

An Essay on Emily Jane Brontë

—Meditation on Death—

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INTRODUCTION

It is no exaggeration to say that there is hardly a novel in English literature that has been interpreted more variously than *Wuthering Heights*. Many approaches, such as psychological, sociological, symbolical and semiological, have thrown different light on this multi-stratified work. Although there are so many explanations and interpretations that bewilder us, we have to be careful not to pay too much attention to their appearance and fail to catch their main point, as the great originality of this novel lies in its inner world rather than its outer features.

Although the first half of the story is very dramatic and interesting, the latter half, after the death of Catherine is more significant. This novel is the history of Heathcliff, and, above all, in the story after Heathcliff has lost his idol the author's original and unique ideas are expressed. His death, in particular, can be said to be the highest symbol of Brontë's mystic values. Since it is also the zenith of her mental development which is traced in her poems, it is quite different from deaths of other protagonists often described in the Gondal saga. In a word it is a perfect creation of the new values.

To understand them, let us closely examine, in chapter 1, Heathcliff's life after the death of Catherine and consider how he attained *his* heaven. Although in the latter half of the novel the focus of the story apparently shifts to the younger generation, we must not lose sight of Heathcliff. It is because the main subject of the novel is the fatal and tragic passion of Heathcliff who ceaselessly longs for his idol for about twenty years after

he has lost her. We have to grasp the true meaning of his incessant passion for Catherine and his malignant revenge on the rest of the people. Only by understanding it properly, can we find the profound significance of this unparalleled novel.

Heathcliff's death is full of symbolical meanings. It is a kind of release from the state of imprisonment. As the images of 'imprisonment' and 'release' are also often found in Brontë's poems, we could say that they are the most remarkable image of her writings. The meanings of these images, however, are subtly changing. So let us trace the images of 'imprisonment' and 'release' explicit in her poems and consider the significance of his death as release in chapter 2.

Heathcliff's death symbolically expresses a creation of the new values. In chapter 3, we will try to throw light upon why the author had to create them, in other words, what was the significance of Heathcliff's death was for the author, though it is very difficult to give a perfect answer to this question.

Although *Wuthering Heights* has often been said to be an adaptation from the Gondal saga, they are rather different in significance in spite of the affinities of their images. So let us analyze the differences between them in the appendix, and we could find the profundity and uniqueness of *Wuthering Heights*.

Chapter 1

LOVE AND DEATH OF HEATHCLIFF

1.

In *Wuthering Heights* Emily Brontë tries to search for the self-abnegating passion and its immortality through Heathcliff's life. Behind the intention there lies the recognition of mutability implicit in every earthly existence in this world. A French essay written in 1842 tells us a part of her own values.

La nature est un problème inexplicable, elle existe sur un principe de destruction ; (1)

All creatures are formed on 'a principle of destruction'. Man's every deed is no exception, all shall inevitably go for nothing. This idea distinctly shows that the author in 1842 was no longer a dreamy girl who indulged herself in a fantastic world, but that she had already turned her keen eyes to the reality of this world with her penetrating sensibility. We can see how this recognition of realities spreads itself into the whole world of *Wuthering Heights*.

In this novel, besides the main subject of Heathcliff's passion for Catherine, some variations of love are also described, which are reigned by 'a principle of destruction'. The most typical one is Catherine's love for Edgar.

'...because he is handsome, and pleasant to be with...And because he is young and cheerful...And because he loves me...And he will be rich, and I shall like to be the greatest woman of the neighbourhood, and I shall be proud of having such a husband...' (2)

In a word, Catherine loves him for what he has rather than for what he is. As this is not at all essential, it will be soon destroyed. She already foretells its destruction before their marriage.

'...My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods, Time will change it, I'm well aware, as winter changes the trees...' (3)

Consequently their married life will be ruined sooner or later as a matter of course. The substance of what she calls love for Edgar is the worldly ambitions. From her childhood, Catherine prefers to enjoy a privileged status.

In play, she liked, exceedingly, to act the little mistress. (4)

When she runs away from *Wuthering Heights* with Heathcliff, and gets a glimpse of the brilliant room and luxurious life through the windows of Thrushcross Grange, she loses herself. She unconsciously confuses her longing for the world of Thrushcross Grange with her affection for Edgar.

In comparison with it, Edgar's love for Catherine is far more persuasive. He sincerely loves his wife and has 'a deep-rooted fear of ruffling her

humour' (5). When Catherine became seriously ill, he tended her most devotedly. Edgar, as it were, might embody the most respectable husband in the moral society of Christian values. It is worth mentioning that his love for her is not always described as that of self-abandonment. Nelly first points out the superficiality which is lying in his affection.

Well, we must be for ourselves in the long run, the mild and generous are only more justly selfish than the domineering—— (6)

We find the author's eyes which penetrate the inevitable selfishness of people however generous and kind they might appear. We also feel the similar reproach on Edgar who grieves over his wife's peaceful death.

I noticed on that occasion how much selfishness there is even in a love like Mr. Linton's, when he so regretted Catherine's blessed release! (7)

When Catherine is enraptured to see Heathcliff again after three years' separation, Edgar looks displeased, of which Catherine complains,

'... And I want some living creature to keep my company in my happiness! Edgar is sulky, because I'm glad of a thing that does not interest him—— he refuses to open his mouth, except to utter pettish, silly speeches ; ...' (8)

In short, Edgar's love for Catherine is based on what a respectable gentleman should have towards his wife. Therefore, he imposes on her as the mistress of Thrushcross Grange to keep order, duty and obligation. So from the viewpoint of Edgar she cannot be allowed to hold intercourse openly with the old ploughboy. He is not at all interested in how she needs Heathcliff. Although Edgar's attitude will be taken for granted, and not at all blamed by common sense, his selfishness is explicit in the fact of taking priority of his judgement rather than Catherine's feelings, which is violently attacked by Heathcliff.

'... Had he been in my place, and I in his, though I hated him with a hatred that turned my life to gall, I never would have raised a hand against him... I never would have banished him from her society, as long as she desired his...' (9)

Since the difference of their attitude may be attributed to their own idea

of values, the author seems not necessarily to mean that Edgar's love is inferior to Heathcliff's. Anyway, the limits of Edgar's love are clearly conveyed in the above reproaches.

The love of the second generation is much different from that of their parents. First, how can we understand the relations between Cathy and Linton? It is not at all similar to that of Catherine and Heathcliff because their relationship is not based on the essential identity of their souls. Linton's fear towards his father finds an outlet in Cathy's affection and devotion, while Cathy feels sympathy for him. Cathy is always the giver of love and Linton is the taker. This unnatural and abnormal relationship inevitably causes many quarrels, and in these cases Cathy must always endure and forgive him. She needs much patience and generosity to maintain her sympathy for Linton because their sense of values are quite different from each other's. Their description of heaven (10) is very famous for their remarkable differences. Between the calm and languid world which Linton prefers, and the radiant and energetic world which Cathy loves, there lies an abyss which cannot be crossed. Linton never needs Cathy as a lover because he has no room in him for love. He is characterized as an extraordinarily self-loving person, which is confirmed by his every word and action. Although Cathy recognizes his egotism, she pours motherly affection upon him. It is needless to say that their relationship is very limited, or even that it is doubtful whether it can be called love. So after Linton's death, Cathy can gradually accept Hareton's love after many turns and twists.

The love of Cathy and Hareton is much more normal in comparison with other relationships.

...but both their minds tending to the same point—one loving and desiring to esteem; and the other loving and desiring to be esteemed—they contrived in the end, to reach it. (11)

These words clearly sum up what their love is like; they gradually try to love each other through their efforts and finally reach their goal. Here is an ordinary love story which appears to be rather out of place in this novel. It seems, however, that there is hidden in this commonness the profound intention of the author. Cathy and Hareton will live happily ever

after. Their happiness will soon be overshadowed by routine life, and their love will no longer keep its tension, that is exactly the limit of their earthly love.

2.

While the author describes some forms of human relationships, she lays before us a question : how could we be freed from our own selfishness and achieve something immortal? Although the limit of earthly love almost always results from the disaccord of interests, there is no relationship in this world which causes no friction. This recognition is deeply connected with the idea of 'a principle of destruction.' We might think, however, that by describing the life and passion of Heathcliff, the author is searching for something immutable and everlasting beyond the limit which is lying in this earthly world.

Then what could we do for the goal? How could we be released from the worldly desires, vanity and selfishness? There is only one possibility ; that is the self-abnegating love burning as an abstract passion in one's mind without having any actual object. Therefore, in order to make Heathcliff pursue it, the actual presence of Catherine becomes an obstacle to his aim. There lies the necessity of Catherine's death. Although the heroine's early death in this novel is rather bewildering, the author's intention is explicit in the life of Heathcliff after the death of his idol. So this novel must be appreciated at the different level from the ordinary love story.

Catherine's death has stratified significance. First of all, it is the consequence of the self-destruction of Catherine, who has betrayed her true self. In her childhood, she lived as a whole being, but her life is disunited by the acquaintance with the world of Thrushcross Grange which is different from her own world of Wuthering Heights, and finally she exiles herself to Edgar's world through her own will. What she has done to herself is considered as a sin. Heathcliff blames Catherine for it.

‘....You have killed yourself....Because misery, and degradation, and death, and nothing that God or satan could inflict would have parted us, *you*, of your own will, did it. I have not broken your heart—*you* have broken it—and in breaking it, you have broken mine....’ (12)

Therefore, Catherine’s death implies the atonement for her sin.

‘If I’ve done wrong, I’m dying for it. It is enough!....’ (13)

From Catherine’s point of view, her death has two aspects; the consequence of the self-destruction and the expiation of her sin. From Heathcliff’s side, it is the necessary condition to achieve his supreme passion in the purest form. In short, her death is a point of contact of shifting the story-world from the actual level to the ideal one.

The next problem is how Heathcliff comes to realize it after Catherine’s death. When he learns of her death, he becomes desperate and cries,

‘....Be with me always—take any form—drive me mad! only *do* not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! Oh! God! it is unutterable! I *cannot* live without my life! I *cannot* live without my soul!....’ (14)

Strangely enough, however, he lives for eighteen years after he loses his ‘life’ and ‘soul.’ It means that he must have found out a way of living ‘in this abyss, where he cannot find her.’ Needless to say, it is the ambitious plan of revenge.

Soon after Catherine’s death, Hindley Earnshaw finally ends his miserable life. Consequently, Heathcliff gets into his hands all the property of Wuthering Heights, which means half the attainment of his substantial revenge. Although there is a blank of thirteen years in the story, we can guess how Heathcliff has lived during these years from the following words.

‘....She has disturbed me, night and day, through eighteen years—incessantly—remorselessly—....’ (15)

This confession tells us that Heathcliff is ceaselessly distressed with passion for Catherine, while he is waiting for an opportunity for his ruthless revenge.

‘...my son is prospective owner of your place, and I should not wish him to die till I was certain of being his successor. Besides, he’s *mine*, and I want the triumph of seeing *my* descendant fairly lord of their estates; my child hiring their children, to till their fathers’ lands for wages——...’ (16)

These words might be explained as the resistance of the proletariat against the privileged class, but, rather, these are the distinct expression of defiance against the concrete world of Thrushcross Grange.

Then what is the real meaning of Heathcliff’s revenge? After Catherine is buried, Heathcliff digs her grave to embrace her again. Before he gets off the lid of the coffin, however, he feels her existence on earth.

‘...There was another sigh, close at my ear. I appeared to feel the warm breath of it displacing the sleet-laden wind. I knew no living thing in flesh and blood can by—but as certainly as you perceive the approach to some substantial body in the dark, though it cannot be discerned so certainly I felt that Cathy was there, not under me, but on earth... Her presence was with me; ...’ (17)

Catherine’s spirit is not resting peacefully in heaven as Edgar believes, but she is wandering on earth. Heaven is not really her home just as her dream has foretold. Strangely enough, however, Heathcliff can never get a glimpse of her, though he knows her existence around him and longs for her night and day. Heathcliff explains it as a kind of torment by her caprice.

‘...She showed herself, as she often was in life, a devil to me!...It was a strange way of killing, not by inches, but by fractions of hair breadths, to beguile me with the spectre of a hope, through eighteen years!...’ (18)

The true reason for her not showing herself lies in the singular fact that Heathcliff is potentially refusing her.

Let us re-consider the true meaning of Heathcliff’s avaricious revenge. He is essentially not at all greedy. He must have endured the ill treatment and unreasonable insult of Hindley, if only Catherine had always been beside him. What makes him decide to run away from Wuthering Heights is Catherine’s words,

‘It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff, now ; ...’ (19)

Without her there is nothing to make him stay there. On hearing these words, Heathcliff must have felt himself betrayed by her. When he came back after a few years as a mysterious gentleman, his mind have been burning with revengeful thoughts. Even when he sees her delight at his return, it is impossible for him to forget completely his chagrin and anger. In fact he declares openly his intention of revenge.

‘....—I want you to be aware that I *know* you have treated me infernally——infernally! Do you hear? And if you flatter yourself that I don’t perceive it, You are a fool—and if you think I can be consoled by sweet words you are an idiot—and if you fancy I’ll suffer unrevenged, I’ll convince you of the contrary, in a very little while!’ (20)

As his way of revenge is rather eccentric, he never intends to hurt Catherine herself.

‘....I seek no revenge on you.... That’s not the plan——The tyrant grinds down his slaves—and they don’t turn against him, they crush those beneath them....’ (21)

In these words we find the remarkable logic of Heathcliff. Catherine is a tyrant for him, so he does not turn against her, however he may be grinded down. He just crushes those beneath them. In short, Heathcliff’s sadistic treatment of them means his indirect revenge on Catherine.

Just before her death, Heathcliff finally recognizes that she betrayed not only him but her true self. He learns she has deceived and driven herself to death.

‘You teach me now how cruel you’ ve been——cruel and false. *Why* did you despise me? *Why* did you betray your own heart, Cathy?.... You deserve this. You have killed yourself.... I have not broken your heart——you have broken it—and in breaking it, you have broken mine....’ (22)

Heathcliff forgives Catherine who has betrayed him, but he can never forgive Catherine who has killed herself.

‘ I forgive what you have done to me. I love *my* murderer—but *yours*! How can I? ’ (23)

This is their last conversation in this world and important because it decides the way of Heathcliff’s life after her death. His feelings towards Catherine are complicatedly divided into love and hate. The hate is transformed into the revenge against ‘those beneath them.’

The apparently unreasonable revenge of Heathcliff after the death of Catherine is the result of his passionate attachment to her, rather than the consequence of degradation of his love to avarice. In his consciousness, the contradictory emotions, love and hate, are derived from the same source. Accordingly, he feels as if revenge is the shortest way to attain his love. He does not realize that “there is no room for both passions in the same soul. . . . Only what is fine, and finely conceived, can feed love. But anything will feed hate.” so hate always surpasses love. Moreover, “hate blinds people.” (24) It is the reason why he cannot get a glimpse of her, though he knows of her existence around him. He is so blind that he has to ascertain her image again and again from her portrait, the locket, and her corpse. If she survived with the eternal light in his mind, he should not have to seek her actual image from them. It tells us that while he gives himself up to revengeful intention, he loses sight of Catherine. “Hate is the eternal negation.” (25) It may safely be said that in Heathcliff co-exist a deep attachment to Catherine and an unconscious negation of her.

Then how does he come to understand the erroneous direction of his passion? We have to consider why he suddenly gives up his revenge. Though his revengeful intention is often explained to have been abandoned for the love between Cathy and Hareton, it is contradictory to his feelings. As the revengeful hatred and love are intermingled in his consciousness, if it were right to say that the young lovers have driven his hatred away, it means their love has conquered his passion for Catherine. Moreover, we must pay attention to the fact that the indication of his change is already described before the reconciliation of Cathy and Hareton. The first peculiar change of his expression is pointed out by Lockwood.

There was a restless, anxious expression in his countenance, I had never remarked there before,... (26)

This can be said as the first sign of his madness which is later told by Nelly. Heathcliff's confession at this time implies a very important significance.

'It will be odd, if I thwart myself!... But, when I look for his father in his face, I find *her* every day more! How the devil is he so like? I can hardly bear to see him'. (27)

He already half abandons his revenge, because in Hareton's face, he finds every day an image of Catherine more than that of Hindley. It is needless to say Catherine is a symbol of love and Hindley is one of hatred. So this confession expresses suggestively the process of love surpassing hatred. He realizes the change by what he feels in Hareton's figure, because——

'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——....' (28)

We have to consider what the direct reason of his change is. The first sign of it is marked in January, 1802, when Lockwood visits Wuthering Heights for the third time. He becomes aware of Heathcliff's change in comparison with his first visit in November, 1801. During these two months Nelly stays in Thrushcross Grange, so the information of Lockwood is the only clue of what has happened to Heathcliff in these two months. Then we must go back to the narration of Lockwood in the first two chapters. The most important event is, needless to say, the appearance of Catherine's ghost. It is not too much to say that in this supernatural situation is hidden the key to open the mysterious doors of this novel.

We are not surprised to find that Catherine has been wondering the moor for twenty years, for her soul is accused of the sin which is too grave for her to be released even by death. The figure of a child who mournfully asks to be admitted into Wuthering Heights is the symbol of Catherine's earnest wish to regain the whole being which she possessed in

her childhood. Her entreaty is in vain, however. She is not allowed to come in, and she has already disappeared by the time Heathcliff hurries to the window and opens it for her. Her disappearance is not 'a spectre's ordinary caprice' (29) as Lockwood thinks. She cannot show herself before Heathcliff, because he cannot completely forgive Catherine who betrayed herself. Heathcliff violently longs for her, while he relentlessly impeaches her. Therefore he cannot let her come into Wuthering Heights. It is generally accepted that Heathcliff and Wuthering Heights are essentially identified in this novel. Wuthering Heights is not a mere house or scene, but it is the symbol of Heathcliff's values. Therefore the description of the soldered window of Wuthering Heights through which Catherine tries to come in suggests a very important significance. It implies that the window of Heathcliff's mind is also shut off against Catherine.

The hook was soldered into the staple, . . . (30)

It is the true reason why she cannot appear before him.

Heathcliff must be shocked by the fact that Catherine showed herself to a stranger, Lockwood, and not to him. There lies the direct cause of his abandonment of the revenge. He must have noticed the danger of losing her for his revengeful hatred. When he completely resigns the revenge and abandons his hate, he finds out a way to satisfy his passion perfectly. He finally realizes that he can fulfill his longing for Catherine by embracing her in a more comprehensive love.

After this recognition, Heathcliff loses every interest in the actual life and begins to search for his idol in the ideal world. Consequently he becomes aware of a change approaching him.

'Nelly, there is a strange change approaching—I'm in its shadow at present— . . . ' (31)

He cannot conjecture what is waiting for him in the future.

'I shall not know that, till it comes,' (32)

He only feels certain of the approaching fulfilment of his pathetic wish which has almost devoured his life.

‘...I have a single wish, and my whole being and faculties are yearning to attain it. They have yearned towards it so long, and so unwaveringly, that I’m convinced it *will* be reached—and *soon*—because it has devoured my existence—I am swallowed in the anticipation of its fulfilment....’
(33)

After a few days, a symptom of his madness is perceived by Nelly. When he abandons his reason, he seems to foresee what will happen to him.

‘...To-day, I am within sight of my heaven—I have my eyes on it—hardly three feet to sever me!....’ (34)

At the night he goes up into the room where there is the window through which Catherine’s ghost once tried to come in. Though nothing is said, we can safely imagine that Heathcliff must have finally received Catherine into Wuthering Heights. The next day his excited expression becomes more exaggerated, and his words tell us that he has half attained his lifelong wish and moreover, that he is expecting death as the fulfilment in the end.

‘...—I’m too happy, and yet I’m not happy enough. My soul’s bliss kills my body, but does not satisfy itself. ‘...I have nearly attained *my* heaven, and that of others is altogether unvalued, and uncoveted by me!....’ (35)

He is finally taking possession of what he has been ceaselessly longing for throughout his life. He is realizing his own heaven by his incessant will. The essence of it consists in the immortal spirit of Catherine and the eternal passion of Heathcliff. Her wandering spirit has been given immortality by the catharsis of his passion. Heathcliff’s own spirit can obtain the immortality only by escaping from the physical restraint as an actual existence. There lies the necessity of his death. As his death is the only way of being released from a mortal existence, it must not imply the destructive image which typically follows the ordinary death. Consequently, it becomes a very ambiguous and unnatural way of dying. The convincing cause of his death is not shown. We can only imagine from the suggestive sentence; ‘My soul’s bliss kills my body’. We cannot easily forget the scene vividly described by Nelly. Heathcliff is dead and stark

with 'frightful, life-like gaze of exultation' (36) in the oak panelled bed, for which Catherine was earnestly longing before her death. The window, through which Catherine once tried in vain to come in, is wide opened, and finally she must have been admitted into Wuthering Heights a few days before. This symbolic death-scene exquisitely expresses the ecstatic bliss of him who is released from the mortal life and has entered his own immortal heaven.

Catherine's death is the boundary from the actual world to the ideal one, and Heathcliff's death is also the boundary in the novel from the mortal world to the immortal one. Although the death of Catherine is the result of self-destruction, that of Heathcliff is the fruit of self-fulfilment, and the catharsis of his intense and pure passion finally makes it possible for him to release not only his own soul but also hers, and to immortalize them. We can get a glimpse of their immortal world by their spectres described in the last part of the story.

'They's Heathcliff, and woman, yonder, under t' Nab', (37)

Here, Catherine is no more a wailing and wandering child who once astonished Lockwood. She will survive eternally with Heathcliff in 'the middle of the heath on the top of Wuthering Heights', (38) their heaven. The last narration of Lockwood about the calm grave-scene suggests exquisitely and ironically the harmonious immortality which is the symbol of their heaven.

I lingered round them, under that benign sky ; watched the moths fluttering among the heath and hare-bells ; listened to the soft wind breathing through the grass ; and wondered how anyone could ever imagine unquiet slumbers, for the sleepers in that quiet earth. (39)

The immortal heaven which is attained by Heathcliff and Catherine suggests the infinite sphere that far transcends 'a principle of destruction' which the author found implicit in this actual world. It embodies the absolute value just as 'quiet earth', while, we mortals live only momentarily as 'the fluttering moth'.

Chapter 2

SIGNIFICANCE OF DEATH AS RELEASE

1.

As we have traced thus far, Heathcliff's death does not mean a mere termination of his life. It is a kind of release and suggests the eternal continuance of his existence with Catherine's. If he is released by death, we can say that his life has been a state of imprisonment. Not only Heathcliff, but also Catherine feels herself imprisoned and she is yearning for escape from that state.

'. . . .the 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. . . .' (40)

It is worth while to note that Catherine seems to be conscious of her flesh as prison and longing for the release of her spirit into 'that glorious world'. Nevertheless, even after her death, she is not allowed to be released, because of the sin she committed, so she has to continue wandering the moor as an exile for about twenty years. Many other protagonists in Emily Brontë's writings have more or less the sense of imprisonment or exile. We can say that a 'Prison Complex' (41) is the most important and remarkable feature of the mind of the author. Therefore we are going to trace the image of prison in her works and consider what it means.

The image of prison is so often expressed from her early poems to her last that the sense of imprisonment seems to occupy an important region in the mind throughout her life. They are not simply used as a scene which produces unusual or extreme situations. They have some stratified meanings, which, when explicated, will show us the inside of the author's mystic world into which she would not allow anyone to enter.

The imagery of a captive in a dark dungeon is one of the most dominant situations in the Gondal poems. He (or she) was arrested as

the result of war, intrigue, betrayal or groundless accusation and put into prison, where the captive reflects on the past happy days or grieves and despairs of the miserable and hopeless circumstances. First, captives lament for their sad fortune.

And salt drops from my haggard cheek
Descend, like rain upon the heath.
How long they've wet a dongeon floor,
Falling on flag-stones damp and grey! (42)

Next, captives despair of their hopelessness, often anticipate their death, and shudder at the idea.

A few years of captivity,
And then a captive's tomb. (43)

In the dark and damp dungeon, their minds thirst for the open air. The grating of the dungeon wall is the only part of contact with the outer world through which moonbeams or snowflakes visit them. (No. 39, 46) The grating of the prison is later transformed to the 'window image' in *Wuthering Heights*. In the novel 'windows' have very symbolic meanings because they are the boundary of the real world and the spiritual one. Though in the Gondal poems 'grating' is not used as so profound imagery, it may be important in the connection of the 'window' in the novel. The captives in the dungeon draw outside scenery in their mind and pine for their home country.

But what on earth is half so dear,
So longed for as the hearth of home? (44)

On the other hand they have the full knowledge that they will never be able to see again their home or people whom they love. They fear and hate the idea of death which will come in the near future. So they enthusiastically thirst for release from the state of captives and long for returning to the place where they essentially ought to be.

The spirit that bent 'neath its power,
How it longed, how it burned to be free! (45)

Could I have lingered but an hour
It well had paid a week of toil,
But truth has banished fancy's power,
I hear my dungeon bars recoil—— (46)

Prison or a confined, small space bring up the image of a coffin to our minds. A Coffin is immediately related with death. Therefore, prisoners' earnest wishes for release suggests their intense will for life. The more hopelessness they find in the dungeon, the more earnestly they pursue life. Thus, prison is a situation in which people can inevitably feel life and death close to them. It is worth noticing that life is closely connected with the longing for release or recurrence.

Although we have traced so far the real situation of prison in the Gondal poems, there are some others which contain the image of imprisonment in the figurative sense. In these poems a man is not always confined in the dungeon any more, but a man's soul is imprisoned in his body. His soul struggles violently to get free of the prison, his clay, often in vain.

Man's spirit away from its drear dongeon sending,
Bursting the fetters and breaking the bars. (47)

Many poems contain the image of the flight and wanderings of the soul or spirit. Such experiences of free wanderings seem to be the most rapturous and ecstatic moments for the author.

I'm happiest when most away
I can bear my soul from its home of clay
....
But only spirit wandering wide
Through infinite immensity. (48)

In her world the spirit and the body of man do not co-exist on an equal level. The body can have restraints imposed upon it by the outer world, but the spirit must not.

My mortal flesh you might debar,
But not the eternal fire within. (49)
But I am sure the soul is free
To leave its clay a little while, (50)

The body seems to be the only obstacle that prevents the soul from soaring freely. In early poems, this flight of the spirit is described as rather abstract imagery in the imaginative world. Poem No. 174 (titled "To Imagination") tells us that the imaginative region is the only shelter of the author from this real and troublesome world.

When weary with the long day's care,
And earthly change from pain to pain,
And lost, and ready to despair,
Thy kind voice calls me back again——
O my true friend, I am not lone
While thou canst speak with such a tone! (51)

As she feels intensely the hopelessness of the outer world, she esteems highly the imagination of the inner world where she is released from care and trouble.

So hopeless is the world without,
The world within I doubly prize ;
....
Where thou and I and Liberty
Have undisputed sovereignty. (52)

Though she addresses the imagination as 'sure solacer of human cares and brighter hope when hope despairs,' (53) she does not believe recklessly in its absolute power.

I trust not to thy phantom bliss, (54)

There lies unerring recognition of reality. She is not at all a romantic and dreamy girl who indulge herself in fancy but she has a correct understanding of heavy actualities and the limitation of the imaginary escape.

In later poems we can see the soul's escape from the bodily chain as a real and concrete experience, not as an imaginary one. The author must have experienced these mystic moments, because we find the detailed

progress of it in poem No. 190. The situation of the heroine, Rochelle is one of the typical examples in the Gondal poems. She is a captive in a dark dungeon and makes a confession of her visional moments.

But first a hush of peace, a soundless calm descends ;
The struggle of distress and fierce impatience ends ;
Mute music soothes my breast——unuttered harmony
That I could never dream till earth was lost to me.
Then dawns the Invisible, the Unseen its truth reveals ;
My outward sense is gone, my inward essence feels——
Its winds are almost free, its home, its harbour found ;
Measuring the gulf it stoops and dares the final bound! (55)

At this moment she must be released from the bodily sense, and experience the rapturous ecstasy which nobody could ever feel. It never lasts long, however, and this soon leaves her in bitter realities. She describes this dreadful awaking most vividly.

Oh, dreadful is the check——intense the agony
When the ear begins to hear and the eye begins to see
When the pulse begins to throb, the brain to think again,
The soul to feel the flesh and the flesh to feel the chain! (56)

We find her completely released from the bodily restraint and finally having reached the blissful ecstasy, though it is very transient. This poem is considered to have been written just before she began to write *Wuthering Heights*, and it is also the last prison poem of Gondal. The situation of a captive in the dungeon is not so important here but the attainment of breakaway of the soul from the bodily chain is what we must pay attention to. This is, as it were, the final goal of existence in her values. This moment of mystic experience is the unique life genuine and true, and it is what she has been ceaselessly longing for. She has wisely perceived the falsity and superficiality of the general values, and besides, she believes and feels an Existence lying behind every actual thing. In these mystic moments only, she can reach the region of the Existence and its eternity. But she never closes her eyes to the real world. She possesses an incomparable recognition of the reality. She clearly describes this world in poem No. 157.

Where Wisdom ever laughed at Love,
 Or Virtue crouched to Infamy ;
 Where, writhing 'neath the strokes of Fate,
 The mangled wretch was forced to smile ;
 To match his patience 'gainst her hate,
 His heart rebellious all the while ;
 Where Pleasure still will lead to wrong,
 And helpless Reason warn in vain ;
 And Truth is weak and Treachery strong,
 And Joy the shortest path to Pain ;
 And Peace, the lethargy of grief ;
 And Hope, a phantom of soul ;
 And Life, a labour void and brief ;
 And Death, the despot of the whole! (57)

She could finally go beyond this deceitful world through mystic experience. We can trace in her poems her struggle for release and liberty, and its ultimate attainment through vision. The only imperfect point is its transiency. The next aim to pursue is how she could convert its transiency into eternity ; how she could achieve 'endless bliss through endless years'.

(58) In *Wuthering Heights* she tries to eternize her blissful ecstasy and perfectly fulfill it. In this novel the Existence is replaced with Catherine and the image of Heathcliff yearning for her suggests the earnest longing for eternal release and liberty of the author. This abstract wish for eternity is described in the shape of love, and other ideal symbols are all replaced with actual images. So we must be careful not to be deluded by its appearance.

Next we are going to analyze the profound significance of the death of Heathcliff.

2.

We have traced so far two kinds of images of imprisonment in Gondal poems. One is that of a captive in a dungeon, despairing and longing for his home. The other is the image of the imprisonment of man's

soul in his bodily chain, intensely yearning for release. There are some images of imprisonment also in *Wuthering Heights*, but they are considerably different from that of Gondal. The first sense of imprisonment and aspiration after release is expressed by Catherine before her death.

‘...the 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....’ (59)

‘This shattered prison’ is generally considered to be her bodily yoke, and the whole phrase tells of her longing for the release of the soul from the body. Above all, we must pay attention to the following sentence, ‘I’m wearying to escape into that glorious world, and *to be always there*;’.

(Italics mine) ‘That glorious world’ means the regions of blissful ecstasy into which the author is admitted through mystic experience. Such experience of release from the bodily chain lasts, only for a moment, however. So after it passes, she must be confronted with sad and miserable reality. What Catherine is earnestly wishing for is ‘to be always there (in that glorious world)’; everlasting blissful ecstasy. It can no longer be reached by mere mystic experiences, because what confines her is not only her body but life itself. Life is the biggest chain that fastens her. Her longing for ‘escape’ from ‘this shattered prison’ means the eternal breakaway from life itself. In other words she must abandon completely her physical presence for that purpose. There is only one way for it, that is death. In this phrase Catherine never wishes to die, rather, she is most passionately looking for the true life which she believes to have been hers when she was a child, and lost when she was separated from Heathcliff. She cannot or will not understand that it is impossible in this world. What she is yearning for can be reached only by the abandonment of earthly life. After her death, however, she cannot attain ‘that glorious world’ and has to wander the moor for some twenty years. There lies the true tragedy of Catherine.

As for Heathcliff, he cannot even get a glimpse of Catherine, while he clings to the actual life by means of revenge. Catherine is the embodiment

of 'that glorious world' for him. What he is ceaselessly longing for is essentially the same as what Catherine is passionately wishing for before her death ; that is the complete and eternal existence of the human soul. To reach that goal he must soar up from our usual, experiential life to the transcendental world. We cannot understand the progress by the common level of senses. The whole progress of his release is described through mystical vision. It often goes beyond the boundary of the expressible region and bewilders us. By tracing that progress, however, we will be able to find out the true significance of Heathcliff's life and death.

In order to attain the mystical experience, there are three steps according to the opinion of Caroline F. E. Spurgeon in *Mysticism in English Literature* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1922). The first step is self-abandonment, the next one is concentration and aspiration, the last is union with God. This process can be applied to the case of Heathcliff's life.

First of all, self-abandonment of one of the most remarkable characteristics of Heathcliff. The egoistic aspect is peculiarly cut off from his personality throughout this novel. He is always satisfied with his state as a slave under the tyranny of Catherine.

' You are welcome to torture me to death for your amusement, . . . ' (60)

His self-abandonment is remarkable as compared with the character of Linton, his son. Before Catherine's death, he declares his self-abandonment in the brief sentence.

' . . . I love *my* murderer— . . . ' (61)

The next step, concentration and aspiration must be considered separately. As for aspiration, Heathcliff is longing for her ceaselessly and tragically for eighteen years after her death. Wherever he might go, whatever he might do, the image of Catherine is always clinging to his mind and continuously annoying him.

'When I sat in the house with Hareton, it seemed that on going out, I should meet her ; when I walked on the moors I should meet her coming in. When I went from home, I hastened to return, she *must* be somewhere at the

Heights, I was certain! And when I slept in her chamber—I was beaten out of that—I couldn't lie there; for the moment I closed my eyes, she was either outside the window or sliding back the panels, or entering the room, or even resting her darling head on the same pillow as she did when a child. And I must open my lids to see. And so I opened and closed them a hundred times a night—to be always disappointed! It racked me! . . . ' (62)

However passionately he might be looking for her, he cannot even get a glimpse of her. He can feel her existence but she is always out of reach for him.

' . . . I looked round impatiently—I felt her by me—I could *almost* see her, and yet I *could* not! I ought to have sweat blood then, from the anguish of my yearning, from the fervour of my supplications to have but one glimpse! I had not one. . . . ' (63)

We have already come to know that which prevented him from reaching her is his intention of revenge, and also that his cruel revenge has ultimately been done towards Catherine herself. From the viewpoint of Heathcliff's mystical progress, the act of revenge means the lack of concentration of his love. Therefore while he is burning with revengeful thoughts, he is staying in the second stage and cannot reach the goal.

The possibility of the last step approaches him when he resigns his malignant intention and loses every interest in this actual life. The process of his gradual escape from this daily region is clearly expressed in his confession.

' . . . —And yet I cannot continue in this condition!—I have to remind myself to breathe—almost to remind my heart to beat! And it is like bending back a stiff spring . . . it is by compulsion, that I do the slightest act, not prompted by one thought, and by compulsion, that I notice anything alive or dead, which is not associated with one universal idea . . . ' (64)

Here, we find Heathcliff half getting free from the chain of reality and entering into the transcendental world. He foresees the approaching fulfilment of his lifelong wish.

‘...I have a single wish, and my whole being and faculties are yearning for it. They have yearned towards it so long, and so unwaveringly, that I’m convinced it *will* be reached—and *soon*—because it has devoured my existence—I am swallowed in the anticipation of its fulfilment...’ (65)

These symbolic expressions tell us that Heathcliff has already passed the second step, concentration and aspiration, and he is approaching the moment of the final goal, that is, union with God. It is completely attained only by his abandonment of the earthly connections; it is nothing but death. His death, however, is quite different from that of all mortal creatures. It means the eternal awakening, not the lifeless rest.

3.

Now we have understood that Heathcliff’s madness and death embodies the complete process of mystical experiences. He eternizes the transient ecstatic moment which some of the protagonists in the Gondal poems are allowed to experience on rare occasions and are bitterly disappointed at its loss. After his death, Heathcliff finally succeeded in uniting with Catherine, his lifelong wish, and achieved the eternal bliss in which we mortals can never participate. Here, Catherine is no longer a mere woman or heroine in the story, but she is the symbol of the immortal Existence which the author believed lying behind all Nature. Moreover, Heathcliff’s sentiments is not at all love for the lost lover as in the Gondal poems, but it is the embodiment of unextinguishable passion for the eternal. His inexhaustible will takes a form of love and its destination is immortality. He wins success in abandonment of his physical restraint by catharsis of passion. He enters into eternity through death and consequently he merges his identity into Nature and is in harmony with its eternal immovability. The author faces the supreme problem of Man; how he can save his own existence from the world of ‘principle of destruction’. The image of Heathcliff is already beyond the actual humanity, yet his existence is so overpowering and irresistible that we cannot help really believing it. It never means the loss of identity to abandon

one's personal presence and extinguish oneself by throwing it away into the Infinite, but it means to obtain the mighty identity. This ideal conviction is one of the most characteristic aspect of mysticism. B. P. Kurtz says,

Mysticism is a visioned conviction of a supersensuous, superrational reality in which all things are somehow one without losing their disparateness.
(66)

The significance of Heathcliff's death is condensed in this sentence. Remarkably enough, we can find similar ideas in Percy Bysshe Shelley.

He is made one with nature : (67)

The final conviction that Emily Brontë in *Wuthering Heights* seems to be very similar to that of Shelley in *Adonais*, though the two poets have some dissimilarity in other respects. Just as this romantic poet, she loved and longed for liberty and eternity above all. On the other hand she fully recognized the difficulty and even impossibility of freedom in life. Not only the parsonage in Haworth or her own room to which she was attached, but her own body itself was a chain that bound her soul. Therefore, unfastening this chain was the necessary condition in order to reach the ultimate freedom. Her desire for death which we often find in her writings was a result of her earnest wish for an escape from the state of physical creature and also for a life as a free existence. It is not her case that a pessimistic view of life made her desperate of living and brought in her mind the longing for death. Rather, it is no exaggeration to say that she was searching for life more passionately and devotedly than any other man in the world. Actual life is finite, as we all know. There is no room for doubt that it is impossible for us to live eternally as well as to live freely. It must have been worthy of searching for because of its impossibility. If the actual form of life is transient, the negation of life (=death) means eternity. In other words, the eternal and free life for which she had been earnestly longing can only be achieved by denying the earthly life. It is nothing but death. In this case, death never means disappearance or destruction, but it is the most sublime form of life in

human existences. It is only death that allows us to escape from the transient actualities and participate in the absolute existence. Therefore, the death of Heathcliff signifies, just as that of Adonais, the eternal continuance of this existence. In comparison with the eternity with which they embody, we are forced to recognize the finiteness of our common happiness. In both works, the general notion of life and death is reversed.

...he is not dead, he doth not sleep——
He hath awakened from the dream of life——
... *We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel ;
He lives, he wakes——'tis Death is dead, not he , (68)

The two poets came to the same conclusion after their meditation on life and death. The significance of the end in *Wuthering Heights* is precisely expressed as well in a line of *Adonais*.

No more let life divide what Death can join together (69)

Heathcliff has finally actualized by this death to join with Catherine in the eternal world. It may safely be said that Emily Brontë created a unique form of existence by Heathcliff's life and death.

Just after finishing this novel, she wrote an exquisite poem filled with harmonious tranquility and firm conviction in her mind.

No coward soul is mine
No trembler in the world's storm-trouble sphere
I see Heaven's glories shine
And Faith shines equal arming me from Fear (70)

This poem is not only one of the most perfect confessional poems of the author, but also the epitome of what she attained through the death of Heathcliff.

Chapter 3

MEDITATION ON DEATH

'Death' is one of the main subjects of all the writings of Emily Brontë. We are going to analyze what is lying behind her frequent meditation on death.

When we read her biography, we are surprised to find many records of family deaths during her short life. At the age of three, her mother died; at seven, her two sisters died; at twenty seven, her aunt's sudden death (in this year, Martha Taylor, Charlotte's friend, and Weightman, the curate of Haworth also died); and three months before her own death, her brother, Branwell lost his miserable life. It must be a rather peculiar experience to meet the death of family members five times in the life of thirty years. Perhaps death was always beside her. Moreover, as her room in the parsonage faced the church yard, through the window she could often turn her eyes to the grey tombstones stretching their dark shadows. All the circumstances around made her reflective and meditative whether she liked or not. It is quite natural for her that death should have become the matter of primary concern.

All human beings have more or less a vague horror of death. We cannot help it, though we try to think about it as little as possible. The author, who had keen penetration and a reflective inclination, dared to fix her eyes on the inevitable termination of our biological life. What she abhorred above all seems to be the mortality or corruptibility of man rather than death itself. We Japanese may not realize so intensely the perishability of corpse, because we generally cremate our remains to ashes. As burning has a special power of purification, we can keep our mind at peace in some measure. So probably the image of death troubles less the calmness of our mind. Burning up something leaves a mystic atmosphere behind. Burning a corpse to ashes may be a reasonable solution of our hate for corruption. In the Western world, however, people generally bury corpses in the ground. They gradually perish and inevitably become food for worms. Such grotesque and hideous images of

corruption is always associated with death. The author must have shuddered at these thoughts. Embalmmment of corpses which is described twice in *Wuthering Heights* clearly tells her abhorrence of mutability.

—near a swamp, whose peaty moisture is said to answer all the purposes of embalming on the few corpses deposited there. (71)

‘...when I saw her face again—it is hers yet—...’

Do you suppose I dread any change of the sort? I expected such a transformation on raising the lid, but I’m better pleased that it should not commence till I share it....’ (72)

Abhorrence of corruption under the ground takes the form of strong tenacity for earth. The attachment to this world is often found in her writings.

We could not leave our native home
For *any* world beyond the Tomb. (73)

‘...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....’ (74)

These expressions can be understood as an outburst of passionate tenacity for life on this earth. Beyond it, in the region of unconsciousness, there lies a life-instinct. We might say that the author’s life-instinct was extraordinarily strong and it made her persistently pursue the eternal life.

On the other hand, strangely enough, her attachment to earth can also be considered as the expression of impulse which urges her to return to an inorganic substance. Earth is the place where all creations have their last sleep. Death is quietly waiting for us sooner or later. In our minds there lies the death-wish which sometimes tempts us to put an end to our life against our reasonable thoughts. We have a vague and irrational yearning for destructiveness in death, while we disgustingly hate it more than anything else. The tenacity for earth of the author signifies also the intense death-wish in her inclinations. Earth is the symbol of life and death coincidently. The strong life-instinct and death-instinct co-exist in her, and they take a form of persistent longing for earth. Two contradictory elements, the intense wish for life and the passionate impulse for

death, are clearly solved by the death of Heathcliff; the eternal life through death.

Apart from these life and death instincts, the author had a remarkable bilateral character which makes it possible for two contrary ideas to co-exist. Her writings and biography show her passionately romantic aspects and also her detached air or even nihilistic inclination at the same time. The two-sidedness can be said as one of the most characteristic attributes of Emily Brontë. The large disparity produces her mental profundity. This disparity is finally combined by her mysticism.

We might say that the keen penetration and intense fear of death made her bring forth some unique works. Then why was she so annoyed by the horror of death? One reason for that is attributed to our general fear or uncertainty towards death, which is lying more or less in the depth of all human minds. The other, more important reason is the incurable disquietude towards religious belief. Although both the novel and the poems involve many images of paganism, it must have been impossible for her to live without having anything to do with Christianity. She must have often meditated on it. The profound contemplation gradually lead her to doubt the established Christian God and to create her original one. This process is clearly traced by examining how she addresses God in her poems.

O God of heaven!... (75)

Speak, God of Vision,... (76)

O God within my breast (77)

'God' is transfigured from that of the usual meaning into the unique Existence in herself. It signifies that she is estranged from the God or heaven of Christianity. Her unbelief in the ready-made God is gradually increasing.

And Heaven itself, so pure and blest,
Could never give my spirit rest. (78)

Now might we doubt God's guardian power
And curse instead of pray.

He will not even let us die——
Not let us die at home ; (79)

*"No promised Heaven, these wild Desires
Could all or half fulfill ;
No threatened Hell, with quenchless fires,
Subdue this quenchless will!"* (80)

Especially, the last one clearly describes the overpowering passion which cannot be explained or understood by some ready-made ideas. This passion becomes the motive power of *Wuthering Heights*. In the novel her skepticism towards established religion brings forth the stubborn, self-satisfied hypocrite, Joseph. Several references about the dilapidation of the chapel also suggest the decay of religion.

When beneath its walls, I perceived decay had made progress, even in seven months——. . . . (81)

Catherine's words in madness are more suggestive and significant.

'...and we must pass by Gimmerton Kirk, to go that journey! We've braved its ghosts often together, and dared each other to stand among the graves and ask them to come...But Heathcliff, if I dare you now, will you venture? If you do, I'll keep you. .' (82)

Needless to say, this is a sacrilegious practice towards the church or the dead. We find Catherine and Heathcliff quite deviated from the Christian moral.

'...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!' (83)

These words clearly show the deep agony of Catherine and the powerlessness of church or Christianity.

... 'He's considering... he'd rather I'd come to him! Find a way, then! not through that Kirkyard... You are slow! Be content, you always followed me!' (84)

This expression foretells the life of Heathcliff after her death. In a word, it can be said as the progress to 'find a way' towards Catherine. The expression 'not through that Kirkyard' means that the 'way' is quite independent from the Christian values. It cannot be easily found, however. so 'you are slow!' suggests that eighteen years are needed for Heathcliff to reach the goal.

A French essay written three years before *Wuthering Heights* has a direct reproach for God.

... pourquoi l'homme était-il créé? Il tourments, il tue, il dévore ; il souffre, se meurt, est dévoré—voilà toute son histoire. . . . l'univers me paraissait une vaste machine construite seulement pour produire la mal. Je doutais presque de la bonté de Dieu, dans ce qu'il n'anéantit pas l'homme sur le jour du premier péché. (85)

These doubts about the concrete religion are not only the author's personal feelings, but many other writers in nineteenth or twentieth centuries seemed to have more or less such a sense of unbelief in religion. J. Hillis Miller analyzes such inclinations in *The Disappearance of God*.—Long ago, people experienced the divine power as immediately present in nature, in society, and in each man's heart. But paralleling the development of urban, technologized life there has been a gradual dissipation of the medieval symbolism of participation. Consequently man finds himself alone and in spiritual poverty. Modern times begin when man confronts his isolation, his separation from everything outside himself. One great theme of modern literature is the sense of isolation, of alienation, brought about by man's new situation. We are alienated from God ; we have alienated ourselves from nature ; we are alienated from our fellow men ; and, finally, we are alienated from ourselves, the buried life we never seem able to reach. God is not dead, God exists, but He is out of our reach. People struggle against the absence of God. As the romantics find His absence intolerable, they must attempt to re-establish communication at

all costs. Almost all the romantic poets begin with the sense that there is a hidden spiritual force in nature, and it is altogether beyond the world. The problem is to reach it. (86)

Beyond Heathcliff's pathetic pursuit for Catherine, may be hidden the author's tragical attempt to re-establish a new god. In this sense, *Wuthering Heights* can be called a kind of religious book of her originative values. The real substance of her god is 'the immortal energy without any creed' (87) that is ever omnipresent in the universe.

Appendix

DISCONTINUITY BETWEEN 'GONDAL' AND WUTHERING HEIGHTS

Wuthering Heights has often been said to be the adaptation from the Gondal saga. In fact, they have some motifs in common ; violent emotion, betrayal, revenge, separation, agony, death, and so on. Both stories are filled with many Byronic images and exaggerated feelings, giving the overwhelming impression. In spite of their similar situation, however, their concluding subjects seem to be quite different.

The central theme of *Wuthering Heights* is the fulfillment of yearning for immortality which cannot be attained in this world. This progress is described by the longing of Heathcliff for Catherine. The love is his motive of life and death, and moreover, it is the only way towards the entrance of the eternal world. It is not banal at all, but it is the most sacred passion that man's heart could ever cherish.

In order to find out what the love of the Gondal poems is like, we are going to take up an example, No. 182. (88) It is one of the most famous Gondal poems and usually called 'Cold in the Earth'. Rosina visits the grave of her lost lover, Julius, after fifteen years' absence and she pours out most passionate grief and lament. Her situation is very similar to that of Heathcliff. Images of a lover's death or grave are also used in the novel

as in Gondal and seem to be the favourite of the author. There lies great difference between them; the tone of the protagonist's emotion.

Rosina remembers happy old days and her dead lover, grieves for his absence, but finally checks her useless lamentation.

Then did I check the tears of useless passion,
Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine; (11.25-26)

She determines to live alone 'without the aid of joy'. (1.24) Her whole emotion is based on remembrance. Not only this one, but in most of the Gondal poems people are yearning for the past days and despair of the present misery or hopeless future.

On the other hand, Heathcliff is not in the least absorbed in the happy recollection. His feeling for Catherine is the everlasting desire, while Rosina's for Julius is 'Sweet love of youth'. (1.13) Heathcliff cannot forget Catherine as long as he exists and he is firmly convinced her spirit's existence around him. Rosina feels that she is quite separated from Julius by his death and his images must become less and less clear, so she begs forgiveness of him.

...forgive if I forget thee
While the World's tide is bearing me along: (11.13-14)

Rosina's lamentation is the result of the sense of sin which comes from forgetfulness of love. Heathcliff's agony arises from the fact that Catherine is out of his reach, though he knows she is ever present. Julius is half buried into the past oblivion, while Catherine is the immortal existence never forgotten or disappeared. That is the chief and significant difference of the meaning in the dead lovers between Gondal and *Wuthering Heights*.

In general Gondal's situation is limited in this world. Its stage is set in the large-scale background; such as kingdom, royal houses, wars. Therefore, Gondal poems are often filled with descriptions of dramatic scenes or miserable circumstances and exaggerated passions. So it can be the inevitable result that they are devoid of some profundity of the pure passion which characterizes Heathcliff most distinctly. In *Wuthering Heights* the situation of the story is quite narrow, only two houses and

nature around them. What they embody are very symbolic, however. Everything in this novel seems to surpass their apparent meanings and suggest some infinite values beyond our real world. In the Gondal poems love is a mere personal sentiment however passionate it might be. As Heathcliff is a kind of metaphysical being, his love for Catherine is at once personal and universal, because it is the embodiment of Man's yearning for the eternal, rather than Man's feeling for his lost lover. It is easy to find some affinities between the Gondal sagas and *Wuthering Heights*. They seem to be exaggeratedly emphasized more than necessary. We must not fail to pay attention to the differences lying in their similarities. Although both have many scenes or images in common, their significance and the depth of their meanings must be clearly distinguished. In Gondal they are mere description, while in the novel they are symbols or suggestions.

Wuthering Heights is not the mere adaptation from the Gondal sagas as it is often said to be. Heathcliff's death and his last firm conviction are the final attainment of the author's long meditation on life and death.

CONCLUSION

We have traced Heathcliff's life from Catherine's death to his own death and considered its meanings. His intense and unreasonable longing for her is not a mere love of a man for a woman, but it suggests the author's passionate pursuit for something absolute and eternal, in other words, 'an existence of yours beyond you'. (89) It may be called god if you would like, but it seems more suitable to name it *power* lying in Nature, though the reason cannot be clearly explained.

The main image of the author's works consists of 'imprisonment' and 'release', of which the definite situations are gradually transformed into an abstract significance. There are three aspects of the change. The first

one is the situation imprisoned in a dungeon where a captive is fearing an approaching death and yearning to return home. The second one is the state of soul or spirit imprisoned in a body or consciousness in which one has a horror of realities and longing for an escape into a momental mystic experience. These two aspects are described in her poems. The last one is in the novel, which is the circumstances of life imprisoned in life itself, where one is abhorring the finiteness and intensely longing for the immortal eternity, and finally attaining it through death.

Such an idea of death as the eternal awakening is very impressive when considering the rather unbelievable episode of her death. Charlotte described her sister as follows.

Yet, while physically she perished, mentally, she grew stronger than we had yet known her. Day by day, when I saw with what a front she met sufferings, I looked on her with an anguish of wonder and love. I have seen nothing like it ; but, indeed, I have never seen her parallel in anything. Stronger than a man, simpler than a child, her nature stood alone. The awful point was, that, while full of ruth for others, on herself she had no pity ; the spirit was inexorable to the flesh ; from the trembling hand, the unnerved limbs, the faded eyes, the same service was exacted as they had rendered in health. (90)

In her mind there might be Heathcliff's death-scene, when she felt her own death approaching.

The profound theme of *Wuthering Heights* is the pursuit of eternal life released from death or finiteness of mortals. The author's best solution for the problem seems to be expressed in the death of Heathcliff and the oneness with Nature. This idea seems to arise from two motives. The one can be considered as uncertainty about Christian values. It has very important meanings as a starting point of modern literature. The other one is the deep-rooted fear towards the perishability or transiency that are lying in all existence. Herman Hesse said in a novel.

Perhaps, thought Goldmund, fear of death is the root of all our image-making, and perhaps, too, of all our intellect. We shrink from death, shuddering at our frail instability, sadly watching the flowers fade again and again, knowing in our hearts how soon we shall be as withered as they.

So that when, as craftsmen, we carve images, or seek laws to formulate our thoughts, we do it all to save what little we may from the linked, never-ending dance of death. (91)

Therefore we might say that Emily Brontë expressed the essence of all arts in *Wuthering Heights*.

Although what she described is the inside of the minds, it is very different from 'consciousness' which draws attention of some great modern writer, such as Henry James, James Joyce or Virginia Woolf. Rather, something lying in the abyss of our consciousness, or undescrivable energy hidden in our existence—such an inexpressible world is exactly what the author intended in *Wuthering Heights*. The following sentences are originally written for William Blake, but they can be well applied to her.

His philosophy is a series of intuitive flights into the realm of the Absolute, soaring with tranquil and imperious assurance ; His mind works in open defiance of all the normal laws of logic ; His thought... moves and has its being on the extreme edge of the thinkable, or even beyond, just as his eager expression will cross the bounds of the inexpressible. (92)

What she expressed in the novel may safely be called the primitive passion which has not yet risen to the surface of our consciousness.

The most characteristic point in *Wuthering Heights* is its inclusion of the opposite attribute at the same time. It has at once the modern and the primitive aspects. Arnold Kettle also says,

'*Wuthering Heights*... is at once concrete and yet general, local and yet universal'. (93)

If we are right to say 'All being, it seemed, was built on opposites, on division'. (94), the author must have described everything in this dualistic novel.

NOTES

- (1) W. Gérin, *Emily Brontë* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1971) p. 271, Appendix A, Emily Brontë's French devoirs, "Le Papillon".
- (2) Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (The Penguin English Library) p. 118.
- (3) *Ibid.*, p. 122.
- (4) *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- (5) *Ibid.*, p. 131.
- (6) *Ibid.*, p. 132.
- (7) *Ibid.*, p. 202.
- (8) *Ibid.*, p. 137.
- (9) *Ibid.*, p. 185.
- (10) *Ibid.*, pp. 279-280.
- (11) *Ibid.*, p. 346.
- (12) *Ibid.*, p. 197.
- (13) *Ibid.*, p. 198.
- (14) *Ibid.*, p. 204.
- (15) *Ibid.*, p. 320.
- (16) *Ibid.*, p. 243.
- (17) *Ibid.*, pp. 320-321.
- (18) *Ibid.*, p. 321.
- (19) *Ibid.*, p. 121.
- (20) (21) *Ibid.*, p. 151.
- (22) *Ibid.*, p. 197.
- (23) *Ibid.*, p. 198.
- (24) Oscar Wilde, *De Profundis* (The Penguin English Library) p. 126.
- (25) *Ibid.*, p. 131.
- (26) (27) E. Brontë, *op. cit.*, p. 334.
- (28) *Ibid.*, p. 354.
- (29) *Ibid.*, p. 70.
- (30) *Ibid.*, p. 67.
- (31) *Ibid.*, p. 353.
- (32) (33) *Ibid.*, p. 354.
- (34) *Ibid.*, p. 358.
- (35) *Ibid.*, p. 363.
- (36) *Ibid.*, p. 365.
- (37) *Ibid.*, p. 366.
- (38) *Ibid.*, pp. 120-121.
- (39) *Ibid.*, p. 366.
- (40) *Ibid.*, pp. 196-197.
- (41) Romer Wilson, *All Alone* (1928) p.42.

- (42) C. W. Hatfield, *The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë* (Columbia Univ. Press, 1941) p. 41, No. 15, 11.29-32.
- (43) *Ibid.*, p. 134, No. 125, 11.23-24.
- (44) *Ibid.*, p. 94, No. 92, 11.15-16.
- (45) *Ibid.*, p. 92, No. 91, 11.63-64.
- (46) *Ibid.*, p. 95, No. 92, 11.41-44.
- (47) *Ibid.*, p. 31, No. 5, 11.5-6.
- (48) *Ibid.*, p. 63, No. 44, 11.1-2, 1.7, 8.
- (49) *Ibid.*, p. 109, No. 102, 11.23-24.
- (50) *Ibid.*, p. 109, No. 102, 11.11-12.
- (51) *Ibid.*, p. 205, No. 174, 11.1-6.
- (52) *Ibid.*, p. 205, No. 174, 11.7-8, p. 206, 11.11-12
- (53) *Ibid.*, p. 206, No. 174, 11.35-36.
- (54) *Ibid.*, p. 206, No. 174, 1.31.
- (55) *Ibid.*, p. 239, No. 190, 11.77-84.
- (56) *Ibid.*, p. 239, No. 190, 11.85-88.
- (57) *Ibid.*, p. 185, No. 157, 11.27-40.
- (58) *Ibid.*, p. 185, No. 157, 1.24.
- (59) E. Brontë, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-197.
- (60) *Ibid.*, p. 151.
- (61) *Ibid.*, p. 198.
- (62) (63) *Ibid.*, p. 321.
- (64) (65) *Ibid.*, p. 354.
- (66) B. P. Kurtz, *The Pursuit of Death: A Study of Shelley's Poetry* (Folcraft, 1933).
- (67) P. B. Shelley, *Adonais*, 1.370.
- (68) *Ibid.*, 11.343-344, 11.348-349, 1.361.
- (69) *Ibid.*, 1.477.
- (70) C. W. Hatfield, *op. cit.*, p. 243, No. 191, 11.1-4.
- (71) E. Brontë, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
- (72) *Ibid.*, p. 319, p. 320.
- (73) C. W. Hatfield, *op. cit.*, p. 149, 11.41-42.
- (74) E. Brontë, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-121.
- (75) C. W. Hatfield, *op. cit.*, p. 40, No. 15, 1.1 (1837).
- (76) *Ibid.*, p. 209, No. 176, 1.39 (1844).
- (77) *Ibid.*, p. 243, No. 191, 1.5 (1846).
- (78) *Ibid.*, p. 166, No. 149, 11.13-14 (1841).
- (79) *Ibid.*, pp. 183-184, No. 156, 11.71-74 (1843).
- (80) *Ibid.*, p. 220, No. 181, 11.11-14 (1845).
- (81) E. Brontë, *op. cit.*, p. 366.
- (82) (83) (84) *Ibid.*, p. 164.
- (85) W. Gérin, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

- (86) J. Hillis Miller, *The Disappearance of God* (Harvard Univ. Press, 1975) Introduction, pp. 1-14.
- (87) Mary Visik, *The Genesis of Wuthering Heights* (Hong Kong Univ. Press, 1958).
- (88) C. W. Hatfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 222-223, No. 182.
- (89) E. Brontë, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
- (90) Charlotte Brontë, "Biographical Notice of Ellis and Acton Bell", *Wuthering Heights* (The Penguin English Library), pp. 34-35.
- (91) Herman Hesse, *Narziss and Goldmund* (Penguin Modern Classics) p.151.
- (92) Lequouis and Cazamian, *A History of English Literature*, Part II, Book iv, chapter 7.
- (93) Arnold Kettle, *An Introduction to the English Novel* (Hutchinson, 1951) Vol. 1, p. 130.
- (94) H. Hesse, *op. cit.* p.238.

(本稿は1979年12月に学習院大学文学部英米文学科に提出した卒業論文に加筆したものである。)