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WUTHERING HEIGHT

A Research

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Dedication

To...

Our guide and spark of hope and light in our life- The prophet and messenger "the peace and prayers of God be upon him"

To...

The pearls our life , our parents.

To...

The sweetest figures , our brother and sisters .

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Abstract

The main purpose of this paper is to deal with the social class in Emily Bronte's novel *Wuthering Heights* and to know some aspects of her life are reflected in her novel as she created a motherless character because she lost her mother by cancer when she was three years. Even the setting of her novel is similar to the environment that she grew up in especially Haworth village which is an isolated place surrounded by moors.

The paper comprises three chapters. The first of them gives introduction about Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. Chapter two deals with Emily Bronte's life and glimpse at her major works. Chapter three sheds light on the characters and social classes, social classes and the status of women. The paper ends with a conclusion that sums up the findings of the study, followed by a list of references.

Chapter One

Introduction

Certainly, in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, the compelling relationship between the characters Catherine and Heathcliff commands the immediate attention of the reader. The entire novel is, in fact, structured around Brontë's powerful depiction of that relationship, and a perceptive reader must grant its central position in the work. The relationship, however, is not one of love, but one of almost complete self-obsession on the part of each of these characters. And an exclusive focus upon the Catherine-Heathcliff emotional axis, along with their numerous self-serving acts and casual cruelty may detract from other important and remarkable aspects of the novel. *Wuthering Heights* is indeed a novel of manners, offering the reader a rich and varied portrait of life in provincial English society during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The social setting of the work is one to which many current readers are unaccustomed.

One unusual element of the novel is its use of several narrators. The narrator Mr. Lockwood tells the reader a story of the Earnshaws and the Lintons, one that he is told by another narrator, Mrs. Ellen ("Nelly" or "Elly") Dean, a servant to both families. Mrs. Dean sometimes relies upon other characters to

fill in parts of the “history” of the families and their relationships, thus introducing into the complex mixture a three-times-removed observer who may use an epistolary form or reported speech to add details that advance the plot. *Wuthering Heights* is a “frame-tale,” that is, the story of the two families within the “frame” of Mr. Lockwood’s visit to the Yorkshire district and his subsequent bizarre encounters with his landlord, Mr. Heathcliff, and with a ward of Heathcliff’s household, Cathy, to whom Lockwood, an unmarried man, is attracted.

Chapter Two

Emily Bronte: Life and Career

Emily Jane Bronte was born in July, 30, 1818 in village of Thornton near Bradford. She spent most of her life in the Yorkshire moors in England's industrial north. She is the daughter of Reverend Patrick and Maria Bronte. Her father was an Anglican clergyman. Her mother was a gentlewoman from Penzance in Cornwall who married from the curate in 1812, and given birth to six children. Five daughters and only one son. Maria, Elizabeth, Charlotte, Branwell, Emily, Anne. Emily was the fifth child and fourth daughter in her family. In April 1820 after the birth of Anne the family moved to Haworth where the father Mr. Bronte received a position as perpetual curate (Bloom, 2008:10)

Haworth was small separated town on the Yorkshire moors, Attractive in summer and spring, in winter the weather is cool, dark and damp, rude when sudden storms blew from the west. In mid nineteenth century the people separated from each other, large towns were few, the moor land set uncovered under the sky as it from thousands of years (Coles,1987:1). In September 1821 Emily's mother died from cancer, and the six children left motherless with ages scoping from eight to one. Then their Aunt Branwell came to look after the children and keep the house.

She was a formally known spinster, thrifty, she raised the children up (Bloom,200:10)

Little is known about Emily's sisters, Maria and Elizabeth, because they died young. Charlotte and Emily were literary intellect and geniuses. The youngest, Anne, was also publisher and Patrick Branwell, called simply Branwell, have the tendency both for writing and painting (Coles, 1987:1). Because of the isolated situation of the Bronte's family they don't like mention or even talking about their covert lives and they don't like the company with others or even to have many friends. Moreover, little information is known about Emily's childhood (ibid:2).

In the date of 1824 Emily attended with her three elder sisters (Charlotte, Maria and Elizabeth) Cowan Bridge school for teaching the daughters of the local clergy by a rev. This school was as any other Victorian schools, schooling there was strict and condition life was tough for the students. Then the tuberculosis ran the school and Maria and Elizabeth were sickened by it. They returned home to die. Maria died at 1825 May 6, and at June 1 Emily and Charlotte returned home after summer vacation, at June 15 Elizabeth Bronte died (Coles, 1987:34).

Emily attended this school briefly from 1824 to 1825. Most of the time she was educated at home by her aunt and her father.

The books and magazines with which parsonage were well stocked, she and her sisters spent six years of education at home (Bloom,2008:10). At their home the conversation topics are about the poetry, history and politics. Such talk fed the active imagination of the children. One day Branwell the son was presented with a box of wooden soldiers, the children began at once adopted soldier's life as their own character. Emily acted a descendent of sir Walter Scott, the Scottish romantic poet and novelist, and one of her notable heroes led by eldest Charlotte and Branwell. The children began to write and produced little plays about the soldiers and imaginary worlds in which they lived. These plays became stories, copied in to tiny booklets, and finally developed into two ongoing sages, one composed largely by Charlotte and other set on unreal island of Gondal by Emily and Anne, Gondal was populated by character who seemed to be rude, brave type. In their own town Emily will still to write about Gondal for the rest of her life (Jobnson,2004:ix).

Emily's personality was the most notable and strange one, She was carful, reclusive, calm, quite in company, polite but with drawn. Here deepest thoughts were always kept hidden from the others, also she was tall, slender, pale, with grey eyes and not very attractive complexion. She dressed oddly, she is pleasant enough to live with understanding the other and very kind, very

strong countryside girl. She was attached to nature and, while she was wandering in the moors, she became truly alive. She spent a great deal of time alone in the moors walking, thinking, and may be forming some of her poetry in the free and open air. Furthermore, she has the talents that make the literary artist great (ibid.).

Emily's later life relate on her abortive try to make a living on her own. Some jobs presented to the girls in Bronte. In 1835 Emily joined her sister Charlotte at (Miss Woolers school) at Roe head, but because she remained far away from the moors she became sick. Then she returned to Haworth when her health began to fail again. She stayed at home for five years and at this period she and her two sister plan to made their own school at parsonage with their aunt lending them money, but the next year their aunt and Mr. William who had been a favorite with girls both died, and the girls returned to their home and their hopes of building the school failed (Coles,1987:3)

Emily was concerned about her optimistic sight of the future in which she supposed that she and her sisters will head a school, and living in busy harmony, but the school will never to open and she left Haworth only briefly. Their adulthood was then devoted to writing rather than teaching (Bloom,2008:128). Emily became sick and physically ill. In the period between (1838-1842) she wrote many poems and kept them for herself,

but in 1845 Charlotte her sister discovered these poems and tried to persuade her sister to publish her work (Jobnson,2004:x)

In May the three sister Emily, Charlotte and Anne made up a small volume containing a selection of verse of all the three and published it wishing to stay anonymous because if they knew that they are women their work will not receive serious attention, so they published under the names of (Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell). Names that were bearing the initials letters of their own names (Coles,1987:55). In their first try they published Dismal Failure poems but it received no suitable critical attention and only two copies were sold. Nevertheless, they didn't stop their hopes, each of three girls wrote a novel; Charlotte produce Jane, Emily produce Wuthering Heights and Anne produce Agnes Grey publishing them in 1847 (Coles,1987:3).

Emily Bronte's novel Wuthering Heights was first not well received and it was considered as unreasonable, gloomy and cruel. The result then was that only few copies of the first edition were sold (Bloom,2008:123). Despite the fact that she wrote only one novel, she continued to carry on uncertain relationship with nineteenth century thoughtful traditions that support humanistic values either by advancing the claims of the individuals or by carrying on those of community (ibid:89). Emily and her sister Anne wrote many diary papers and journal

articles as a description of their lives that prescribe a future date on which they read the account and then write an incidental one (ibid:128). Moreover, it is worth noting that Emily was born after the apex of the romantic period in the Victorian era, in the midst of the Industrial Revolution. Yet, she had always a desire to return back to the earlier era and that is notable in her novel *Wuthering Heights* (Jobnson,2004:xi).

In 1848 Emily began to write a second novel, this time her brother Branwell died of tuberculosis. In his funeral Emily caught a cold, which was then developed into serious illness and she ignored herself refusing all medical advises, she was not able to breathe without going to cough. After two month she broke down saying to Charlotte that she now wants to see the doctor, but she passed away before help could arrive. She died on December 19, 1848 at the age of thirty, her body was very thin and her coffin was only sixteen inches wide (Jobnson, 2004: x). After Emily's death and not earlier than the twentieth century her novel of *Wuthering Heights* started to be regarded as a masterpiece in which gothic romantic units were dealing with huge sources and poetic power (Bloom,2008:123).

Chapter Three

Characters and Social Classes

Allen, Walter (1961:153) says that there seems to be a great amount of uncertainty in *Wuthering Heights* regarding the social class of certain characters. One should perhaps note that the ambiguity of social classes and the criteria for membership in a particular class is one of the major concerns of the novel. The characters in the outline below are especially appropriate to this motif of class structures because they are at one time or another members of both the lower class and the higher class.

- **Heathcliff:**

Heathcliff becomes a “servant” for a time after Mr. Earnshaw’s death; he had previously been a member of the family with equivalent status. The legal master of the household, Hindley, relegates Heathcliff to the status of servant and removes him from the house. Later, when Heathcliff brings back his unexplained fortune, he becomes an aristocrat again (“Mr. Heathcliff”). He secures his recovered status by playing upon Hindley’s weaknesses and cheating him out of the estate. Heathcliff’s changes in fortune do not alter his fundamental attitudes and values; any changes in his character are superficial (Watson, 1949).

- **Nelly Dean:**

Nelly is a servant who occasionally worries about being discharged from her position for displeasing her master. However, she is called “Mrs. Dean” and is given a somewhat privileged status. Mrs. Dean is certainly the intellectual equal of anyone in the novel; Mr. Lockwood, the truly aristocratic snob, tells Nelly, “Excepting a few provincialisms of slight consequence, you have no marks of the manners which I am habituated to consider as peculiar to your class.” (Note that Mr. Heathcliff also exhibits those “provincialisms,” though Mr. Lockwood does not mention them.) Later, Mrs. Dean also acts as the agent for Cathy Linton, who has not yet come of legal age(Varghese, 2012).

- **Hareton Earnshaw:**

Hareton is an aristocrat by birth. His father, Hindley, dies after losing his fortune and lands to Heathcliff. Hareton occupies a special position in the household at Heathcliff’s suffrage, but like a servant, he does not receive an education and he is put to manual labor on the estate.(Oates, 1982:435)

- **Cathy Linton:**

After Heathcliff secures all of her fortune and property to himself as legal heir of both his deceased wife and son Linton, Cathy, who was an aristocrat at Thrushcross Grange, becomes a

servant in Heathcliff's household, certainly more specifically a servant with a servant's duties than Hareton. When Heathcliff dies, however, Cathy becomes heir (through her husband Linton) to Thrushcross Grange again, and she is the person to whom Mr. Lockwood must pay his rent. Upon Cathy's marriage to Hareton, her fortune and property will become his; he will then be the legal owner of Thrushcross Grange as well as Wuthering Heights (Allott,1958).

- **Frances Earnshaw:**

Hindley's wife is an aristocrat by marriage (as was legitimate in the society); however, she was probably not an aristocrat by birth. Marriage was the legitimate way to change one's social class; the idea of an aristocrat marrying "beneath" him was repugnant to the class, and evidently a good reason for Hindley not to tell his father or anyone else that he was married(ibid).

Social Classes and the Status of Women

The social classes represented in Wuthering Heights are, for the most part, the rural landed aristocracy and their servants. There is mention of other classes—for example, of the tenant farmers to whom Heathcliff is a harsh landlord—but readers never observe them; neither do readers get to know many of the laborers on the estates. Similarly, readers do not see members of the middle classes, other than the doctor, Mr. Kenneth, and the lawyer, Mr. Green, who come from the town called Gimmerton,

a place that seems to be ever glimmering just over the horizon for most of the characters in the novel. London, or even Liverpool, where one might indeed encounter industrial working class people as well as people from the aristocratic urban upper class, seem to exist in different worlds, apart from the inhabitants of rural Yorkshire. Mr. Lockwood, an aristocrat from London, is viewed with hostile suspicion by most of the other characters in the work(Eagleton,1975).

The Lintons and the Earnshaws, families who represent the rural landed gentry, exercise enormous power over people from the lower classes in Yorkshire, both immediate legal power and the power of custom and tradition. The aristocrats hold government office (Edgar Linton is a magistrate, for example, though he gives up that office) and have wide latitude in dealing with members of the lower class(Read, 1969).

The various punishments that may be administered by the aristocrats include corporal punishment, imprisonment, allocations of living space, job assignments, and discharges from employment that could render the servant completely unemployable. The servants owe respect to their “masters,” who remain somewhat aloof from them; they would address the masters properly (as Mr. or Mrs.); the servants would be regarded by the aristocrats as child-like beings who should be guided and corrected when necessary (<http://www.victorianweb.org>).

For servants to hold property or to have legal status within the system would suggest a breaking down of the social order, an introduction of chaos into the system. Mature men and women of the lower class were seen not only as child-like, but educating them beyond a certain limit would have been seen as misguided and even dangerous. It was the burden of the upper class to see to their welfare, just as under the system of European imperialism, it was the burden of the “whites” to look after the interest of the non-white indigenous people in other lands. When Heathcliff, as master of Wuthering Heights, does not see to the formal education of Hareton, he is refusing to accept his responsibility as an aristocrat (Bronte,1987).

Associated with these ideas of class structure was the matter of the status of aristocratic females, who were also thought of as child-like, frail, and emotional beings unsuited by nature to the rigors of intellect. Even though these women shared the status of the families and husbands, they had no voice in decision-making at any level, except as they could persuade their husbands or their fathers to listen. The men held both broadly legal and domestic power over women, like the power they assumed over children and servants, and women were expected to submit to the wishes of the men who were their guardians. Women could not hold property separate from their husbands’ holdings; when women married, the control of their property passed to their husbands(Clay, 1963).

In 18th and 19th century England, women could not vote in elections and did not have legal status in society apart from their fathers or husbands. The system for inheritance of wealth and property was primogeniture, in which the eldest son received all or most of property upon his father's death. Trying to thwart Heathcliff's schemes to control both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, Edgar Linton determines that he will not leave his daughter Cathy the property, but will rather "put it in the hands of trustees for her use during life, and for her children, if she had any, after her." Of course, Heathcliff counters Mr. Linton's desires by delaying the attorney with a bribe until Mr. Linton has died without making such a will. Further, the imprisonment of Cathy Linton and Mrs. Dean is not an excessively melodramatic or far-fetched incident; Heathcliff has a ready answer for his treatment of the two women. He is the master and they are females, subject to his governance(ibid).

Conclusion

Wuthering Heights presents us with a twofold aspect life. We can safely propose that novel is an elemental struggle between good and evil, the world of darkness versus world of light. These contradictory aspects can be categorized as chaos and calm. And it can be claimed that these two elements are not in contradiction but is a balance to establish the cosmic order of the universe. The work of Emily Bronte comes as a product of real hard - experiences and harsh life. It shows that feelings of cruelty and hate co-exists not only in adults, but also in children themselves. In her single novel Wuthering Heights, Emily Bronte proves that man is a creature who differs from all the other creatures.

The main difference lies in the extremeness of the feelings of cruelty and hate in every human being. The coming of the unknown, dark-face child to the life and future of the adults as well as the children. Through him the novelist shows that the feelings of hate can be hidden under the soft exterior of human beings, and these feelings might turn him into a beast which shows but hate and cruelty. This kind of toughness that is hinted upon in the first generation, it is strongly revealed in the scheme of revenge Heathcliff intends with the second generation. He is the beast who returns hate for hate embodied in the cruel treatment on the second generation. While those in the second

generation returns love for hate, of Heathcliff , because they could find beauty inside them and in their surroundings .

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