

Catherine and Heathcliff as Rebels: A Consideration of “That Glorious World” in *Wuthering Heights*

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Introduction

Wuthering Heights was published in 1847 as a work of Ellis Bell, which is an assumed male name of Emily Brontë. Emily Brontë spent most of her life in Haworth, where her father Patrick had a job as a perpetual curate. Although nowadays some people might find it strange, *Wuthering Heights* was not welcomed by the readers at that time. Its high standard value was bestowed long after her death.

In fact, *Wuthering Heights* was treated harshly by Victorian readers and was bitterly criticised with negative words such as “too coarse and disagreeable” in *Spectator* (Allot 39). It is possible to presume what the initial readers’ negative impressions were like by reading Charlotte’s preface of *Wuthering Heights*. In order to defend her sister from the criticism, she wrote a preface and gave an excuse about the shockingly evil nature of its hero, Heathcliff and the violence depicted in the work. Charlotte suggested as follows:

Had Ellis Bell been a lady or a gentleman accustomed to what is called ‘the world’, her view of a remote and unreclaimed region...would have differed

greatly from that actually taken by the homebred country girl. (li)

She also explained that her sister “did not know what she had done” (lii). Charlotte emphasised her sister’s reclusive nature, while highly regarding her “creative gift” (liii) to make a masterpiece with only “simple tools, out of homely materials” (liv).

Only after the twentieth century did the tide of critical opinion change, the negative value judgement was gradually turned, and the work was reevaluated as a masterpiece (Nestor xx). For example, Lord David Cecil in his *Early Victorian Novelists* (1934) claims the importance to appreciate *Wuthering Heights* outside of characteristic Victorian novels such as the works by Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell and Anthony Trollope. He remarks that Emily succeeded in constructing “a cosmic harmony” at the end of her work (164). According to Cecil, “the whole created cosmos” is established on a “certain living spiritual principles – on the one hand what may be called the principle of storm—of the harsh, the ruthless, the wild, the dynamic; and on the other the principle of calm—of the gentle, the merciful, the passive and the tame” (152). He stated that the two confronting houses in *Wuthering Heights*, the Earnshaws and the Lintons represent these two confronting principles and that in the end, the two “combine to compose a cosmic harmony” (152). He claims this is the theme of this book.

Similarly, Miriam Allot in “The Rejection of Heathcliff?” (1958) tries to solve the problem of interpretation of its dualistic structure. She claims that through the world of *Wuthering Heights*, “Emily Brontë attempt[ed] to do justice to the two conflicting demands of her heart and head” (186) and that Catherine and Heathcliff represent Emily’s heart, her stormy element, while the Lintons represent her calm nature, her rational aspect. Allot shows a counterargument to Cecil, yet her viewpoint is the same as his.

Recently, *Wuthering Heights* has accepted numerous critical approaches from various perspectives such as Marxist criticism, feminist criticism, psychoanalytic criticism and post-colonial criticism. This list can be extended. Importantly, Pauline Nestor points out that “these critics have concentrated on issues of class, gender and sexuality, and all have been inclined to highlight conflict and division in the novel” (xxi), and what these facts explain is that *Wuthering Heights* is a remarkably difficult book to understand. About its mysterious quality, J. Hillis Miller states in

Disappearance of God (1963) that “[i]n a way, though, the secret was still protected, since *Wuthering Heights* is a difficult and elusive work, a work with which no reader has felt altogether at ease” (162). Considering the increasing number of theses written about this work, it seems that his view is still sufficiently viable. Later in *Fiction and Repetition* (1982), he claims that the secret truth of *Wuthering Heights* is not only one, “[t]he secret truth would be something formulable as a univocal principle of explanation which would account for everything in the novel” (51). He highlights the importance of a broad view when analysing this work.

In this essay, I would like to pay regard to Miller’s stand to stress a broad viewpoint to examine *Wuthering Heights*, for I think the conflicts that take place between the two houses, the elements which Cecil and Allot dealt with as a main theme of this book, only reveals the different natures between the people among the Heights and the Grange, and that this is only one aspect of the interwoven complicating story of *Wuthering Heights*. The theme of this book is something more magnificent, something that accounts for everything as Miller states. However, it does not mean to encourage the attitude to treat the conflicts between the two houses lightly. I would like to consider it as one of the important elements depicted in this work. It is also important to think about Emily’s view of life and death by reading her poems. She had a unique view of life and death which was not the typical religious one that prevailed at that period. Through writing poems, she developed her original view about life and death. At first she considered death as a negative factor; however, she changed it to a positive one, by discovering a circular relationship between life and death. In this essay, I would like to demonstrate how she solves her emotional conflict trying to accept death and how the fictional world in *Wuthering Heights* reflects those changes. In the conclusion, I will also examine the role of the narrator presenting this unique world.

1

In this section, I would like to examine Emily’s unique view of life and death in order to think about how important it was for her to change the view about life and death, because how to accept death was deeply related to the problem of her own identity. However, first, let me explain Emily’s religious views as an introduction

of this argument.

One of the reasons for the harsh criticism of *Wuthering Heights* when it was first published was its Antichristian view or the paganism reflected in the work. In the Victorian period, people had a high regard for their moral sense and ethical views based on Christianity at that time. However, it does not necessarily mean that Emily was not interested in the Christian view at all, for we can find a lot of references or quotations concerning Christianity and from the Bible. For example, in Lockwood's dream, the Bible plays an important role. Also, in his dream, Lockwood goes to hear "Jabes Branderham's preach" with Joseph, a character well reflecting the Calvinistic view (23). Furthermore, various characters in *Wuthering Heights* often speak of antinomic concepts about God and the Devil or Heaven and Hell. Even if those are Antichristian, they originally came from Christianity (Nakaoka 117). This fact shows that Emily's religious views are ambiguous and difficult to identify.

Emily's life is wrapped in mystery. Existing sources about her life are scarce. There are only one collection of her poems, a few letters and fragments of her diary and the essays written in French during her study abroad in Brussels. Other information comes from Charlotte's statements. Although sources about Emily Brontë are scarce, by reading Emily's poems and essays, it is possible to investigate her attitude toward life and death.

Her first collection of poems, *Poems by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell* (1846), was published in a joint signature with Charlotte, Emily and Anne. Starting with the first complete collection of her poems, *The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë* edited by C.W. Hatfield, after her death, editing Emily's poems has been progressing. Through composition of poems, she changed and developed her idea about life and death. Yoko Ushironaka points out that Emily changed her attitude toward death from a pessimistic one to a hopeful one (38). She points out that, in Emily's early poems, her idea about death was constructed on Christian belief (30). For example, in poem H41 written in December, 1837 (Hatfield 59), which consists of a conversation between "I" and "thee", while "I" hesitates to die, for she has to "leave thee here" (9), she seems to have a hope for her after life. She believes that she can meet "thee" again at the place "[w]here blissful ages never die" (16). This poem shows that for Emily death meant separation from this world; however, after

death, people can meet again in somewhere like heaven.

However, in poem H155 (Hatfield 179) written in October, one of the poems supposed to be written from 1842 to 1843, she changes her view and wishes to avoid “Death” (9). In this poem, she describes “the grave” (41) as her “foe” (42) and considers that time compulsorily brings her death. In this poem, Emily seeks to “gain” (7) something through her life, yet “Death” compels her to end her soul’s pursuit. Emily’s stoic nature is shown in this poem.

Poem H177 (Hatfield 209), written in November, 1844, consists of by a conversation between a daughter and her father. The daughter claims that she will return to “[w]here we were born—where you and I / [s]hall meet our dearest, when we die;” (59-60). She also notes that they will be “[r]estored into the Deity” (62) after death. “[The] Deity” here means the creator of all nature. Giving an example of a “tree” (48) grown from “the seed” (47), she denies her father’s mourning. Although he thinks that death brings an eternal separation from “those that [he] ha[s] loved of old” (21), she presents her positive attitude toward death, for she knows that, beyond death, there lies “that land divine” (58) which is a source of a new soul and at the same time, the place where the dead return. In other words, that is the place which relates life and death in a cycle. Ushironaka points out that Emily sees the circulation of life and death in this poem (38). This image becomes to be a vision of recognising “Life’s restoring tide” (12) on earth in her later poems.

When she considered death to be the foe of the living, death was a harmful element for her. However, gradually, through writing poems, she discovered the cycle of life and death. Reading her poems makes us realise her conceptual change about death. “No coward soul is mine” written in January, 1846 tells that she finally found repose for her soul. As we have seen so far, as in poem H177 (Hatfield 209), Emily had a hope after death at “that land divine” (58), which is somewhere outside the earth. According to Eiko Ohira however, later, in poem H183 written in 1845 (Hatfield 224), Emily finds that there lies “Life’s restoring tide” (12) “within its parent’s kindly bosom” (11) which means the earth. She claims that this shows Emily discovered the principle of life by observing various natural phenomena on the earth in poem H188 (Hatfield 231) and that this led Emily to seek “*What is to be*” (36) in somewhere “[d]eep in unknown Eternity” (34) in poem H188 and that this becomes a seed of an original concept of her “God within [her] breast” (5) or

“Being and Breath” (27) in “No coward soul is mine,” poem H191 (Hatfield 243), written in January, 1846 (94). Emily says that “[e]very Existence would exist in ...” (24) “God within [her] breast” (5). Also, in the fifth stanza of “No coward soul is mine,” she states:

With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates and rears. (17-20)

Using his “spirit,” “God” administers the earth eternally, as “Deity.” She also claims, “There is not room for Death” (25). Thus, Emily established her belief in “God within [her] breast” (5), which sustains a source of the principle of life, which is constituted of a never ending cycle of life and death on the earth. This vision wipes out her fear of death, for she discovers a magnificent view that transcends death.

Thus, so far, I have examined how Emily established her idea about her inner God. Actually, it is still unknown exactly when *Wuthering Heights* was written. In July 1846, the work was sent to Henry Colburn with other two works written by her sisters, Anne and Charlotte (Chitam 187). However, in this essay, I would like to demonstrate that her vision is well reflected in the world of *Wuthering Heights* and how it works in its plot and in the roles of some characters. I think that through the whole story, Emily Brontë tries to establish a world whose centre realises her vision of life and death, the idea shown in “No coward soul is mine.”

2

The structure of *Wuthering Heights* consists of two parts. The first half of the novel is about the separation and the loss of love between Heathcliff and the first Catherine and the latter half is about Heathcliff’s revenge against the younger generation, Linton, Hareton and Cathy, the second Catherine. In the following section, I would like to examine the first half of the book in order to show how the tragic separation between Catherine and Heathcliff is brought about.

The separation of Heathcliff and Catherine occurs on “[a]n awful Sunday” (20). About that day, Catherine writes “H. and I are going to *rebel*” (my emphasis; 20). Their rebellion is committed against Hindley, Catherine’s older brother because he does not allow them to spend time together, wishing to separate them. However, contrary to their expectation, this attempt only brings about their separation. That day, escaping from the punishment by Hindley, they “have a scamper on the moors” (22). When they sneak into Thrushcross Grange, Catherine is caught by the guard dog and gets seriously wounded, and because of this, she is forced to stay at the Grange for five weeks. During her stay, she experiences the sophistication at the Lintons and is transformed from a wild savage girl running around the moor with Heathcliff into a well-dressed lady. When Heathcliff welcomes her at the Heights, she laughs to find him “dirty” (55). Feeling insulted, he leaves the site. This shows that her transformation is not only physical but also spiritual, for she never insulted him by comparing him with herself before. Since then, she comes to spend more time with Edgar while cutting time to be with Heathcliff. Thus, as a result, their rebellion against Hindley to secure their bond committed on “[a]n awful Sunday” brings the separation between them and the suffering from the loss of their mutual love, and the attempt to regain their union completes the whole story of *Wuthering Heights*.

Next, I would like to examine the purpose of their rebellion that was attempted on “[a]n awful Sunday.” On that day, Catherine and Heathcliff determine to resist Hindley. After the death of Mr Earnshaw, her father, Hindley, as the new head of the family, treats Heathcliff unjustly. Catherine gets indignant with him and states that “Hindley is a detestable substitute” (20). However, we have to be careful before blaming Hindley, for in his childhood, Hindley too was treated unfairly by his father. After Mr Earnshaw brings back Heathcliff, who was a waif in Liverpool, this boy monopolises Mr Earnshaw’s love. In this way, Heathcliff disturbs the peace of the Earnshaw family, but Mr Earnshaw never reproaches Heathcliff; rather, he bestows more favour upon him, and poor Hindley becomes isolated and grows increasingly hostile toward both Heathcliff and Mr Earnshaw. Thus, the root of Hindley’s childhood misfortune lies in Mr Earnshaw’s bad treatment of him.

Hence, it is Mr Earnshaw who makes Hindley a tyrant who treats Heathcliff unfairly. Mary Burgun analyses how he abuses patriarchal authority by stating

that we can see “in Mr Earnshaw the declining patriarch’s lonely obsession with power, his resentment of inheriting children and his effort to dominate the future by putting their patrimony in doubt” (136). According to her, he tries to enhance his declining paternal authority by bringing conflict between the children over his love and “[e]ach child in the Earnshaw household is locked into a confused battle plan in which victory can be claimed only by proving himself or herself upon the other” (137). Thus, the main characters are toyed with in the system of patriarchy and made to conflict with each other. The patriarchal power abused in *Wuthering Heights* is also pointed out by Marryn Williams as she states “[a] major theme of this novel is the oppression of the young by a violent father-figure, first Hindley and Heathcliff” (98). Thus, Catherine and Heathcliff, in order to protect their bond, have to be completely free from this ideological restriction in society. Therefore, they determine to “rebel” against Hindley, a representative of patriarchal authority after the death of Mr Earnshaw. Hence, the aim of the rebellion of Catherine and Heathcliff is to regain their union and therefore, at the same time, their ambition to break down the conventional social value system.

However, Catherine yields to patriarchal authority by choosing Edgar for her husband. Because she has no property rights, the only method left for her to improve her “family fortune and social status” is marriage with Edgar (Wu 65). Thus, she is seduced by his wealth and civilised life at the Grange and marries Linton, which means that Catherine becomes a victim of the patriarchal system. However, being unable to settle herself in the fashionable life, she reveals the negative aspect of civilisation in society. Stevie Davies claims that “Catherine reveals in this most poignant moment that the civilized world, priding itself on its rationality, mildness, and gentle behaviour (Edgar reading in his library) depends on exploitation” (123). Her original purpose to marry Edgar is to “aid Heathcliff to rise, and place him out of (her) brother’s power” (82) by using Edgar’s authority. However, the reality is that under the patriarchal system, women have no power, and they are forced to succumb to their husband. Although she tries to combine her love for Linton and Heathcliff by playing “a double character” (67), her dual nature reaches a limit when she is asked by Linton to choose him or Heathcliff (117). Not being able to choose either, she escapes from reality and regresses to a childhood when she used to be a wild girl playing with Heathcliff, yet this only pulls her toward

“psychosis or death” (Nestor xxiv). This time, she finally realises that she is just exploited in this system as a woman by becoming Edgar’s wife. Her regression shows her inability to adjust to life in this world. Thus, her marriage to Edgar turns out to be a failure, for it brings the separation of Catherine and Heathcliff, and even her death in the end.

On her death bed, she confesses her love to Heathcliff. Realising that it is impossible to attain union with Heathcliff in her lifetime, Catherine depends on her wish for life after death in “that glorious world” (162). She states as follows:

[T]he thing that irks me most is this shattered prison, after all. I’m tired, tired of being enclosed here. I’m wearying to escape into *that glorious world*, and to be always there; not seeing it dimly through tears, and yearning for it through the walls of an aching heart; but really with it, and in it. Nelly, you think you are better and more fortunate than I; in full health and strength—you are sorry for me—very soon that will be altered. I shall be sorry for *you*. I shall be incomparably beyond and above you all. (my emphasis; 161-62)

This does not mean that she resigns herself to death in order to escape from this world. On the contrary, in the delirious speech, she refuses a quiet sleep in the grave and appeals to Heathcliff by claiming, “... I’ll keep you. I’ll not lie there by myself; they may bury me twelve feet deep, and throw the church down over me; but I won’t rest till you are with me... I never will!” (126). As Emily rejects death and recognises the “grave” as her “foe” in her early poems, Catherine rejects the grave as a place to repose after death. Her desire to attain her union with Heathcliff is too strong to allow her to sleep in the grave, and she continues to remain on the earth.

Being on the verge of death, she refuses the Christian heaven as a place to repose after death. When she was engaged with Edgar, she told this vision to Nelly:

I was only going to say that heaven did not seem to be my home; and I broke my heart with weeping to come back to earth; and the angels were so angry that they flung me out, into the middle of the heath on the top of *Wuthering Heights*; where I woke sobbing for joy. (81)

Therefore, her statement means her recognition of the moor as her own heaven, “that glorious world.” This reveals Catherine’s refusal of the Christian heaven, which was believed in universally in the Victorian era, and her strong attachment to the earth which lasts even after death. In order to make her vision come true, she tries to transcend death and becomes a ghost wandering on the moor. This vision might be Emily’s own vision about life after death as well. After Emily finds the cycle of life and death, she seeks a place of refuge for her soul not in the conventional heaven, but on the earth. And Emily tries to depict the vision of life beyond death in *Wuthering Heights*.

Importantly, for Catherine, the rejection of heaven and that of engagement with Edgar are identical because she says, “I’ve no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven” (81). As I have shown already, for Catherine, her marriage to Edgar means to succumb to the patriarch as a wife. By choosing Edgar for her husband, she is forced to abandon her rebellion with Heathcliff, and it kills her in the end. However, she does not give up. With her invincible will to live after death, she still tries to be united with Heathcliff.

The union after death is originally Catherine’s vision. Although it is only vaguely explained by her, collecting the fragments of her statements makes it possible to speculate what her vision of life beyond death is like. She refuses both the death of sleep in the grave and repose in the universally believed heaven, and wishes to remain on “the heath” (81) as her own heaven. On her deathbed at the Grange, she longs for her lost childhood and states that “I’m sure I should be myself were I once among the heather on those hills ...” (125-26). Her “myself” means Heathcliff at the same time, for she states “I *am* Heathcliff” (82). These facts show that what she desires the most is union with Heathcliff on the earth after death, which is her idealistic image of life after death by expressing it as “that glorious world.”

After Catherine’s death, in order to attain union with her, this time, Heathcliff has to free himself from the ideological restrictions by himself. By rejecting the religious heaven, Catherine succeeds in remaining on the earth. She overcomes the patriarchal restriction, for she is no more alive but remains in this world. In order to reach her place, Heathcliff has to get outside of the restrictions as well. Because the original aim of their rebellion was to “rebel” against the ideological value system in order to attain their mutual union, her rebellion can never be accomplished

without him. So, Heathcliff also has to continue to rebel against the social restrictions in order to reach her. However, Heathcliff declares revenge against Catherine and distracts himself from the rebellion. Whether they can regain their bond by accomplishing their rebellion or not depends on Heathcliff, which is the main story of the second half of the book.

3

Catherine has to wait for “twenty years” (25) in order to regain her union with Heathcliff. After Catherine’s death, abusing his patriarchal authority, he devotes himself to revenge in order to obtain the properties of the Lintons and the Earnshaws and thus is distracted from the rebellion. First, he steeps Hindley in liquor and gambling in order to pinch *Wuthering Heights* and degrades his son, Hareton by depriving every opportunity for his education. Next, he elopes with Isabella. She gives birth to his son, Linton. Edgar having no male child, his right of inheritance falls into Linton’s hands. Heathcliff forces Linton to marry Cathy, so that he takes possession of all the property of the two houses after Linton’s death.

As to the reason why Heathcliff is completely absorbed in his revenge, Hillis Miller states, “If he possesses the two households, he can take possession of Catherine through them, since they are her property, stamped with her image, proper to her, as much hers as her proper name” (*Fiction* 65). Pursuing Catherine’s shadow, Heathcliff even opens her grave on “[t]he day she was buried there” (289). Later in the book, he admits this to Nelly. However, Catherine is not in the grave, because, as I have mentioned, she said that her body was just a “shattered prison” (162) and wished to “escape into that glorious world,” which mean that her dead body is a mere shell of her.

Thus, what he pursues is merely the remains of Catherine, not the essence of her existence. In this episode of opening the grave, we can find the contradictory nature of his revenge: he pursues in his revenge only materialistic and capitalist results for his spiritual and existential union with her just as he does her corpse for her soul. Heathcliff becomes an oppressive patriarch in order to capture the properties of the Lintons and the Earnshaws, which means that Heathcliff, once oppressed under patriarchy, is eventually absorbed into the very system. Merryn

Williams points out his error : “In fact, he has been making the same mistake as Catherine when she married Edgar—smothering his own deepest feeling about people and judging them by external factors” (99).

Heathcliff's revenge makes him fail to recognise where Catherine really is now. Without knowing how to possess her again, he struggles to reach her by collecting her images, which are, however, produced and sustained only by her absence; thus he is put into a dilemma, which produces the stifling atmosphere at the beginning of *Wuthering Heights*. When Lockwood visits the Heights for the first time, he finds that all the doors, gates and windows are closed in order to keep visitors away (Hirono 147). Recognising the strange air, Lockwood says, “[T]ime stagnates here” (28). The atmosphere of the Heights reflects the feelings of Heathcliff, and this is why the air of confinement fills his house. Also, Heathcliff strictly shuts out outsiders. He does not let his guard down with strangers. For example, to Lockwood, he says, “A stranger is a stranger, be he rich or poor—it will not suit me to permit any one the range of the place while I am off guard!” (16) Being in a suffocating situation, Heathcliff cannot make any change to improve his situation, and he only becomes absorbed in following the image of Catherine and more fervently avoids others.

However, Lockwood's visit brings a positive change to this stalemate. In the dusty room with a few mildewed books piled up in one corner, which suggests the badly ventilated condition of the room, Lockwood meets the ghost of Catherine. Hearing about her, Heathcliff opens the window and sobs shouting, “Cathy, do come. Oh do—*once* more! Oh! My heart's darling, hear me *this* time—Catherine, at last!” (28) Opening the window lets a breath of fresh air into the room, and this inflow symbolises the positive change that Lockwood's visit brings to Heathcliff, for thanks to Lockwood's dream, Heathcliff learns that Catherine is still wandering on the earth and suffering from loneliness, waiting for him. Lockwood tells him that Catherine's ghost was crying poignantly and asked him to let her in (25).

After Lockwood's visit, Heathcliff gradually loses his lust for revenge. When he finds Cathy and Hareton reading books together, he sees Catherine and himself in them. This time, he finally acquires an objective view of himself and realises the error in his revenge. Heathcliff explains to his strange feeling which he gets when he sees them together to Nelly:

Five minutes ago, Hareton seemed a personification of my youth, not a human being—I felt to him in such a variety of ways, that it would have been impossible to have accosted him rationally. ...

In the first place, his startling likeness to Catherine connected him fearfully with her—That, however, which you may suppose the most potent to arrest imagination, is actually the least—for what is not connected with her to me? and what does not recall her? I cannot look down to this floor, but her features are shaped on flags! In every cloud, every tree—filling the air at night, and caught by glimpses in every object, by day I am surrounded with her image! The most ordinary faces of men, and women—my own features—mock me with a resemblance. The entire world is a dreadful collection of memoranda that she did exist, and *that I have lost her!* ‘Well, Hareton’s aspect was the ghost of my immortal love, of my wild endeavours to hold my right, my degradation, my pride, my happiness, and my anguish—(323-24)

Through Cathy and Hareton, he finds the shallowness of his revenge. As he compares Hareton to “the ghost of [his] immortal love” (234), he realises that he was just retracing Catherine’s absence and that the accomplishment of his revenge brings him only recognition of the absence of Catherine. Miller also points out the worthlessness of Heathcliff’s revenge as follows:

(For Heathcliff,) [e]verything in the world is a sign indicating Catherine, but also indicating, by its existence, his failure to possess her and the fact that she is dead. Each sign is both an avenue to the desired unity with her and also the barrier standing in the way of it. ...

But to possess her image, like appropriating her by uttering her name (“Cathy, do come. Oh do—*once* more! Oh! My heart’s darling! Hear me *this* time!—Catherine, at last!”; ...), is to possess only a sign for her, not Catherine herself. He must destroy Hareton and the second Cathy, as well as the two houses. If he destroys them, however, he will of course reach not Catherine but her absence, the vacancy stands behind every sign that she once existed and that he has lost her. (*Fiction* 64-65)

Heathcliff finds the properties he acquired worthless, because, now for the first time, he learns that his revenge does not bring him to Catherine. Thus, for him, all his past efforts to accomplish his revenge lose their point, and he also loses his obsession with the patriarchal authority that gives him the privilege to obtain the immense estate from the two houses. This can be seen in Heathcliff's statement at the end of the story, where he says, "I have not written my will yet, and how to leave my property, I cannot determine! I wish I could annihilate it from the face of the earth" (332). Thus, he finally rises above the worldly values established by patriarchy.

This shows that he finally accomplishes the rebellion which he and Catherine once tried to achieve together in order to protect their love. It should be done not by becoming a patriarch to gain social authority but by transcending that value system. As Catherine transcends death by rejecting the universal image of heaven, he overcomes the social value system in Victorian society and finally reaches the field where the ghost of Catherine exists. Then, he is allowed to see the ghost of Catherine. Although this is never clearly explained in the novel, Nelly's narrative enables us to think so. She testifies that Heathcliff seems to chase an invisible "fancied object" (331) which moves around, and he calls it Catherine.

Soon after he starts to chase the ghost of Catherine, he dies. However, it does not necessarily represent that death straight takes him to her. Their vision beyond death is not equal to a physical death, for it is a spiritual life beyond death. Interestingly, even just before his death, Heathcliff shows his never yielding vitality to live and claims, "I ought to, and probably *shall*, remain above ground, till there is scarcely a black hair on my head" (324). Even just before his death, he still tries to live to an old age. However, her ghost makes him forget to eat and drink, and he grows weak. When he recognises this discrepancy in himself, he states, "I have to remind myself to breathe—almost to remind my heart to beat!" (324) His statement shows that his body and spirit are completely divided in himself. Because his soul longs for union with Catherine beyond death, he dies, and, needless to say, it means that he reaches Catherine at last. Thus, their initial rebellion is now finally achieved after 25 years since that "awful Sunday" (Sanger 25-27).

4

In this section, I would like to examine where Catherine and Heathcliff seek the place to repose after death, which is “that glorious world” and what kind of place it is. In order to know where this world exists, first, we have to examine Heathcliff’s statement about his life after death with Catherine. When death approaches him, he finally sees Catherine with his eyes, and he says he is approaching “*my* heaven” (329). It is his union with Catherine. As she states, “I *am* Heathcliff,” he also states that she is him. When he faces her death, he says, “Oh! God it is unutterable! I cannot live without my life! I *cannot* live without my soul!” (169) Thus, their union after death establishes their heaven, and this should be achieved on the earth.

According to him, it exists in his close vicinity. He states, “I am within sight of my heaven—I have my eyes on it—hardly three feet to sever me!” (328) After his death, people see his ghost and that of Catherine on the earth. Nelly says that a shepherd boy sees their ghosts:

I was going to the Grange one evening—a dark threatening thunder—and, just at the turn of the Heights, I encountered a little boy with a sheep and two lambs before him, he was crying terribly, and I supposed the lambs were skittish, and would not be guided.

‘What is the matter, my little man?’ I asked.

‘They’s Heathcliff and a woman yonder, under t’ Nab,’ he blubbered, ‘un’ Aw darnut pass ’em.

I saw nothing; but neither the sheep nor he would go on, so I bid him take the road lower down. (336)

Her statement testifies to the fact that the ghost of Catherine and Heathcliff stay on the earth. Also, it is important to examine how Heathcliff passes away. When Nelly first finds his dead body, she notices that the window of his room is open and says that the face of his corpse has a “life-like gaze of exultation” (335). It seems that Heathcliff flies away out of the window to the moorland that is Catherine’s place. Now, after they accomplish their rebellion, they finally achieve union, and accordingly their achievement to break down the ideological restriction of society

reforms finally the world into “that glorious world.” They finally make the vision which Catherine dreamed come true. The whole world has been changed into their own heaven, “that glorious world.” Now, he no longer needs to stay inside of the house to cling to the memory of Catherine. His revenge means to collect Catherine’s memory, and he does not notice that they are just the shadows of her. However, after he transcends the restriction of social value system, he sees a vision of union with Catherine again and flies through the window to achieve it.

So far, I have examined “that glorious world” as the accomplishment of the union of Catherine and Heathcliff. However, it is impossible to recognise its nature fully, for this is a matter beyond language. Most of the important statements concerning life after death are made in dreams, in delirium, or as statements about spiritual beings; thus when we try to delve into the core of this strange world, we are forced to stay there. This is why *Wuthering Heights* has been considered a mysterious work.

In order to examine “that glorious world” more, it is also important to consider the relation between Heathcliff and Catherine, because it is a world accomplished upon the fulfilment of their love. Ohira points out the similarity in the relation between Catherine and Heathcliff and that between Emily and her inner God in her poem (174). The relation between Catherine and Heathcliff is well explained in Catherine’s statement:

If all else perished, and *he* remained, I should still continue to be; and, if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the Universe would turn to a mighty stranger. I should not seem a part of it. ... [M]y love for Heathcliff resembles eternal rocks beneath—a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, I *am* Heathcliff—he’s always, always in my mind—not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself—but, as my own being... (82)

A similar image is given in Emily’s poem, H191 (Hatfield 243):

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by thy infinity
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of Immortality

...
 Though Earth and moon were gone
 And suns and universes ceased to be
 And thou wert left alone
 Every Existence would exist in thee (13-24)

Thus, both Catherine and Emily admire an absolute being as a representative of the whole world. Emily calls "God within [her] breast," "Being and Breath" (7) in her poem. This expression reminds us that Catherine's ghost appears as "sigh" (289), that is to say "Breath" when Heathcliff tries to open her coffin. This shows that the ghost of Catherine becomes what is like an absolute in this poem, for she is a creator of "that glorious world." If so, it is impossible to clarify the essence of "that glorious world" with logical explanation with language. Catherine's words, "*I am Heathcliff,*" are uttered when she finds it impossible to be united with Heathcliff in her lifetime, but this shows that there exists a firm bond between Catherine and Heathcliff which even death cannot break. The reason why her statement sounds contradictory and difficult to understand is that this presents the vision transcending death and even language expressions. After death, she accomplishes this vision by attaining union. Also, this means his heaven at the same time.

Next, I would like to examine the role of Hareton and Cathy. It is often pointed out that the role of the story of the second generations is vague (Hirono 192). However, their roles are essential to this story, for only they can show that the previous world changes into "that glorious world" brought by the accomplishment of the rebellion by Catherine and Heathcliff. The role given to the second generation children is to make this new world understood by verbalization. As "that glorious world" is Catherine's vision about life after death, it is a sphere that language cannot explain. As I have argued, Catherine and Heathcliff establish this vision on the earth, as an earthly heaven in this world. Thus, it can be not only heaven, the world of the dead, for Catherine and Heathcliff, but also the land of the living for Cathy and Hareton and all the other people. A similar vision is given in Emily's poem, which is the whole world run by her inner God depicted in H191 (Hatfield 243) which I examined in Chapter 1 in this essay. According to Emily, "God" sends his "spirit" to administer the principle of the world eternally. As she states, "God

within my breast" (5) is "Life, that in me hast rest/ [a]s I Undying Life, have power in thee" (7-8), her "God" is also an undying existence. When Heathcliff approaches his heaven, he says this vision and claims, "I notice anything alive, or dead, which is not associated with one universal idea" (324). This allows us to infer that he sees a vision beyond life and death.

It is Cathy who talks about the image of heaven. When she discusses it with Linton, she gives her idea of her heaven as follows:

[M]ine was rocking in a rustling green tree, with a west wind blowing, and bright, white clouds flitting rapidly above; and not only larks, but throistles, and blackbirds, and linnets, and cuckoos pouring out music on every side, and the moors seen at a distance, broken into cool dusky dells; but close by great swells of long grass undulating in waves to the breeze; and woods and sounding water, and the whole world awake and wild with joy. [Linton] wanted all to lie in an ecstasy of peace; I wanted all to sparkle, and dance in a *glorious* jubilee. (my emphasis; 248)

She dreams of a world filled with a "glorious jubilee" as her heaven. This is her beautiful vision of the earth; furthermore, she promises Linton to try her heaven and his "as soon as the right weather came" (248). This shows that it is possible to experience her heaven as a concrete reality. Her vision presents a universal idea, because it is an idealistic vision about "the whole world" (248). This supports the idea that "that glorious world" is a vision that takes place in the real world. Besides, Cathy also uses the word "glorious" to explain the atmosphere of her heaven on earth. Thus, through verbalization, Cathy reflects the change of the world brought by the establishment by the first generation. Thus, she presents a vision of "that glorious world" as her image of heaven in order to fix this brave new bright world in the land of the living.

Conclusion

So far, I have argued how "that glorious world" is established through the rebellion of Catherine and Heathcliff in order to fulfil their love. *Wuthering Heights*

treats a universal theme of a magnificent vision. This novel is about the establishment of an earthly heaven, “that glorious world” as the whole new world. About Emily, Virginia Woolf states that “[s]he looked out upon a world cleft into gigantic disorder and felt within her power to unite it in the book” (158). “It is this suggestion of power underlying the apparitions of human nature and lifting them up into the presence of greatness that gives the book its huge stature among other novels” (159). This is true, for Emily challenged Victorian society, which was bounded by patriarchy and established a new world through the process of the rebellion of Catherine and Heathcliff.

Lastly, I would like to examine the relation between this story and Emily Brontë and then talk about the relation between Emily and her readers. First, about the core of *Wuthering Heights*, it is difficult to examine and to find any logical truth that is universally applicable to the mysteries in this book. So far, I have argued that one aim of this work is to establish Catherine’s “glorious world” on the earth with Heathcliff. Therefore, the initial creators of “that glorious world” are Catherine and Heathcliff. However, the mysteries about the origin of this world are eternally wrapped and buried in darkness because of their death. The more the story approaches its centre, the more it is difficult to narrate it, because it is an approach to a sphere beyond language expression.

The narrative of *Wuthering Heights* is telescopic. Nelly, the main narrator tells the story and Lockwood, the other narrator, writes it down in his diary. However, neither of them can reach the centre of the story. Although Nelly tries to approach it, she is never given an opportunity to know what is in the centre or what Heathcliff sees beyond death. All Nelly is allowed to tell Lockwood is what she can see and hear. Also, as we have seen, the centre rejects verbalization. However, only by language can the story be told. Thus, because the centre of *Wuthering Heights* refuses verbalization, this book is contradictory in its nature. However, as Miller claims, “The novel is not coherent, confused, or flawed. It is a triumph of the novelist’s art” (*Fiction* 52). It is true. As we have seen, toward the centre of the story, it is well structured in a good, logical manner.

At the end of the story, the atmosphere completely changes because of the established new world, “that glorious world.” This is symbolised in the last scene in which Lockwood stands in front of the three grave stones of Edgar, Catherine,

and Heathcliff and watches “the moths fluttering among the heath, and hare-bells” (337). In 1842, in Emily’s essays written in French, she presents her idea of heaven using the example of the growth of insects. She states, “[a]s the ugly caterpillar is the origin of the splendid butterfly, so this globe is the embryo of a new heaven and a new earth whose poorest beauty will infinitely exceed your mortal imagination” (*Belgian Essays* 178). Here, she compares the relation between the globe and heaven to that between a caterpillar and a butterfly. Thus, for Emily, life after death is symbolised as a butterfly. Thus, “the moths” at the end of *Wuthering Heights* symbolise the reconciliation of life after death and life in this world in “that glorious world.” It took a long time for Emily to reach this vision. At first, she rejected death as her foe, but gradually, she found hope beyond death, as we saw in H177 (Hatfield 209), written in 1844. Later, in H183 (Hatfield 224), she discovered the eternal cycle of life and death in “Life’s restoring tide” flowing in the earth. Then, she reaches the vision of “that glorious world,” which involves the vision of “Life’s restoring tide,” and transcends it at the same time, the centre are Catherine and Heathcliff; therefore, representing Emily and her inner God; which is “Almighty ever-present Deity” in H191 (Hatfield 243). Therefore, the completion of the vision of “that glorious world” shows the harmony of the two visions, “new earth and new heaven” in her Belgian essays as the image of heaven and the earth as the image of a new heaven.

Lastly, I would like to think about what the publication of this work meant for Emily. It is said that when Emily published her poems for the first time, she was not so enthusiastic about this plan proposed by her older sister, Charlotte (Chitani 185). She explains to her sister as below:

My sister’s disposition was not naturally gregarious, circumstances favoured and fostered her tendency to seclusion; except to go to church or take a walk on the hills, she rarely crossed the threshold of home. (li)

This allows us to infer how big it was for her to expose her inner vision to an enormous numbers of readers by publishing a book. I consider that the complicated narrative style is her method to protect herself from the exposition of her inner world to the public, for she depicts the establishment of “that glorious world,”

which is the core of her inner religious belief, in *Wuthering Heights*. Also, as we have seen the similarity between the relation of Catherine and Heathcliff and that of Emily and her inner God in her poem, in the core of the story, Emily's inner vision is well depicted and plays an important role in the whole story. Cathy's image of heaven shows that it is a universal vision prevailing in the book. As a narrator of this story, Lockwood bears the responsibility to transmit this grand vision depicted in the book to its readers. Although the role of a narrator is just to tell the story to those outside of the book, Lockwood enters the inside of the story world and even joins the story as one of its characters. Thus, he links the inner world of the story and the outside of the readers' world. At the end of the story, the book is filled with the peaceful atmosphere caused by the establishment of "that glorious world." Thus, Emily positions her readers in an extension of "that glorious world" in *Wuthering Heights*, because Cathy's verbalization makes it possible for "that glorious world" to be narrated. By doing this, Emily tries to unite herself and her readers. Hence, Charlotte's preface to *Wuthering Heights* might bring an outcome that Emily did not expect. Charlotte made an excuse for the violence depicted in the book by giving the reason of Emily's extremely reclusive nature and therefore her scarce opportunity to meet people outside her house. Charlotte gave an excuse to the Victorian readers and appealed to their sympathy and tried to attract the readers' attention to this book. However, her efforts were needless, for Emily tried to be linked with the society through her work by the method of the complicating narrative system and the establishment of a universal earthly heaven of the world in the story as a concrete reality established by verbalization.

At the end of the story, however, Lockwood suggests the possibility of further conflicts awaiting the second generations by saying, "They are afraid of nothing." "Together they would brave satan and all his legions" (337). Thus, he suggests that outside of the book, our world is still ruled by various ideological restrictions and that people conflict with each other like the previous world in *Wuthering Heights*. In the end, Lockwood enters the inside of the story and connects us to the inside of the book. Although Lockwood is a narrator who records the story of *Wuthering Heights* told by Nelly, a real narrator, the author of the story is, of course Emily Brontë. Behind Lockwood, she protects her inner world from us, while she also invites us to its story world, as Heathcliff says "wincing" (3), "[W]alk in" (3) to

readers as well as to Lockwood.

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Catherine and Heathcliff as Rebels:
A Consideration of “That Glorious World” in *Wuthering Heights*

Rie Baba

Abstract

The purpose of this essay is to examine how Catherine and Heathcliff regain their lost union and what change their challenge brings to the fictional world of the novel. It is also important to pay attention to some visions depicted in Emily Brontë’s poems in order to investigate the mystery and the uniqueness of *Wuthering Heights*.

In childhood, Catherine and Heathcliff are tied with a strong bond. However, their strong ties are threatened by patriarchal authority and other restrictions which dominated the society at that time. In order to protect their love, they determine to rebel against the patriarchy. However, their union is lost when Catherine marries Edgar for his high status and the wealth of the Lintons. Heathcliff blames Catherine for her betrayal.

Thus, Catherine and Heathcliff are forced to be separated from each other, and they suffer from the loss of their love. However, their vision to obtain their bond again does not yield to this failure. Catherine puts confidence in life after death and tries to remain on the earth as a ghost by refusing the Christian idea of heaven.

By becoming a ghost, she overcomes the social restrictions, for she succeeds in existing outside of the social system. In order to reach her, Heathcliff has to resist and overcome the present values as well.

However, Heathcliff deflects himself from rebellion and become obsessed with revenge. He makes Herculean efforts to plunder all the properties of the Lintons and the Earnshaws. Unfortunately, his revenge makes it impossible for him to attain union with Catherine. After he realises the error in his revenge, he is finally allowed to regain his love with Catherine.

The union of Catherine and Heathcliff is Catherine's dream vision of "that glorious world" after death. Their love and rebellion bring this vision to realisation and exert a great influence on the next generation of children, Cathy and Hareton. Through the accomplishment of their union by completing their rebellion, they establish "that glorious world" as their own heaven on the earth.