

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I would like to conclude my analysis of theme through the portrayal of the protagonists in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*.

The first novel, *Jane Eyre*, deals with the struggle of Jane Eyre, who has to face obstacles when she meets Mr. Rochester, whom she falls in love with. Interestingly, Jane's characteristics seem to be progressive, making her a progressive woman living in a traditional society, which is supported by Brontë, who was "determined to create a main character who challenged the notion of the ideal Victorian women" ("Introducing Jane Eyre: An Unlikely Victorian Heroine"). In this novel, Jane is portrayed as a strong, confident, virtuous, but also capricious person, especially when it comes to her emotions and feelings.

The second novel, *Rebecca*, tells about Mrs. de Winter's attempt to gain acknowledgement especially from her husband, and from everyone around her as well. The author portrays Mrs. de Winter as a person who is anxious, timid, self-conscious, and devoted. Despite being set in the early twentieth century, when the society are starting to be progressive, Mrs. de Winter's characteristics signify that she is a traditional woman. This fact is also supported by du Marier,

who stated that the novel is about a weak woman under the influence of a strong man (“The theme of Feminism and Gender Roles in Rebecca”).

Each author has different purposes in creating their protagonists. Brontë wants to show that by confirming to the patriarchal values, women can still find their happiness in love. Du Maurier, on the other hand, wants to show that being traditional in an era when women start being progressive may lead them to get their happiness in love since the traditional patriarchal values remain dominant.

Analysing the two novels through the portrayal of the protagonists help me to reveal the themes. The theme of *Jane Eyre* is “One’s being progressive and capricious at the same time may help one to achieve one’s idea of love that entails equality with one’s partner.” whilst the theme of *Rebecca* is “One’s being traditional may make one to achieve one’s own idea of love that entails acknowledgement by one’s partner.”

After analysing the two novels, I can conclude that both novels have several similarities and differences. Both novels are set in England; both protagonists are women who come from a working-class society who fall in love with rich, older men from high-class society. Interestingly, both men have secrets regarding their first wives. Furthermore, both protagonists want to have a good relationship with their partners. Nevertheless, their different characteristics lead them to getting their own ideas of love.

Despite having similarities, the two novels have a different setting of time. *Jane Eyre* was set and published in the nineteenth century England, whilst *Rebecca* was set and published in the early twentieth century England. Additionally, each protagonist has a different idea of love: Jane’s idea of love

entails equality in her relationship with the man she loves, while Mrs. de Winter's idea of love entails acknowledgement by her husband.

Thus, from the similarities and the differences of the novels, I can conclude that the unifying element is no matter which period a woman lives in, love plays an important role in shaping, affecting, and giving her happiness.

In my personal opinion, both novels have deep and important messages, especially for women. Based on the unifying element, it is clear that love from men have important roles in both protagonists' happiness. It may seem like they both still comply with the patriarchal orders, since they both still see marriage as the roots of their happiness. This fact makes Jane's and Mrs. de Winter's struggles seem to be in vain, since no matter how progressive or traditional they are, nor the periods they live in, in the end they still comply with the patriarchal orders. However, the most important thing here is that they believe that they are the ones who realize their happiness. Both Jane and Mrs. de Winter feel like they achieved their goals in the end, they are happy.

