

Female Anxieties of Influence: Reminiscences of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* in Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley*

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It is well known that Charlotte Brontë sharply criticized Jane Austen in a letter to G. H. Lewes on Jan. 12, 1848 as follows:

Why do you like Miss Austen so very much? I am puzzled on that point.

What induced you to say that you would rather have written "Pride & Prejudice" or "Tom Jones" than any of the Waverly [sic] Novels?

I had not seen "Pride & Prejudice" till I read that sentence of yours, and then I got the book and studied it. And what did I find? An accurate daguerreotyped portrait of a common-place face; a carefully-fenced, highly cultivated garden with neat borders and delicate flowers—but no glance of a bright vivid physiognomy—no open country—no fresh air—no blue hill—no bonny beck. I should hardly like to live with her ladies and gentlemen in their elegant but confined houses. These observations will probably irritate you, but I shall run the risk. (Smith 2:10)

Brontë's harsh attitude towards Austen might sound puzzling when one encounters the comment "Helstone also is proud and prejudiced" (311) in Brontë's next novel, *Shirley*, which was published in the following year, 1849. Regarding this sentence, Herbert Rosengarten in his Explanatory Notes in the Oxford World Classics edition states "perhaps a reminiscence of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, which Charlotte had read for the first time in December 1847" (561). As a matter of fact, however, this is not the only allusion back to *Pride and Prejudice* in *Shirley*. In fact, many passages related to pride and prejudice can be found in *Shirley*. The words, "pride" and "proud", appear 93 times in *Shirley* while *Jane Eyre* has them only 38 times. As for the word, "prejudice", it appears 16 times in *Shirley* whereas *Jane Eyre* has it only 5 times. These figures indicate that Brontë might have been much more influenced by

Pride and Prejudice than is generally thought. In this thesis, I will examine how such elements are represented in *Shirley*, in order to explore Brontë's attitudes and expand interpretation of this novel through the study of its intertextuality.

I

In this section, I would like to explore both the textual and structural similarities between *Shirley* and *Pride and Prejudice*. At the outset, it is useful to quote the famous beginning of the latter:

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.

However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters. (3)

It is noteworthy that the following conversation between Mr. Malone and Robert Moore in the second chapter of *Shirley* resonates with the above passage.

“Do you know what I heard, Moore, the other day? . . . That you were going to take Fieldhead on a lease . . . and that it was your intention to settle a Miss Sykes there as mistress; to be married, in short, ha! ha! . . .”

“I wonder how often it has been settled that I was to be married since I came to Briarfield! They have assigned me every marriageable single woman by turns in the district.” (20-21)

Malone mentions the rumor that Moore is going to take Fieldhead in Briarfield as a tenant, which echoes the news that Mr. Bingley is going to lease a similar-sounding estate, Netherfield. Robert complains, “to think that these ridiculous gossips of Whinbury and Briarfield will keep pestering one about being married! As if there was nothing to be done in life but to ‘pay attention,’ as they say, to some young lady . . . I believe women talk and think only of these things, and they naturally fancy men’s minds similarly occupied” (22-23). Both novels portray how “the truth” is socially imposed. There is similar ironical tone

towards a young woman and her family who are eager to hunt a husband as soon as an eligible man moves to their neighborhood as in *Pride and Prejudice*. Still, we can see the contrasting way marriage is treated in each novel here. *Pride and Prejudice* presents “the truth” from a female point of view while *Shirley* shows it from a male perspective. In the former, Mr. Bingley is apparently “in want of a wife”. On his first visit to Mr. Bennet, he “had entertained hopes of being admitted to a sight of the young ladies, of whose beauty he had heard much” (9). He not only actively attends balls in the neighborhood but also holds one himself. It will be needless to say that a ball is generally considered as an opportunity for young men and women to meet with hopes of marriage. On the contrary, *Shirley* depicts how debatable “the truth” is. Robert Moore, who is a mill-owner in Yorkshire, will not “take Fieldhead on a lease” nor settle down with a “marriageable single woman” there “to be married”. Although the attitudes of Mr. Bingley and Mr. Moore towards marriage are opposite, they have some similarities as well as differences. Mr. Bingley was “of a respectable family in the north of England” (16) and his fortune “had been acquired by trade” (16). He “inherited property to the amount of nearly an hundred thousand pounds from his father” (16). On the other hand, “Trade was Mr. Moore’s hereditary calling” (25) and he accepted the liabilities of his father’s business “as a legacy” (25). Thus, both of them are the descendants of a family engaged in trade in northern England, while their inheritance made one man wealthy and the other deeply in debt. Both novels delineate the importance of the economic aspect in marriage, which defines two men’s prospects of marriage in opposing directions.

As for the deployment of the main characters, two sisters are to marry two close male friends in *Pride and Prejudice*, while two intimate female friends are to marry two brothers in *Shirley* with financial and social status subtly displaced. It is possible to regard Shirley Keeldar and Caroline Helstone as sisters like Elizabeth and Jane Bennet. This is insinuated when Caroline declares, “Shirley, I never had a sister—you never had a sister; but it flashes on me at this moment how sisters feel towards each other” (222). Shirley has much in common with Elizabeth, despite the difference of their fortune; for example, Elizabeth is “an excellent walker” (39) and so is Shirley. Elizabeth was “jumping over stiles and springing over puddles with impatient activity” (36); likewise, Shirley “was surefooted and agile: she could spring like a deer when she chose” (286). In

addition, Elizabeth Bennet is “a studier of character” (47) and so is Shirley, who says to Caroline, “What a study of character you are! Weak, certainly; but not in the sense you think.—Come in!” (194).

It should also be noted that Shirley did not reveal her attachment to Louis to Caroline just like Elizabeth concealed her fancy towards Darcy from other people, even including Jane. Caroline believes that Shirley is hostile to Louis and says to her, “you don’t like poor Louis,—why?” (381). She is surprised by Shirley’s secret love; similarly, Jane is astonished by Elizabeth’s engagement with Darcy. Jane would not believe it at first and says, “Oh, Lizzy! it cannot be. I know how much you dislike him” (414). Shirley seems to be a wealthy version of Elizabeth.

Moreover, one of the friends serves as an obstacle to the union of other two in both of the novels: Darcy intervenes in the relationship between Jane and Bingley and Caroline suffers from the intimacy Shirley shows towards Robert.

Caroline’s acceptance of Hortense’s invitation to the Hollow during Robert’s absence is a revision of Jane Bennet’s going to Netherfield. In both cases each is invited by the sister of the man each loves during his absence. At Caroline Bingley’s request to dine together while Mr. Bingley goes out, Jane, who “had much rather go in the coach” (34) was “obliged to go on horseback” (34) in the rain as part of her mother’s scheme to let her “stay all night” (34) so that she could meet Mr. Bingley. The degree of Jane’s complicity is unclear; however, she seems to be reluctant to conspire in the plot. On the other hand, the design is explicit by Caroline, who was informed that Robert “was gone to Whinbury market” (331) and obviously expects that “Robert may come home while you [she] are in his house” (332). Hortense is “half-deceived” (332) by Caroline’s “childlike joy” (332), which is in fact ascribed to her brother instead of herself. Despite the difference of their intention, both visits lead them to meet the men they are attracted to at the cost of the subsequent confinement to bed due to illness. Their union with the man each loves is achieved close to the end of the novels only through the intervention of external forces; the repeal of the Orders in Council and Darcy’s “permission” (411).

Furthermore, a similar term of comparison is noticeable in both novels. Hortense’s “explosion of wrath . . . sounded in her [Caroline’s] ear as confusedly as the agitated rattling of the china” (74) while “Sir William Lucas, and his daughter Maria . . . were listened to with about as much delight as the rattle

of the chaise” (172) by Elizabeth. The allusion, though operating in different contexts of tableware and coach, shows how thoroughly Brontë’s text is permeated by the presence of Austen.

Shirley is not devoid of the ironical tone characteristic of *Pride and Prejudice*. Mr. Helstone accuses Robert Moore of being “narrow, selfish” (172). Likewise, Caroline Bingley censures Elizabeth’s manners being “a mixture of pride and impertinence” (38), failing to notice that she herself possesses the same blemish.

Lastly, I would like to point out that the similarities of the chapter “Uncle and Niece” in *Shirley with Pride and Prejudice*. In this chapter, Shirley had a conference with her uncle, Mr. Sympson. It seems to represent a revised version of the showdown between Elizabeth and Lady Catherine, which is one of the most impressive scenes in *Pride and Prejudice*. It is true that the position of the characters is rearranged. Mr. Sympson is Shirley’s uncle and Lady Catherine is the aunt of Darcy, whom Elizabeth secretly hopes to marry at that point.

It should be noted, however, that Lady Catherine and Mr. Sympson have much in common. First and foremost, their personality is similar. Lady Catherine was “insolent” (391) and Mr. Sympson is described as having “so much insolence” (513). In addition, both of them face the audacity of their interlocutors. They are forced to remind their opponents that they are of consequence and not accustomed to such presumptuous language. Lady Catherine says to Elizabeth, “you ought to know, that I am not to be trifled with” (391) and warns her, “Miss Bennet, do you know who I am? I have not been accustomed to such language as this” (393). Similarly, Mr. Sympson says to Shirley, “I am not to be trifled with” (458) and “Never heard such language! . . . Never was so addressed in my life—never was so used” (467). Moreover, they both want to know whether their opponents have been offered a proposal. Lady Catherine asks Elizabeth, “Has he [Darcy], has my nephew, made you an offer of marriage?” (392) while Mr. Sympson asks Shirley, “I want—I demand to know, Miss Keeldar, whether Sir Philip has made you an offer?” (459). Furthermore, they both utter similar reproaches. Lady Catherine says, “Is this your gratitude for my attentions to you last spring? Is nothing due to me on that score?” (394) while Mr. Sympson says, “Ungrateful being! Reared by me as my own daughter—” (459). The confrontation breaks down in both novels. In this way, the resemblance between the respective dialogue of these scenes in their

accusations of ingratitude is clearly more than a product of mere chance. It isn't just the wording but the structure of the exchange that is similar, and so it must have been purposeful.

As indicated above, *Shirley* has close resemblances with *Pride and Prejudice* at verbal, situational, and tonal levels as well as in its characterization. It seems to show that Brontë, despite her overt protestations, is not free from influence of Austen's writing. Rather, it appears that she actively adopted the elements of *Pride and Prejudice* into her new novel. It might be wrong to assume that Brontë spurned Austen's writing; her apparently scathing criticism is perhaps better regarded as indirect homage.

II

In this section, I would like to focus on the representation of pride and prejudice in the text as well as exploring their portrayal of courtship and marriage. *Shirley* is a historical novel dealing with the Luddite riots of 1811-1812. At the beginning, the starving people of the working class in Yorkshire directed their anger and hatred toward Robert Moore, who was the manufacturer at Hollow's mill. They detested him all the more because he was "semi-foreigner" (27). They regard him, with which might be called in-group bias. Robert was so deeply plagued by debt that he was indifferent "whether his advance was or was not prejudicial to others" (26). He says to Mr. Yorke, "What difference does it make to me whether your Yorkshire louts hate me or like me?" (39). Robert's cousin, Caroline admonishes him for being "proud to your [his] workpeople" (79), saying "it unjust . . . continually to think of them and treat them haughtily" (80), in vain. Thus, both Robert and Yorkshire people are hostile to each other, which corresponds to the bias between Mr. Darcy, who was discovered at the first assembly to be "the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world" (11) and the society of Hertfordshire whose "general prejudice against Mr. Darcy is so violent" (251).

Working people are not without pride; in fact, some of them seem to have as much pride as any other class. William Farren, who was fired by Robert and holds a grudge against him, is told by Caroline, "But you are proud in your own way yourself . . . When you were out of work, you were too proud to get anything on credit" (273). It should be noted that William distinguishes his "clean

pride” (274) from the “mucky pride” (274) of the curates like Mr. Malone and Mr. Donne. William’s assertiveness is the product of self-respect rather than arrogance.

Thus, in both novels, pride and prejudice are connected with class conflict, though in different ways. Austen deals with it through a more subtle, and less Victorian-reform type of way. Darcy’s pride is based upon his superior wealth and class. However “violent” prejudice among Hertfordshire community may be, it does not manifest itself in open conflict. On the other hand, the class conflict in *Shirley* between “the Middle Rank” (289) and “the Operative Class” (289) is literally violent and even lethal as it involves bloodshed such as a riot and an assassination. It is out of “a care for your [his] safety” (80) that Caroline tries to redress Robert’s attitude towards “Yorkshire workpeople” (62) by letting him read Shakespeare’s tragedy, *Coriolanus*. It should be noted, however, the degree of Caroline’s sympathy is ambiguous. Ingham interestingly remarks, “Her [Caroline’s] sympathies are all with him [Robert] when the mob attacks” (115). Caroline’s partiality towards Robert is contrasted with Shirley’s utterance, “I am sorry for those poor fellows” (292).

It is noteworthy that pride and prejudice are closely related each other. Three curates in the opening chapter, who are “high” (7), proud and self-conceited, are reminiscent of Mr. Collins, “a mixture of pride and obsequiousness, self-importance and humility” (78), which makes him a butt of ridicule. Their pride is based upon prejudice against “Yorkshire ways and Yorkshire folk” (7). One of them, Mr. Donne, who “prided himself on his southern accent” (243) especially evokes the derision of other characters probably as well as Brontë herself. He once says, “Wretched place—this Yorkshire . . . How *corse* and uncultivated! They would be scouted in the south” (242). He evidently believes that the south is superior to and more sophisticated than “backward” (99) north. Possibly Charlotte’s hostility to Austen is connected with Austen’s setting her novels almost entirely in southern England. One might notice that the “family pride” (312) of Mr. Yorke corresponds with Darcy’s “Family pride” (91). Mrs. Reynolds, the housekeeper of Pemberley, is highly laudatory of her master, which Mr. Gardiner regards as “the kind of family prejudice” (275). Pride is shown to be akin to prejudice, which is also likely to apply to Mr. Yorke. It is notable that like Austen, Brontë shows that pride and prejudice co-exist in the same actions.

Both novels show the frequency of misleading first impressions and consequent misinterpretation. Elizabeth was discomposed when she was to meet Darcy's sister for the first time. "Since her [Elizabeth's] being at Lambton, she had heard that Miss Darcy was exceedingly proud; but the observation of a very few minutes convinced her, that she was only exceedingly shy" (288). In *Shirley*, Mrs. Pryor's diffidence is liable to cause misunderstanding. "Towards the servants, Mrs. Pryor's bearing was not uncourteous, but shy, freezing, ungenial. Perhaps it was diffidence rather than pride which made her appear so haughty" (372-373). Thus, the way shyness and diffidence, especially those of women, can easily be confused with haughtiness is pictured in both novels.

Interestingly, it is whether Shirley is "proud" (166) that Caroline wishes to know before their first meeting. Mr. Helstone's reply, "She [Shirley] holds her head high, and probably can be saucy enough where she dare,—she wouldn't be a woman otherwise" (166) illustrates his attitude to women in general. In fact, prejudice is broadly noticed in terms of gender as well as class. Joe Scott is addressed by Shirley as "Man of prejudice" (279) due to his "supercilious theories about women in general" (275). Old maids are especially a target. Even Caroline is not free from this disdain. She "had always unhesitatingly declared she disliked her [Miss Mann], and more than once she had joined her cousin Robert in laughing at some of her peculiarities" (151-152). After visiting Miss Mann and getting to know her better, Caroline is compelled to "regret divers unjust judgments" (154) and rectify her prejudice.

Robert's thwarted proposal to Shirley is notable as it echoes Mr. Darcy's first offer to Elizabeth. Robert was confident that she would accept as he believed that she loved him. He "smiled in deep secrecy at her naïveté and simplicity, in being the first to love, and show it . . . I [Robert] felt in her [Shirley] a powerful magnet to my interest and vanity" (446). Darcy was also too conceited to imagine the possibility of Elizabeth's rejection: "What will you think of my vanity? I believed you to be wishing, expecting my addresses" (410). Robert uttered the words of his proposal and "stood on the hearth, backed by the mantelpiece; against it I [he] leaned, and prepared for anything—everything" (447). On the other hand, Darcy, "who was leaning against the mantle-piece" (212) like Robert, "with his eyes fixed on her face, seemed to catch her [Elizabeth's] words with no less resentment than surprise" (212). Like Robert, whom Shirley "enraged" (447), Darcy's first feeling is anger. Robert's loveless proposal results in compromising

Shirley's pride. Shirley, in turn, by refusing him, "has hurt your [Robert's] amour-propre" (505) as Caroline put it later. Likewise, Darcy's insolence hurts Elizabeth's pride and her flat rejection wounds him back. Shirley's rebuttal eventually persuades Robert to morally reform himself, just as Elizabeth "taught me [Darcy] a lesson" (410) and made him "properly humbled" (410). Robert goes to Birmingham and London and "looked a little into reality, considered closely, and at their source, the causes of the present troubles of this country" (453), which he would never have done otherwise. He confesses to Yorke, "I saw what taught my brain a new lesson, and filled my breast with fresh feelings" (453). Later, Robert says, "I have learned the downright folly of being selfish" (539) just like Darcy, who admits that "I [Darcy] have been a selfish being all my life, in practice, though not in principle" (409). Eventually, Robert puts aside haughtiness and is changed into a benevolent and altruistic mill-owner. Though Robert might be close to Wickham in being mercenary, their essential quality is quite different. The former is industrious and hard-working while the latter led "a life of idleness and dissipation" (223). Robert is more like a successor of Darcy, though the latter possesses wealth and passion he lacks.

Next, I would like to turn to analysis of the eponymous heroine, Shirley, about whom the narrator states, "Who else has a shape so lithe, and proud, and graceful?" (196). Shirley's self-respect has favorable connotations. It is what William Farren calls "clean pride". She rarely falls into questionable conduct. One of such exceptions is when Shirley expresses her intention to donate five pounds to a new school planned by Mr. Donne, who says to her, "In the south . . . a lady with a thousand a year would be ashamed to give five pounds for a public object" (242). The narrator states, "Shirley, so rarely haughty, looked so now" (242). Mr. Donne's remark stirs up her pride in being "Yorkshire in blood and birth" (178).

Another exception is her proud attitude towards her former tutor, Louis Moore. It is notable that Shirley acts proudly almost only before Louis, while she is generally not haughty in front of other people. This inconsistency draws the attention of her close friends. Caroline wonders, "What had befallen the kind-hearted Shirley that she should be so indifferent to the dreary position of a fellow-creature thus isolated under her roof?" (380). She considers that Shirley had "prejudice" (384) against Louis. Harry Sympton says to Shirley, "you are grown a proud lady to him [Louis], I notice that" (387). Why Shirley behaves

herself in this way before Louis is worth exploring further.

About their reunion after two years absence, Louis says, “She [Shirley] received me haughtily: she meted out a wide space between us, and kept me aloof by the reserved gesture, the rare and alienated glance, the word calmly civil” (432). Shirley responds, “She was an excellent pupil! Having seen you distant, she at once learned to withdraw. Pray, sir, admire, in her hauteur, a careful improvement on your own coolness” (432). They disclose their true feelings by objectifying Shirley through utilizing the third person instead of the first or second person. It is revealed that Shirley’s stance reflects her wounded pride, which Louis’s seeming “coolness” provoked. Her response appears to have an ambivalent effect on Louis. He writes one day, “She charmed me in this mood: waxing disdainful, half insulting, pride, temper, derision, blent in her large fine eye, that had, just now, the look of a merlin’s” (516). Shirley’s pride is one of her charms for Louis. He feels fascinated as well as distanced by it. Another time, Louis writes, “*My wife, if I ever marry, must stir my great frame with a sting now and then: she must furnish use to her husband’s vast mass of patience. I was not made so enduring to be mated with a lamb: I should find more congenial responsibility in the charge of a young lioness or leopardess*” (439). Whether it is done consciously or not, Shirley’s haughty attitude serves as a stratagem to captivate Louis, who prefers “a young lioness or leopardess” to “a lamb”.

Louis is also described as being proud. When he says to Shirley, “You look hot and haughty” (517), she retorts, “And you far haughtier. Yours is the monstrous pride which counterfeits humility” (517). One may recall Darcy’s remark about Mr. Bingley, “Nothing is more deceitful . . . than the appearance of humility. It is . . . sometimes an indirect boast” (53). Louis’s superficial “coolness” could be interpreted as an offspring of his conceit. He attributes the reason for this to his being poor, saying “poverty and pride often go together” (431). He thinks that he needs to hold self-respect all the more because of his lack of wealth. Torgerson rightly remarks, “When Louis and Shirley confront each other about who will be the first to declare love for the other, it is a battle between Louis’s pride of class and Shirley’s pride of gender” (49). The field of romance becomes a fierce battlefield.

The incident which promotes their relationship is a mishap caused by Phœbe. Bitten by the mad dog, Shirley harbors a fear of madness and death out

of hydrophobia. Blamed by Louis for her failing to go to him for help, Shirley replies, "I got as far as the school-room door; there my courage failed" (427). Shirley's utterance reveals that she wanted help from him at bottom. Her anxiety makes her openhearted and she receives support from Louis without haughtiness, which is otherwise unlikely to happen. Duthie is correct when she observes, "the episode marks a turning-point in the relations of Shirley and Louis, who love each other but are too proud to be the first to admit it" (164). After this incident, Louis dares to enter Shirley's room when she is out and snatches "her purse and her keys, both potent sexual symbols" (Beer 107). Thus, Phœbe's biting leads Shirley and Louis to be united together by letting them surmount the wall of pride between them. There is a further parallel here, with the emergency of Lydia's elopement bringing Darcy and Elizabeth closer, through her anxiety and need for help, and the surrender of formalities and distance for practical purposes. It is noteworthy that Brontë transposes "pride and prejudice" onto attention to animals, an area generally ignored by Austen.

Phœbe was "one of Mr. Sam Wynne's pointers [which he] . . . often flogs . . . cruelly" (426). She, often "ill-used" (426) by her owner, could be the representative of working people, who are treated cruelly by their superiors. Then, the mad dog's biting is a form of revenge on its ruling-class owner's cruelty. It presages the subsequent "mad" (199) man's assault on Robert, about which Mr. Yorke comments, "it was done in revenge" (469). Seeber expresses interest in "the connections drawn between cruelty to animals and cruelty to humans" (18) in her reading of Austen, referring to "discourses which connect the animal question to abolitionism and feminism" (18). Taken it into consideration, it would be appropriate for Shirley to have rejected Mr. Sam Wynne's proposal because he is likely to abuse her as well, if they get married.

It should be noted that it is not Caroline but Louis to whom Shirley reveals her apprehension of rabies. Intimate as they may be, the friendship between Shirley and Caroline remains opaque. Shirley once says to Caroline, "I like to watch those I love in a crowd, and to compare them with others: I have thus compared you" (264). Shirley means that Caroline is one of those she loves; in contrast, Caroline says, "I both like and admire her [Shirley]" (315). She never says that she "loves" Shirley, while she does not hesitate to say to Mrs. Pryor, "Indeed, I *do* love you" (321) even before the discovery of Mrs. Pryor's motherhood. She even says, "Since Miss Keeldar and you [Mrs. Pryor] came,

I have been—I was going to say—happier, but that would be untrue” (315). When either Caroline or Shirley fall into illness, it is not either of them but another person who helps them to overcome it. Caroline is nursed by Mrs. Pryor on her sickbed, during which time Shirley is away “at the sea-side” (370) as opposed to Elizabeth going through the muddy fields to nurse Jane when she gets sick. Caroline seems to give priority to her relationship with Robert over the friendship with Shirley, who expresses her dissatisfaction by saying, “He [Robert] keeps intruding between you and me: without him we should be good friends” (221). However, Shirley, who once said to Caroline, “If we were but left unmolested, I have that regard for you that I could bear you in my presence for ever, and not for the fraction of a second do I ever wish to be rid of you” (221), seems to show the same inclination as Caroline. Shirley, who planned the northern tour with Caroline to cheer her up, abandons the scheme, presumably not wishing to miss the opportunity of reunion with Louis Moore. Thus, female friendship is depicted as ultimately secondary; in fact, it is often supplanted by heterosexuality. We may recall that the news of Charlotte Lucas’s marriage with Mr. Collins made Elizabeth feel “persuaded that no real confidence could ever subsist between them again” (144). It is true that Elizabeth and Jane have strong bonds. As sisters they were “left unmolested” through their childhood to be together, while Shirley and Caroline both note the external forces that get in their way. There seems to be a vast difference between being sisters and being like sisters. The difficulty of solidarity between women in patriarchal society unless they are sisters, possibly suggests the difficulty of alliance between female writers, which both Austen and Brontë seem to face literally. According to Austen-Leigh, “Jane Austen lived in entire seclusion from the literary world: neither by correspondence, nor by personal intercourse was she known to any contemporary authors” (90). Likewise, Charlotte was not acquainted with female writers at this point. She was solitary due to the loss of her sisters and it was only after the publication of *Shirley* that she formed friendships with female writers such as Elizabeth Gaskell and Harriet Martineau.

The presence of another dog is worth examining in consideration of the relationship between Shirley and Louis, as it seems to play the role of mediator between them. It is “the ruffianly Tartar; who, sullen and impracticable to others, acquired a singular partiality for him [Louis]: a partiality so marked that sometimes, when Moore, summoned to a meal, entered the room and sat down

unwelcomed, Tartar would rise from his lair at Shirley's feet, and betake himself to the taciturn tutor" (380). Louis is generally tender towards animals. Far from Darcy in terms of fortune and status, Louis might not be very remote from him in the relationship with animals. It is true that we never see Darcy caress a dog, but it is worth noting that he "is distanced from the hunting and shooting worlds" (Seeber 13). Among animals, Louis especially fondles Tartar all the more because the dog is singled out for affection by Shirley. Louis knows that "Tartar is your [her] dear companion . . . I [Louis] once saw you [Shirley] kiss him [Tartar] on that snow-white beauty-spot which stars his broad forehead" (519). Louis wishes for intimacy with Tartar in order to exploit the dog's fascination. When "Tartar had resumed his allegiance to Shirley, and was once more couched near her foot-stool, the audacious tutor by one word and gesture fascinated him again. He . . . came, with head lovingly depressed, to receive the expected caress: as it was given, the significant smile again rippled across Moore's quiet face" (380). Louis's "significant smile" appears to divulge that he had a design to stimulate Shirley to imitate Tartar's loving him in accordance with René Girard's "triangle" of desire (Girard 2).

It is interesting that Ritvo refers to dogs as "metonymic representatives of their owners" (184). Therefore, Tartar's being fascinated by Louis seems likely to represent Shirley's real feeling under the surface. That Louis succeeds in attracting Tartar implies that he would be able to fascinate Shirley as well, and so take the position of Tartar as Shirley's "dear companion" instead of that of a tutor. The similarity of the sound and spelling between Tartar and tutor seems to make it easy to replace each other. When Shirley eventually admits her love towards Louis, she refers to him by this name. "'Poor Tartar!' said she [Shirley], touching and patting my [Louis's] hand: 'poor fellow; stalwart friend; Shirley's pet and favourite, lie down!'" (523). Thus, Louis becomes the object of Shirley's love and caresses as her "companion through life" (523). He writes with satisfaction, "I could not bear to be out of her [Shirley's] presence; I returned to it, and basked in it, like Tartar in the sun" (523).

Concerning the ending of this novel, Shuttleworth points out that "Shirley is reduced to a pining captive" (215) and that "The dominant feeling is one of loss: loss of the identities of Shirley and Caroline who are reduced to 'Mrs Louis' and 'Mrs Robert'" (218). Austen's novels might not be free from such a feeling of "loss" as well. Jane and Elizabeth are also portrayed as "Mrs. Bingley" (427)

and “Mrs. Darcy” (427) in the final chapter. As for Austen, Seeber maintains, “The marriage closure does bring her heroines degrees of economic security and social integration, but it compromises their liberty” (28). This situation might not be, however, without consolation in *Shirley*. It is true that during the engagement period, Shirley “pined, like any other chained denizen of deserts. Her captor alone could cheer her; his society only could make amends for the lost privilege of liberty: in his absence, she sat or wandered alone; spoke little, and ate less” (534). It is possible, however, to imagine that Shirley acted so on purpose, considering the subsequent narration, “a remark she [Shirley] made a year afterwards proved that she partly also acted on system. ‘Louis,’ she said, ‘would never have learned to rule, if she had not ceased to govern: the incapacity of the sovereign had developed the powers of the premier’” (535). Shirley, who once “intimated her intention to ‘give way’ and swoon on the spot” (261) at the school-feast, seems to be able to pretend if she wishes. The old housekeeper’s remark, “Mrs Louis smiled when she talked: she had a real happy, glad, good-natured look; but she had een that pierced a body through” (541) indicates that Shirley’s pining was only temporary. It is true that she appears to have stepped off the center stage by the marriage; however, that she still had piercing “een” [eyes] suggests that she holds the same insight as ever and did not forfeit her power entirely. It is noteworthy that Elizabeth’s “lively, sportive, manner of talking” (430) to Darcy made Georgiana listen “with an astonishment bordering on alarm” (430) and the forcefulness of “Elizabeth’s persuasion” (430) made Darcy take a step to reconcile with his aunt, Lady Catherine after marriage. These show her maintaining another kind of power over her husband, and not abdicating her strong personality to become a wife. It is possible to imagine that like Elizabeth, Shirley might continue to wield her power by managing her husband behind the scenes.

III

Both *Pride and Prejudice* and *Shirley* are the second published novel for each author. *Poems* by Curren, Ellis, and Acton Bell, which appeared in 1846, had received little attention from the public. It is notable that the Brontë sisters adopted male pseudonyms in order to tackle what Gilbert and Gubar called “the anxiety of authorship” (49), which obviously obsessed Charlotte. It is after the

publication of *Jane Eyre* that Charlotte tasted the bitterness of the critics. It is true that *Jane Eyre* brought her great success. A storm of high admiration was greatly delightful for Charlotte, who had waited for the response with a feeling of uneasiness and fear. At the same time, however, some harsh reviews deeply hurt and enraged her to a degree which Austen had not experienced as far as we know, although it should be noted that she did experience as great initial difficulty in getting published (Austen-Leigh 105) as the Brontës. Charlotte went so far as to write a preface to the second edition of *Jane Eyre* as “she could not resist answering those ‘timorous or carping’ critics who had designated *Jane Eyre* [as] an ‘improper’ book” (Barker 638). Her resentment was not completely quelled yet; therefore, she wrote a preface to *Shirley* as “an answer to the unsigned notice of *Jane Eyre* by Elizabeth Rigby in the *Quarterly Review* of December 1848” (Barker 715). When the publisher declined the preface, Charlotte inserted some of the Rigby’s words into *Shirley* as utterances of the arrogant Miss Hardman as an outlet for her own anger.

It is well known that *Shirley* was written during Charlotte’s most difficult period of mourning, when she lost her brother and two sisters one after another within almost eight months. Rather than sorrow, however, resentment might be noticeable in the work. As for *Jane Eyre*, Virginia Woolf states in *A Room of One’s Own*, “it is clear that anger was tampering with the integrity of Charlotte Brontë the novelist” (54) while Jane Austen possessed “genius” (55) and “integrity” (55) which enabled her to “hold fast to the thing as they [she] saw it without shrinking” (55). Anger is embedded in *Shirley* as well; however, it does not seem to be same with that of *Jane Eyre*. The former is inclusive of the indignation against the critics like Rigby, which could be explained as a pre-emptive response to negative reviews.

The success of her first novel made Charlotte acutely sensitive to the response of the critics and “Desperately anxious not to produce a second novel inferior to her first” (Barker 691). Rosengarten states that “urged by G. H. Lewes to ‘keep reality before [her],’ it is not surprising that Charlotte should have sought to avoid the romantic excitement of *Jane Eyre* in favor of an approach that would satisfy contemporary criteria for serious fiction” (35), referring to the following remarks of Elizabeth Gaskell:

Miss Brontë took extreme pains with ‘*Shirley*.’ She felt that the fame she

had acquired imposed upon her a double responsibility. She tried to make her novel like a piece of actual life,—feeling sure that if she but represented the product of personal experience and observation truly, good would come out of it in the long run. She carefully studied the different reviews and criticisms that had appeared on ‘Jane Eyre,’ in hopes of extracting precepts and advice from which to profit. (Gaskell 315)

Charlotte read *Pride and Prejudice* during the period between *Jane Eyre* and *Shirley*. She spitefully declared after perusal, “Miss Austen is only shrewd and observant” (Smith 2:10) in the letter quoted at the beginning of this essay. Her antipathy seems to stem from “anxiety of influence” (Bloom 6) towards Austen as her great precursor. It is probable, however, that when she “represented the product of personal experience and observation truly” in the next book, she was unable to ignore Austen’s writing, which received much applause from the critics as well as a general readership. Besides, as Woolf observes, “we think back through our mothers if we are women” (56); matrilineal precursors are significant for female writers. It is unquestionable that “Jane Austen should have laid a wreath upon the grave of Fanny Burney” (Woolf 49). (In a purely chronological sense, Jane Austen, born in 1775, belongs to the generation of Charlotte’s aunt, Elizabeth Branwell, born in 1776, who became the Brontë children’s surrogate mother after their mother’s death). The precedent of Austen is so powerful that Brontë criticizes her as a form of denial and defense against her achievement; however, she still appropriates certain structural and stylistic features. Charlotte appears to be seized with female anxiety of influence and figuratively struggled to overcome her mother. *Pride and Prejudice* was subsumed in her new novel despite her avowed aversion to Austen’s work with the implicit intention to rewrite it.

In the first chapter of *Shirley*, the narrator addresses readers:

If you think, from this prelude, that anything like a romance is preparing for you, reader, you never were more mistaken. Do you anticipate sentiment, and poetry, and reverie? Do you expect passion, and stimulus, and melodrama? Calm your expectations; reduce them to a lowly standard. Something real, cool, and solid, lies before you. (5)

It is an avowal showing her different attitudes from her first novel. Gezari is right, however, when she remarks, “Yet Brontë doesn’t succeed in avoiding melodrama in *Shirley*, or something we might better call magical thinking” (xviii). The ubiquitous impact of *Pride and Prejudice* in *Shirley*, however, register her new challenge, suggesting the intensity of her struggle to surmount her literary mother and dilemma, caught between justified pride as a successful writer and fear of critical prejudice against female presumption.

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