself to offer Freedoms to his poor Servant! He has now shew'd himself in his true Colours, and to me, nothing appears so black and so frightful (21-22).

[34] Abrams and Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms:* 364.

It is clear that in her mind, doing something that goes against the moral values, which Pamela holds high, is something that gives reason for re-evaluating the respect you give them. She feels that Mr B has overstepped in the way he has talked to her, and as a result, she no longer feels that he lives up to his title as gentleman. The title "master", however, she continues to use. She never stops using this title. Even after they are married, Pamela keeps insisting on calling Mr B master. This shows how inferior Pamela feels even after she is married and has inherited his social standing. As I explored in chapters two and three, Pamela does to some extent embrace her new position in society. She uses her new social standing to help the poor in the community around her, and she accepts to be treated as an inferior by Lady Davers only up to a point. Pamela, however, does not fully embrace her new station. When Lady Davers refuses to eat with Pamela, she does say that she will wait upon her new sister-in-law at dinner if she will be more comfortable with that.

> Indeed, Madam, said I, if your good Brother will permit it, I will attend your Chair all the time you dine, to shew my Veneration for your Ladyship, as the Sister of my kind Protector (427).

Of course, Mr B does not permit this, as it will be beneath his wife to do this. However, the incident shows that even though Pamela is elevated and to some extent embraces her new station, she, nonetheless, still seems to feel inferior. This can explain the fact that she insists upon addressing her husband as "master".

In *Jane Eyre*, we come across the title "master" again. Jane, when speaking about Mr Rochester, uses the term.

> But in other points as well as this, I was growing very lenient to my master: I was forgetting all his faults, for which I had once kept a sharp look-out. It had formerly been my endeavour 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 judgement. Now I saw no bad (212).

Jane, then, uses the term, even though she places herself and Mr Rochester as equals based on their character. Considering the fact that she still uses the title shows that even though Jane seems to place more emphasis on the strength of people's character rather than on the station into which they are born, she still recognizes her place in society by the

standards of her time. By using “master” when talking about Mr Rochester, Jane shows the social gap between them that to some extent seems to be missing otherwise in the novel. Jane and Mr Rochester seem for the most part to regard themselves as equals, even though they do belong to different social spheres. Jane’s use of the word “master” in relation to Mr Rochester emphasises the gap that exists between them.

In his notes in this edition of *Jane Eyre*, Michael Mason comments on the following paragraph where Jane looking at Mr Rochester comments on his appearance:

> My master’s colourless, olive face, square, massive brow, broad and jetty eyebrows, deep eyes, strong features, firm, grim mouth, - all energy, decision, will, - were not beautiful, according to rule; but they were more than beautiful to me: they were full of an interest, an influence that quite mastered me, - that took my feelings from my own power and fettered them in his. I had not intended to love him: the reader knows I had wrought hard to extirpate from my soul the germs of love there detected; and now, at the first renewed view of him, they spontaneously revived, green and strong! He made me love him without looking at me (198).

Michael Mason says that the use of ‘mastered me’ makes “explicit the psychological implications of Jane’s rather insistent use of ‘master’ to address or refer to Rochester (the usage recalls that in Richardson’s *Pamela)”* (516). By giving this clear connection back to *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, Brontë points to the fact that Jane, like Pamela, is inferior to her future husband. The readers of both *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* and *Jane Eyre*, then, have the advantage of learning more about Jane’s feelings towards the classes by recollecting Pamela’s view on the subject. The fact is that both Pamela and Jane to some extent use the word “master” for the same reason. The usage of the word places the two girls in an inferior role to their men. By using this term the social gap that does exist between Jane and Mr Rochester and between Pamela and Mr B becomes evident.

4.2 The Fortune tellers about the Girls' Hands

While Pamela is being kept at Lincolnshire they are visited by a gypsy fortune teller who wishes to tell the fortune of Pamela and Mrs Jewkes. She first reads the palm of Mrs Jewkes, then proceeds to Pamela's, but says:

> I cannot tell your Fortune: your Hand is so white and fine, that I cannot see the Lines... (223-224).

Using a handful of dirt, she proceeds to darken Pamela's palm before telling her fortune. Pamela later realizes that the fact that the gypsy disturbed the ground was a sign. As soon as she has the opportunity, she goes back and discovers a letter warning her that Mr B is planning a sham-marriage. The appearance of the gypsy, then, is used as a warning to Pamela.

The fortune teller incident is to some extent copied in *Jane Eyre*. At Thornfield they are one day visited by a gypsy-like fortune teller demanding to read the fortune of every woman in the house. When it is Jane's turn to have her fortune told, this fortune teller also wants to read Jane's palm but here too the fortune teller runs into problems. In trying to read the palm she says:

> 'It is too fine,' said she. 'I can make nothing of such a hand as that; almost without lines…' (223).

As we can see, the words of the fortune teller in *Jane Eyre* are almost the same words used in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*. It is evident that this scene is lifted from the earlier novel but it serves a slightly different purpose. While the fortune teller in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* serves as a warning about Mr B's next mischief, the fortune teller in *Jane Eyre* is there as an excuse for Mr Rochester to find out how Jane feels towards him.

An interesting aspect on this verbal echo is the fact that the incident is used for very different purposes in the two novels. Brontë, here, has lifted the words of Richardson's fortune teller but has chosen to change the context of it. While Richardson used the fortune teller to further enhance his plot by using it to let Pamela know something she, and subsequently the readers, would otherwise never know, Brontë uses the fortune teller

incident to assist Mr Rochester in learning more about Jane and to some extent further their relationship.

What is also interesting about these quotes is the emphasis on the fine hands of the two girls. The people of the working and lower classes would have hard, coarse hands as a result of the everyday work they were doing. The fine hands where the lines are almost invisible were associated with people of the upper class. In a way the statements by the fortune tellers, then, emphasize the special position of the two girls. This is most prominent when it comes to Pamela, of course. Her position in society indicates that her hands would be coarser and blistered. By introducing the reader to the state of her hands, Richardson draws attention to the special situation Pamela is in. He emphasizes the pureness of Pamela and her right to be elevated to the upper class. By pointing back to *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, Brontë has the advantage of saying these things about Jane too, without actually having to say it. The implication that Jane is too good for the life she has is conveyed to the readers by making use of their knowledge of *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*.

4.3 The Speeches

The last verbal echo found in the two novels is somewhat more hidden. It is found in the speech Pamela gives Mr B early on in the novel, which is drawn on by Brontë in Jane's speech to Mr Rochester when she decides she cannot stay with him after he marries Miss Ingram. The two speeches have a lot in common but they are also very different.

Pamela's speech is found quite early in the novel, in letter 27. Mr B has just insulted her by saying that instead of going home to her father where her fine hands and beautiful face would not be of any use to her, she should instead go to London and live as a luxury prostitute. Of course, Mr B does not say this directly. He says that he will arrange for her to go to London with Mrs Jervis, the housekeeper. He says that Mrs Jervis could buy a house there and let rooms to Members of Parliament and that with Pamela there posing as

her daughter, the house should always be full of paying guests. The implication in this suggestion by Mr B is, however, that Pamela should become a prostitute. This is an insult Pamela cannot bear and she says:

> You do well, Sir, said I, to even your Wit to such a poor Maiden as me! But, Sir, let me say, that if you was not rich and great, and I poor and little, you would not insult me so in my Misery! – Let me ask you, Sir, if you think this becomes your fine Cloathes! and a Master's Station? … Let me alone! I will tell you, if you was a King, and said to me as you have done, that you are no Gentleman: And I won't stay to be used thus! I will go to the next Farmer's and there wait for Mrs. *Jervis*, if she must go: And I'd have you know, Sir, that I can stoop to the ordinary'st Work of your Scullions, for all these nasty soft Hands, sooner than bear such ungentlemanly Imputations (69-70).

Jane for a long time believes that Mr Rochester is to be married to Miss Ingram, and she feels that when the time comes that he marries, she will no longer be able to live at Thornfield. After he ironically says that he has arranged a new position for her in Ireland, Jane decides that she needs to leave him. She truly believes that he is to be married to someone else, and she feels she cannot stay at Thornfield any more:

> Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain and little, I am soulless and heartless? – You think wrong! – I have as much soul as you, - and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty, and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you. I am not talking to you now though 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!' (284).

The two speeches, then, as shown above, serve different functions. For Pamela, it is a way for her to tell Mr B that, inferior as she might be, she does not deserve to be treated this way. It clearly shows how strong Pamela is, and how she stands up for herself. For Jane, the speech shows how she places herself and Mr Rochester as equals, and expresses just how strong feelings she has for Mr Rochester.

The most prominent similarity in these speeches is when Pamela says "that if you was not rich and great, and I poor and little, you would not insult me so in my Misery!", and Jane echoes "Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain and little, I am soulless and heartless?". Pamela here clearly point to the fact that she is Mr B's inferior. In this

passage, she shows how aware she is of the social gap that exists between herself and Mr B. By echoing Pamela, Jane too points to her inferior position. Both girls show how different their circumstances are from their masters. Neither of them has, really, the right to talk this way to someone so very much above them socially but their belief in what they are saying is so strong that they cannot be silent.

The two speeches serve different functions. For Pamela, the speech is a way for her to tell Mr B that even though she is his inferior in many ways, she will not be treated badly by him. For Jane, the speech has a slightly different purpose. For her the speech is an explanation for why she has to leave Thornfield and Mr Rochester. She says that even though she loves him, she must leave because he can never give her what she needs of him. He is not free to love her and she therefore needs to leave in order to protect her own heart.

The reason for the speeches, then, is somewhat different and thus they serve different functions in the two novels but they also tell us something about the two girls. The speech Pamela makes is in some way a means for her to hold her ground when it comes to Mr B. She does not appreciate the way he is treating her. Looking at Pamela's speech, it becomes clear just how strong she is even though she is inferior to Mr B. She in no way accepts to be treated badly by him, and she is not afraid to tell him what she thinks of him. She, in this passage and many more, shows how strong she is when it comes to defending her own virtue.

When reading Pamela's speech it becomes obvious how strong she really is. Being inferior in every way does not stop her from standing up for what she believes, and let Mr B know that even though his station in life might entitle him to do as he wants, she condemns him for it. Drawing on Pamela's speech, Brontë shows Jane's strength as well. Jane shows in her speech that she too believes strongly in her own value. She shows that her belief in the religious laws is what is most important to her and that she will give up everything else in order for her to keep to them.

Another similarity in these speeches is that both of the girls talk about leaving, Pamela because she has had enough of what she feels is Mr B's abuse of her, Jane because she needs to get away from Mr Rochester if he is to marry someone else. For both the girls,

the reason, then, is ultimately to escape a situation, which they feel, is not good for them. The girls, then, to some extent show that they are strong enough to put themselves first.

Even though the two speeches seem quite different, the tone in them is quite similar. When knowing about Pamela, and keeping her speech in mind, the words Jane speaks have traces of Pamela. There is something about the words Jane says that remind us about Pamela. The fact that they do remind us about each other does link the two novels in a very special way. Like all the other similarities and verbal echoes found, the speech Jane gives Mr Rochester shows her strength, and the fact that it shares similarities with Pamela's speech to Mr B does in no way lessen the focus on the strength Jane shows.

Pamela shows in her speech, as well as other places during the novel, that she is a strong woman. She stands up for what she believes in and has no reservations about letting Mr B know how she feels. Jane in her speech also shows that she puts her beliefs before what she might wish for herself. The strength of both girls clearly comes through in the two novels and in these speeches especially.

4.1 Concluding remarks

The verbal echoes explored here in this chapter all give us, the readers, a sense that what happens in *Jane Eyre* has happened before. By drawing on the experiences of Pamela, Brontë has the advantage of giving what she writes more meaning. The way she has Jane use the word "master" when talking to Mr Rochester we are reminded of the situation in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* where Mr B really is Pamela's master in every way, and where she has no way of escaping what is happening to her. For Jane, the situation is not quite the same, she is to a large extent free to leave as she pleases but by drawing on *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, the difficulty Jane has about her own situation becomes clearer. She might want to leave, and at one point she actually manages to do so, but it is with great difficulty.

The passages where both Jane and Pamela tell their masters what they really think, the speeches, also tell us more than what is actually said. When reading Jane's speech you can almost hear Pamela. We are reminded of the struggle Pamela went through to protect herself, and the strength she shows is transferred to Jane. Again, the situation is completely different, but the knowledge of *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* strengthens the feeling that Jane is a strong woman who stands up for what she believes in.

When it comes to the statements of the two fortune tellers, we find another clear link between the two novels. The emphasis on the white hands, the hands of the upper class, and the use of almost the exact same words strengthen the relationship between *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* and *Jane Eyre* and makes us once again find a meaning for the first which can be used on Jane as well.

Even though the events where we find the verbal echoes serve slightly different purposes, the meaning of them does not change. Pamela is a poor girl who cannot escape the situation she is in but who still has enough strength and self-confidence to stand up for what she believes in, and in Jane we see the same properties. The fact that we are constantly reminded of the strong, wilful Pamela only underlines the strength of Jane and shows the difficulties in her situation.

5 Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to find out if there is evidence of intertextuality between *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* and *Jane Eyre*. The thesis has systematically gone through every similarity I have found in the two novels with an emphasis on the difference in the social standing of the two girls, the way relationships and marriage are portrayed, and the instances of what I believe to be verbal echoes. Going through the similarities found, I think I have enough evidence to say that Charlotte Brontë probably did use Richardson's novel for inspiration when writing about Jane Eyre. The similarities are just too many to be a coincidence, and the likeness between the two girls and their stories are too great.

It becomes clear when reading *Jane Eyre* that Brontë has taken elements from Richardson's novel and used them in the work on her novel. When we look at the social differences between Jane and Mr Rochester, we see traces of the relationship between Pamela and Mr B. The way both girls choose to use the word "master", as shown in Chapter 4, is an example of this. The class consciousness of the two girls, examined in Chapter 2, is another example.

In some instances Brontë has taken the elements from Richardson's novel and used them in a slightly different way. This is, for instance, evident in the way she presents the fortune teller in her story. The "woman" says almost exactly the same as the fortune teller in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* and thus makes us remember the earlier novel, but Brontë's fortune teller serves a slightly different function than the one in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*. As we have seen in Chapter 4, the fortune teller from Richardson's novel is used to convey information which would not have been possible to give in any other way, while the fortune teller in Brontë's novel is there to further the relationship between Jane and Mr Rochester.

In some cases Brontë uses the scenes from Richardson's novel and places them in a new context but the messages they send and the function they serve are the same in both novels. Most of the examples can be said to be of this kind. If we look at the past relationships of Mr B and Mr Rochester, and their children who were a result of these

affairs, the stories are quite similar in both novels: both men had relationships when they were younger, they both had a child as a result of this (even though Mr Rochester questions the fact that he is the father of the child), and the young women they had the affairs with were shamed and moved overseas. These stories are quite similar, but while Mr B confesses this because Pamela already has a strong reason to suspect it, Mr Rochester volunteers the information to Jane. The end result, however, is the same. Both Richardson and Brontë use this to convey the kindness and caring nature of Pamela and Jane.

When looking at the different proposals in the two novels, both the proposals to marry and the proposals to live together as if married, the effect is the same in the two novels. We are shown by the answers to these the values of the two girls. In *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, Mr Williams' proposal is turned down, because Pamela wants to marry with the blessing of her parents and because she does not love Mr Williams; Mr B's proposal to live together as man and wife without actually being married is turned down because Pamela believes that this is immoral. In *Jane Eyre*, the proposal by Mr Rivers is turned down and the proposal by Mr Rochester to live together even though they cannot be legally married is turned down because Jane believes that the social conventions are there for a reason, and that acting against them would go against the laws of God.

Yet another similarity is the relationship Jane and Pamela have with members of the upper class. As shown in Chapter 2, the women of the upper class, represented in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* by Lady Davers and in *Jane Eyre* by Mrs Reed, does not accept the two girls. They constantly do everything in their power to remind Jane and Pamela how inferior their social statuses are.

What is interesting about the two girls, is that even though they socially are inferior to their future husbands and respect their place in society, they also to some extent seem to believe themselves to be equals to them. Jane expresses this when evaluation Mr Rochester and his company but Pamela is not quite so forward. She does, however, expect to be treated as more of an equal after she is married. However, equal as they may believe themselves to be, both Pamela and Jane have a clear understanding about their place in

society. Neither girl wishes to be portrayed as something they are not, as shown by their refusal to wear the clothes of the upper class before they are married.

The two novels conform well to the society they were written in. The division of the classes is clearly portrayed, and we are shown the extreme superiority of the upper class by how the people of the lower class are treated. The way Mr B uses Pamela, but also how he has the power to jail Mr Williams, how he dismissed his servants because they do not obey him when he is being unreasonable, and the way he turns away Pamela's father are all good examples of the "greatness" of the upper class. In *Jane Eyre*, this is best shown by the treatment she receives both from her aunt and from Miss Ingram.

In both novels, we also find a warning to the young girls who are tempted to be seduced before they marry. By putting forth the stories of Mr B's and Mr Rochester's earlier affairs we are shown what could happen to both Jane and Pamela should they do what Mr B and Mr Rochester want. If a woman had relationships outside of marriage, it was important that these were kept secret. The social conventions did not allow for this, and should the woman become pregnant her life would change dramatically. Most likely, she would move away in order to escape the shame that having a child outside of wedlock brought with it.

One interesting point to make is that even though Brontë clearly has taken elements from Richardson's novel and used it for inspiration in her work, she has toned down some of the more controversial sides to Richardson's novel. When we look at the two girls we see that Jane is poor does not really belong to the lower class, she just does not have the monetary funds that most others of her station have. This means that the gap between Jane and Mr Rochester is not so great as that between Pamela and Mr B. Brontë does not really have to produce any evidence that Jane is deserving of her marriage. Richardson, however, chose to take a lowly servant and show by means of her lucky education, which she has received from her late mistress, and by the way in which she carries herself that she deserves to climb the social ladder, and that she will be able to do so.

The fact that we are presented with all these similarities between *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* and *Jane Eyre* affects our reading of the latter. Pamela is shown as a strong, wilful girl of the lower class who stands up for herself when she feels threatened or badly

treated. She has, despite her low breeding, had the fortune of being educated in the tasks of a gentlewoman and can thus be said to deserve a rise in social standing. The fact that she holds firm to her values and believes in them and defends them with all the strength she can muster also suggests that this is a woman who would deserve to be rewarded by a rise in society. The fact that she eventually is given the chance to prove herself as an upper class woman truly makes this a sentimental novel, a rags-to-riches story. When we then read *Jane Eyre* and see all the similarities with *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* we are reminded of the character of the young Pamela, and almost unconsciously read this strength and these strong convictions in Jane as well. The similarities, and verbal echoes, make the reader aware that Jane's story is not exceptional; this is something that has happened before.

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