

# Rupkatha Journal

On Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities

ISSN 0975-2935

[www.rupkatha.com](http://www.rupkatha.com)

---

Volume VII, Number 2, 2015

Themed Issue on

“Desire and Deceit: India in the Europeans’ Gaze”

*In collaboration with*

Imagology Centre, University of Alba-Iulia, Romania

Guest Editors

*Diana Câmpan, Gabriela Chiciudean, Rodica Chira, Sonia Elvireanu,  
Maria-Ana Tupan*

---

## Indexing and abstracting

Rupkatha Journal is an international journal recognized by a number of organizations and institutions. It is archived permanently by [www.archive-it.org](http://www.archive-it.org) and indexed by EBSCO, Elsevier, MLA International Directory, Ulrichs Web, DOAJ, Google Scholar and other organizations and included in many university libraries.

## SNIP, IPP and SJR Factors

Nr.	Source ID	Title	SNIP 2012	IPP 2012	SJR 2012	SNIP 2013	IPP 2013	SJR 2013	SNIP 2014	IPP 2014	SJR 2014
1	21100201709	Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities	0.313	0.034	0.1	0.271	0.038	0.116	0.061	0.007	0.101

Additional services and information can be found at:

About Us: [www.rupkatha.com/about.php](http://www.rupkatha.com/about.php)

Editorial Board: [www.rupkatha.com/editorialboard.php](http://www.rupkatha.com/editorialboard.php)

Archive: [www.rupkatha.com/archive.php](http://www.rupkatha.com/archive.php)

Submission Guidelines: [www.rupkatha.com/submissionguidelines.php](http://www.rupkatha.com/submissionguidelines.php)

Call for Papers: [www.rupkatha.com/callforpapers.php](http://www.rupkatha.com/callforpapers.php)

This Open Access article is distributed freely online under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>). This allows an individual user non-commercial re-use, distribution, sharing and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited with links. For commercial re-use, please contact [editor@rupkatha.com](mailto:editor@rupkatha.com).

© Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities



# Charlotte Brontë's 'Imagined' Indianness: Homogenized Othering as a Mimetic Response in *Jane Eyre*

Debarati Goswami

Independent Researcher, Virginia, USA

---

## Abstract

This paper problematizes Charlotte Brontë's historically specific, religiously biased and homogenized underrepresentation of Indianness, considering Hinduism as an exchangeable term for Indianness, in *Jane Eyre* and claims this homogenized Othering to be a mimetic response. It concentrates on the Self/ Other dichotomy constructed through the characters of Jane Eyre and St John, both representing the British and Christian Self, and their individual approaches of Othering Indianness which resulted in a Self/Other polarisation in the Christian Self itself. Considering René Girard's theory of mimetic desire, the objective of the paper is to study Brontë's twofold way of homogenously Othering Indianness through Jane and St John, with an implication of doubly Othering the non-Hindu and non-Hindustani speaking Indians. It attempts to legitimize the novel as a quintessential discourse of British Selfhood besides being a mimetic response to the British social institutions which 'constructed' Jane as the marginalized "Other" in this autobiographical fiction.

[**Keywords:** Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, homogenized Othering, René Girard, Theory of mimetic desire]

At a conference titled "Europe and its Others" at Essex, while articulating the European strategy of representing itself as the sovereign Self and its colonies as Others or "programmed near-images of that very sovereign Self" (Spivak b. 247), in her essay "The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives", Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak proposed:

On a somewhat precious register of literary theory it is possible to say that this was the construction of a fiction whose task was to produce a whole collection of "effects of the real," and that the

"misreading" of this "fiction" produced the proper name "India" (para. 6).

By grounding its research on the mimetic aspect of the homogenised Othering of Indianness in *Jane Eyre*, this paper engages itself in problematizing Charlotte Brontë's 'constructed' representation of Indianness in the novel. It prefers the use of the word 'Indianness' to 'India' as Brontë's contemptuous Othering in the novel was meant for anything representing or containing the essence of the abstract notion of the colonized, 'coloured' object 'India' rather than for the landmass with well defined geographical referents called 'India'.

Entitled *Jane Eyre: An Autobiography*, during its first publication, the novel narrates the journey of an impoverished and orphan eponymous protagonist towards the attainment of her Feminine Selfhood, battling against the conventional patriarchal institutions of family, educational institution, class hierarchy, marriage and even religion. According to Margaret Howard Blom, the novel "(T)races an individual's desperate struggle against insuperable odds to establish and maintain a sense of her own identity and to satisfy the deepest needs of her nature" (Blom 87). The reception of the novel with wide global acclamation and the erudite interpretations of its various universally appealing themes consolidated its acceptance as a canonical text. However, Brontë's constructed narrativization of a historically specific socio-historical scenario of India through a religiously biased and homogenized Othering of Indianness, with a specific underrepresentation of Hinduism, proves to be a problematic. An attempt to discover India or Indianness through its representation in *Jane Eyre* is bound to lead a reader, alien to Indian history, to a factitious understanding of the nation and its socio-historical past from the viewpoint of the "master narrative that could be called 'the history of Europe'" (Chakrabarty 1). This paper, thus, accentuates on the homogenous Othering of the mainstream Hindu population of India and doubly Othering the marginalised Indians primarily by homogenizing its religious plurality, multiculturalism and multilingualism which together constitute Indianness. The itinerary of this research sequentially includes a textual analysis of the underrepresentation of Indianness through the characters of Mr. Brocklehurst, Jane and St John, Jane's Othering of Indianness as a response to the British patriarchal institutions which 'constructed' her as the marginalized "Other" in the novel and a psychoanalytic interpretation of her homogenous Othering of the Indianness as a mimetic act on the basis of René Girard's theory of mimetic desire.

As a quintessential discourse of Imperial subject construction, this novel has genuinely represented the British and Christian spirit and the sovereign Self through a meticulous Othering of Indianness, the paradigm of which was profoundly religious, besides being racial. As a testament to establish corroboration of this proposition one must critically focus on the denigrating words of Mr. Brocklehurst, "the black marble clergyman" (81), self-righteous and fastidious proprietor of Jane's Lowood institution. In a Biblical reference, in her Preface to the second edition of *Jane Eyre*, Brontë wrote, "Ahab did not like Micaiah, because he never prophesied good concerning him, but evil..." (xxxvii). This allusion justifies Jane's contempt for Mr. Brocklehurst whose prime concern was to uphold the doctrines advocated by the Evangelical Anglicans in general and by the Methodists in particular (DeVere web) and who was entrusted with the responsibility of guiding Jane on a virtuous path by her aunt Mrs Reed. Like Micaiah, prophesying evil concerning Ahab, Mr. Brocklehurst despised Jane and once decried her for her lack of essential Christian virtues, in the following words:

(A) little castaway: not a member of the true flock, but evidently an interloper and an alien. You must be on your guard against her; you must shun her example; if necessary, avoid her company, exclude her from your sports, and shut her out from your converse. Teachers, you must watch her: keep your eyes on her movements, weigh well her words, scrutinise her actions, punish her body to save her soul: if, indeed, such salvation be possible, for (my tongue falters while I tell it) this girl, this child, the native of a Christian land, worse than many a little heathen who says its prayers to Brahma and kneels before Juggernaut — this girl is — a liar! (81).

From the perspective of this study, the above speech leads to at least two problems and one hypothesis. First, Brontë's intention behind

making Mr. Brocklehurst insolently refer to the shibboleths of Hinduism was a dissimulation, as Jane was not the signified but a signifier representing the polytheistic population whom the British needed to 'watch', 'scrutinise' and 'punish' for their heathen ways and guide them to 'salvation'. Second, the insinuation drawn from the possessive determiner 'its' again highlights Brontë's racial abandonment of the belittled population by reducing their identity to a homogenous, singular inanimate object. As the religious or communal group alluded to in the speech remains unspecified, the paper assumes that those polytheistic heathens stand the possibility of belonging either to the mainstream colonized elites group or marginalised communities or even to the ethnic groups of the British colonies. The rationale behind this assumption is that Brontë refers to some of the non-white or rather non-British races in the novel, the African slaves, Persians, Turks and Native Americans, besides Indians, and so it is difficult to specify the exact community she refers to in the speech. Susan Meyer calls this European notion of colonial culture and their tendency of alienating themselves from the colonized natives as "Eurocentric idea of colonized savages" (Meyer 45). Since Mr. Brocklehurst makes an allusion to the Hindu deities, from the standpoint of this research, the paper hypothetically claims that this speech has a disparaging allusion to the "colonized savages" and marginalised citizenry of the undivided nineteenth century India who definitely contributed to the omnium gatherum of Indian culture or Indianness although they were not considered as a part of the majoritarian population.

Brontë's perspective of viewing Indianness as indistinguishable from Hinduism, in the novel, results in an overt abnegation of the non-Hindu population of India. There are no references to any other religion or community of Indian origin in spite of India being the birthplace to several popular religious faiths

like Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism and the less popular faiths of the indigenous tribes. Her monolithic notion of Indianness was primarily governed by her knowledge of Hindu majoritarianism in India and the diabolical rituals, propagated by the custodians of Brahminical Classicism, rampantly exercised then. A glimpse of her conception about the grotesqueness of Indianness can be captured in her poem "The Missionary", first published in the anthology *Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell* (159), where she metaphorically describes India as a near image of hell:

Still, with the spirit's vision clear,  
I saw Hell's empire, vast and grim,  
Spread on each Indian river's shore...

A juxtaposition of the gnarled image of this ancient Other, India, to the youthful British and Christian Self with 'spirit's vision clear' is a conspicuous implication of her propensity to peripheralize Indianness from the core British Self. The above picturesque imagery probably alludes to the evil customs like Sati or widow immolation and ailing moribund bodies abandoned on the shores of the Indian rivers, particularly The Ganges, which has a religious significance among the Hindus and has also received a specific reference in *Jane Eyre* through St John's exotic description of its shore (Brontë, 1991). The above mentioned imagery of the ritual of Sati has a close reference to Jane's notion of hell which she defined as "A pit full of fire" (35). The flames of the funeral pyres engulfing the widows alive emerge as a stereotyped symbol of the eternal infernal fire and recurs at regular intervals in the novel. A proof of her contempt for the religiously beleaguered Indianness and its diabolical heathen rituals reverberates in this autobiographical narrative as well when she makes Bertha Mason, her ugly, Creole antagonist, immolate herself and pave the path for the fulfilment of Jane's desire to matrimonially unite with Mr. Rochester who was previously legally wed to Bertha. In the above cited incident Brontë very skilfully exhibits her racial alienation from two

different colonies simultaneously, Jamaica and India. Therefore, the contemptuous Othering of the Other and an alienation from the colonial population, in various forms, function as an agency for centripetal mobilization of Jane towards attaining the core Selfhood and is constantly at work in the novel.

In order to contrapuntally comprehend this religiously biased Othering of Indianness and locate the vantage point from where Bronte surveys and represents Indianness one needs to contextualize Bronte in the socio-historical ambience in which she conceived this plot. India was then politically administered by the British East India Company whose governance was further regulated by the British parliament. The Company had to indulge in a political warfare in order to consolidate its foothold in this colony where Hinduism was followed by majority of the population. British tradesmen or the Company men were not eager to anglicise India, fearing to offend the educated class on whose support they depended, and arouse religious antagonism among the Hindu natives (Stockwell, 2008). As proselytism was not one of the missions in the initial days of the Company, it officially did not encourage Christian missionary activities in India. It was only with the renewal of the Company's charter, better known as the Charter Act of 1813 that the Christian missionaries from Britain were allowed to come and engage themselves in proliferation of evangelical activities in India. As a part of their political strategy the Company went to the extent of supporting the Hindus during the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 and expressing disfavour against Christianity to win over the native confidence. But a harmonious coexistence with the natives in the colonies would not have enabled the British to set up an empire and enjoy the sovereignty as colonizers by exploiting the colonized. Therefore Othering the native denizens was indispensable on their part. Moreover, the loopholes in Hinduism in the form of evil customs were the vulnerable

points through which the Company could split the power of the nation as a whole by trying to religiously interfere into the society, with the colonial elites on its side. In the words of Lata Mani, "(E)ven the most anti-imperialist amongst us has felt forced to acknowledge the "positive" consequences of colo-nial rule for certain aspects of women's lives, if not in terms of actual practice, at least at the level of ideas about "women's rights"" (Mani 120). Thus it was an effective strategy on the part of the British colonizers to establish an apparently amicable relationship with the Hindus and secure a political as well as a religious control over India. But the frontier of Self/Other between the colonizer and the colonized remained indissoluble.

Back in England people imagined India initially through the documentations chronicled by the East India Company with their colonial capital in Calcutta, in erstwhile undivided Bengal, and later through the pamphlets of the evangelists. Bronte's 'Calcutta centric' notion of Indian climatic conditions where Jane would be 'grilled alive' (235) and "protracted under an Indian sun" (219), metaphorically alluding to Sati that was rampant in Bengal, exhibits the superfluous influence of the documents of the Company in her writing. Both the types of documentations, political and religious, aimed at creating a stereotyped savage 'Other' by a "daemoniac repetition" (Bhabha 18) of underrepresentation of India, politically and religiously, which adversely affected the image of Indianness and legitimized British racial as well as religious supremacy over the Indians. For educated nineteenth century British women like the Brontes, these documents were the only 'reliable' source for knowing India. Consequently, Europe's perpetual Panoptican gaze on India through the lenses of fabricated representation resulted in an underrepresentation of Indianness in the expanding body of Imperialist discourse which further negatively influenced the

representation of Indianness in the nineteenth century British literature.

Besides homogenously Othering Hinduism, Jane's "Hindostanee" (210) tutorial under Evangelist St John suggests a hierarchical superiority and popularity of Hindustani over the other vernaculars which exhibits Bronte's Othering of the aspect of linguistic diversity of Indianness. Owing to a confluence of various linguistic families, the enormous diversity in Indian vernaculars, their dialects and sub dialects is too vast to cater to. Yet, her emphasis on Hindustani, so as to make it appear like a language that can function as a pan Indian medium of communication, would sound disputable even today, after 68 years of sovereignty and emancipation from British hegemony.

By using her fiction as a discourse of the Imperial Self, Bronte represents the British strategy to 'create' a "communal language" which was initiated by John Gilchrist who was a Scottish surgeon, indigo farmer and Indologist. In his insightful study of religious nationalism in India, Peter van der Veer, in his book *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*, stated that Gilchrist had "discovered" Hindustani, a unified language of Hindi, Urdu and Persian, and popularised it as the language for British administration in the early nineteenth century India and specially preferred the language for communicating with the Indian soldiers of the Company (1994). Therefore, although Bronte's novel could touch the innermost chords of the British hearts with her biased representation of Indianness, it estranged itself from those Indian provinces who indulged in conflicting ideas of accepting Hindustani as the representative language of India. In this context of ignoring the vernaculars, Nandita Ghosh stated, "Class exclusions are reinforced by language exclusions; each feeds off the other" (para.12). In the present situation it is the exclusion of the marginalised population from the mainstream Indian population through accepting one language and

relegating the rest. Thus, in both the cases Bronte summarily relegated the existence of religious diversity and multiculturalism and multilingualism in nineteenth century India, under British regime, and homogenised and represented them as "India" and "Hindostanee" respectively in her novel. Thus, in her attempt to portray her religious and racial Self 'recognizably different' from the colonized Other, she not only distanced the novel from the mainstream Indian Hindu population but moved doubly away from the Indian marginalized minorities.

Bronte's alienation of herself from Indianness has been displayed through more than one character and form, in this novel, in several occasions. She employed the characters Jane and St John to create the Self/Other dichotomy between British and Christian Self and the heathen Indianness. At the climactic point in the novel when St John Rivers proposed Jane to marry him and accompany him to India as a missionary's wife and be a "fitting fellow-labourer in his Indian toils" (234), Jane was torn between her desire to wait for Mr. Rochester by staying in her homeland and showing her gratitude by succumbing to St John's proposal for saving her life from poverty and starvation. She agreed to choose the second option, conditionally, that she would accompany him to India free and not as his wife. Her refusal resulted in a divergence in their journeying together on a religious mission and in life. Jane preferred to stay in her homeland and search for divine grace in the bliss of a family life with Mr. Rochester. Unlike Jane, St John renounced his love for Miss Rosamond Oliver to pursue the life of a missionary, the path predestined by God for him. This divergence resulted in a Self/Other polarization in the Christian Self itself through Jane's display of the Christian ideologies of Arminianism and St John's representation of Calvinism which further influenced their individual approaches of Othering Indianness. Bronte deliberately created this dichotomy within the Christian

Self in the interest of her plot. But in the interest of its parameters this paper seeks to circumvent the topic of Othering of the Christian Self and concentrate on the twofold way Jane and St John peripheralised Indianness.

Arminianism is a belief in conditional election based on God's foreknowledge and man's free will to cooperate with God in salvation ("Calvinism and Arminianism", n.d.). Jane's faith was "a different way to St John's, but effective in its own fashion" (241). Her reluctance in accompanying him to serve in India as his wife is evident in her words: "If I join St. John, I abandon half myself: if I go to India, I go to premature death. And how will the interval between leaving England for India, and India for the grave, be filled?" (219). She alienates herself from her colonial counterparts in the words "I am not fit for it: I have no vocation..." (217). Jane's Othering of Indianness is a colonial alienation where the determinants of racial superiority and the freedom to choose between religion and personal desire are more dominant. More than serving the distressed population of the colonized nation, as a service to God, it is her individual way of prioritising her wants that become more coveted for her.

Jane's journey to India was like journeying to hell which was overtly expressed in her words, "(D)earth's gates open, shewed eternity beyond: it seemed, that for safety and bliss there, all there might be sacrificed in a second. The dim room was full of visions." (239). Quite interestingly, Jane had expressed her unwillingness to go to the pit of hell in her first meeting with Mr. Brocklehurst, the religious zealot. This might have been a metaphorical prognostication of her refusal to go to India on an evangelical mission. This refusal is not only an alienation from serving India or Indianness but also from the First World patriarchal social set up, conventional convictions of marriage and religion and a colonial alienation from the sufferings of the

Third World women or the "brown women"(Spivak 1988 )

St John, on the contrary, was a zealous, fastidious representative of Calvinistic principles with a profound faith in salvation and predestination. ("Calvinism and Arminianism", n.d.). Bronte's creation of his character was influenced by the Biblical figure of Saint John the Divine, the writer of the final and Apocalyptic book of the Bible, Book of Revelations. His attitude towards Indianness suggests yet another kind of Othering. For him Indianness was a religious Otherness, a fallen country of heathens awaiting the Christian proselytes to lead them to salvation by eradicating the social evils and "save the brown women from brown men". (Spivak, 1988)

The paper looks at the characters of Jane and St John as representing two different persona of Bronte herself. The former representing the feminine desire of domestic security and familial bliss while the latter celebrating self-less service to Christianity and attaining divine benediction. In both the cases it is the human desire that is at the nexus on which the plot develops. Through both the characters it is Bronte's suggestive Othering of Indianness that is conveyed. In spite of having two different modes of Othering Indianness, their object of Othering is common, Hinduism, camouflaged with homogenized Indianness. This result in a misrepresentation of the historical past of India in totality as the other communities in India were not in a state of exigency, awaiting an intervention from foreign missionaries to reform their religious customs, as much as Hinduism was. Moreover, her representation of India's overt dependence on Christian missionaries for a reformed society completely eclipsed and ignored the movements like Bengal Renaissance, spear-headed by "The Father of Indian Renaissance", Ram Mohan Roy (1772- 1833). Thus, defending its hypothesis, the paper justifies itself in finding the representation of Indianness in the novel as fabricated and problematic.

At the personal level, narration of the struggle of her Feminine Self, in and against the world of the patriarchal Other, was never less challenging for Brontë as a writer. During its first publication in 1847, the authentic identity of the author of *Jane Eyre: An Autobiography* was concealed under the androgynous pseudonym Currer Bell. This leads to at least two most 'obvious' conclusions. First, the story is a narration of her own centripetal journey towards achieving the desired core 'Selfhood' and second, her dealing with several historically specific social issues in the novel was a prohibited domain for women of her era for which she chose to introduce herself in a masked identity as Mr./Miss Bell rather than Miss Brontë. As a dissuading response to her poems, which Charlotte Brontë had sent to him for his feedback, Robert Southey the Poet Laureate, had replied, "Literature cannot be the business of a woman's life, and it ought not to be. The more she is engaged in her proper duties, the less leisure will she have for it even as an accomplishment and a recreation." (Gaskell 123). This novel was thus, her platform for a fictitious representation of her response to the patriarchal predominance she had to struggle against.

Brontë's homogenized Othering of Indianness is a mimetic response to the Othering of her by the traditional institutions and can be psychoanalytically interpreted through René Girard's theorization of mimetic desire articulated in his book *Mensonge romantique et vérité romanesque*, 1961 (*Deceit, Desire and the Novel*, 1966). Girard differentiated between 'imitation' and 'mimesis' as the former to be a positive aspect of reproducing someone's behaviour, usually implying 'mimicry' and the latter as a negative aspect and a deeper instinctive response that humans have to each other. Based on this difference, Jane's reproduction of British patriarchal behaviour of racially and religiously Othering the colonized and gender wise Othering the white Female should be

tagged as 'mimesis' as it ends up in the negative result of creating discrimination among humans, an unbridgeable gulf between the colonizer and the colonized. This paper attempts to prove the interpersonal relationship between Jane and the patriarchal institutions through Girard's "desiring Subject-model- desired Object" framework. The itinerary of the narrative of Jane's journey towards her Selfhood shows how her Othering by the various conventional institutions implanted in her the zeal to achieve her Selfhood through pseudo-narcissism. This resulted not only in an alienation from the colonial population, in pursue of her personal desire, but also in a rebellion against the social institutions. As per Girard's theory, her emulation of the British patriarchal Self makes it her desired 'model' or 'mediator' and technically, her mimetic response is an 'external mediation' as she is spatially distanced from her model and there are no chances of rivalry between the subject and the desired object. But the uniqueness of portrayal of Jane's character lies in her clash with the representatives of the institutions on the personal level and thus reducing the spatial and social distance between the desiring Subject and the representatives of the model. Thus, it transforms the external mimesis into an 'internal' one due to their converging desires of being the core Self.

According to the Girardian concept, shared desires lead to rivalry and conflicts in the society and Jane's desire of sharing the same Selfhood that British patriarchy enjoyed was the prime reason behind the clashes between her and the social institutions. Her traumatic childhood at Gateshead Hall with her aunt, Mrs. Reed, and her cousins was a fight against her status as a familial Other which created the "family/counter-family dyad" (Spivak a. 246), as termed by Spivak in her essay "Three Women's Text and a Critique of Imperialism", as she was 'dispensed from joining' (I. 1) the 'perfectly happy' (I.1) Reeds until she acquired more sociable and childlike



disposition. In all probability her confinements in the 'red-room', a strong metaphorical representation of the "patriarchal death chamber" termed by Gubar and Gilbert (as cited in Eddy 77), at Gateshead Hall was one of the reasons for her xenophobia and her aversion towards the colour or the 'coloured', metonymically referring to the non-Whiteness or non-white races, in this case Indianness.

At Lowood Institution, she was portrayed as the religious Other, hierarchically below the heathen Indians and labelled as 'not a member

was employed as a governess in Thornfield Hall. She represented the class of governesses which was 'homogenously Othered' by the elite ladies like the Ingrams. Juxtaposing Jane alongside the elite ladies marked a clear ineligibility for her to be the bride of Mr. Rochester, her employer and lover. The linear plot of the novel changed its course when she was welcomed as one among the Self in the house of the Rivers, who turned out to be her cousins and where she ceased to be the Other anymore.

In all the above instances Jane was Othered for being gender wise and class wise a Subaltern, in the patriarchal social set up. To specifically refer to Jane in the initial phase of her struggles, the identity which Spivak refers to as 'counter family', this paper would call her 'Jane the Other'. As a mimetic response to being Othered and in a desperate pursue of her desired object of 'Jane the Self' she homogenously Othered the colonized population who were racially, and according to Bronte's representation even religiously, inferior to her in order to attain ascendancy in

novel is not only a documentation of Bronte's personal notion of India or Indianness, but also an emblematic of Europe's notion of this ancient land of mystique. *Jane Eyre* is a perfect amalgamation of the powerful discourse of the colonizer and a narrative of the powerlessness of the colonized. Othering, for Bronte, was not a

of the true flock' by Mr. Brocklehurst. "While tyrants such as Aunt Reed, Brocklehurst, Rochester, and St John Rivers want to turn Jane into a personal servant, Lowood Institution wants to turn her into a servant of the wage labour economy." (Leggart & Parkes 169). These incidents of being marginalized by society contributed considerably in aggravating Jane's contempt for the coloured races.

Reaching the next struggle in the itinerary of her journey she encountered the class hierarchy. During that time she the colonial hierarchy. By superimposing Girard's Subject-model-object framework on the novel we would therefore have 'Jane the Other' as the desiring Subject, the British patriarchal Self as the model and 'Jane the Self' as the desired object. "*Jane Eyre* was written in an ideological context in which white women were frequently compared to people of non-white races, especially blacks, in order to emphasize the inferiority of both to white men" (Meyer, 2007). Since the social status shared by the non-white races and the white women were both below the white men in the social hierarchy it was an absolute necessity for the white women to maintain their superiority in the colonial hierarchy by Othering the hierarchically low 'Others' which is reflected in the homogenous Othering of Indianness in *Jane Eyre*.

Bronte's homogenized Othering of Indianness resulted in a rejection of its kaleidoscopic demography which has remained the true identity of the 'lost Self', India, since ages. Representation of India in the

simple alienation. It was, at the same time an impediment while journeying to 'Self', an outburst of the suppressed wrath for being dominated, an act of vengeance against all dominant powers through rebellion and a resistance against being further Othered. The fulfilment of Bronte's desire of Othering Indianness can be best expressed in the words

of her surrogate, Jane, "Something of vengeance I had tasted...; as aromatic wine it seemed, on swallowing, a warm and racy: its after flavour, metallic and corroding, gave me a sensation as if I had been poisoned." (Bronte 43)

## References:

- Blom, M. H. 1977. *Charlotte Bronte*. Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers.
- Bronte, C. 1991 [1847]. *Jane Eyre*. L. Hughes-Hallett (Ed.). New York, NY: Everyman's Library.
- Calvinism and Arminianism. Retrieved from: <<http://christianity.about.com/od/denominations/a/calvinarminian.htm>>
- Chakrabarty, D. 1992, Winter. Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for "Indian" Pasts? *Representations*. 37. pp. 1-26. University of California Press.
- Critical Inquiry*. pp. 243- 261. University of Chicago Press.
- DeVere, L. S. 1995. Evangelicalism at Lowood. *English 73*. Brown University. Retrieved from <<http://www.victorianweb.org/>>.
- Eddy, S. 2003. *The Brontes: A Beginner's Guide*. London: Hodder and Stoughton
- Gaskell, E. 1996. *The Life of Charlotte Bronte*. A. Easson (Ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Ghosh, N. 2001, Summer. Fixing the Language, Fixing the Nation. *Jouvert*. 5(3). Raleigh, NC: North Carolina State University.
- Leggart, J. & Parkes, C. 2006, Dec. From the red room to Rochester's haircut: mind control in Jane Eyre. *English Studies in Canada*, 32(4).
- Mani, L. 1987, Autumn. "Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India. *Cultural Critique*. 7. *The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse II*. pp.119- 156. University of Minnesota Press.
- Meyer, S. 2007. "Indian Link: Colonialism and the Figurative Strategy of Jane Eyre" In H. Bloom (Ed.), *Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre* (pp 43- 74). New York, NY: Chelsea House Publishers.
- Missionary, The. [1846]. *Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell*. London: Aylott and Jones. Retrieved from:<<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/bronte/poems/psc-missionary.html>>
- René Girard (n.d.). *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Retrieved from<<http://www.iep.utm.edu/girard/#SH2a>>
- Spivak, G. C. a. 1985, Autumn. "Three Women's Text and a Critique of Imperialism". *Critical Inquiry*, 12:1 (Autumn 1985), 235-61. {235}
- \_\_\_\_\_. b. 1985, Oct. The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives. *History and Theory*, 24(3), pp. 247-272. Wesleyan University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. c. 1988. "Can the subaltern speak?" In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Cary Nelson & Larry Gross (Ed.). pp. 271-313. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Stockwell, Sarah (Ed.). 2008. *The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives*. London. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Veer, P. van der . 1994. *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*. California, CA: University of California Press.

---

**Debarati Goswami** successfully completed her M. Phil in Postcolonial Studies securing a First class at the Department of English Studies, Christ University, Bangalore, India, in May 2014. Her dissertation was titled "Rewriting Epic as a Discourse of the Marginalized: A Study of Mahasweta Devi's Select Fiction". She is currently a member of the Hilda Doolittle International Society and an independent researcher in Postcolonial Studies, based in Virginia, USA.

---