

Exploring the Gothic Hero and the Cursed Desire in Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights

Lect. Mishaal Harb Mkhailef

Thi-Qar Study Center

Open Educational College- Ministry of Education

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Summary:

This research explores the Gothic elements in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, focusing on the antihero Heathcliff's quest for revenge against his love, Cathy Earnshaw. We set the Gothic novels originating in the 18th century, emphasize moral ambiguity and villain-heroes, blurring the lines between good and evil. They often employ violence, terror, and the supernatural, creating suspense and questioning religious beliefs. *Wuthering Heights* is a Gothic tale, with Mr. Lockwood as the protagonist. We focus on the elements in *Wuthering Heights*, The house's dark exterior and pugnacious interior create a vampire-like atmosphere, possibly due to Heathcliff's brutal treatment. The supernatural presence in Catherine's room adds mystery and intrigue. In the concluding section The research examines the occurrences of Catherine's ghost and their influence on Heathcliff, leading to his resignation and ultimately his death. The study of Gothic novel features in *Wuthering Heights* is a vast topic that deserves more attention.

1. Introduction

The Gothic novel as a genre left distinct feminist figures, characterized by thwarted desire and inappropriate strong feelings directed toward socially forbidden objects. These characters are usually social outcasts who become gradually aware of the plight of their desire, finding themselves irresistibly drawn to the others who are

often, metaphorically or literally, dead, inanimate, cryptic, uncivilized, monstrous, obscene, forbidden in the name of reason, respectability, social conventions, etc. To search the inanimate or already dead objects of their desire, these gothic heroines first have to dismantle the western civilization's symbolic order based on social bonds and sexuality. In so doing, they also disclose this order as fragile, artificial, usually brutal, oppressive, and pernicious to human nature at large. But, in a sense, the heroines remain outside this civilization, engaging in transgressive social roles but always denying full active and conscious subjectivity and agency. They encounter various and enhanced states of existence, possible for excluded and marginal subjects, and act as a medium through which this experience is transmitted to the civilized spectator (FU, 2013).

The gothic female desire, being deprived of the object of its desire and usually experience and knowing this lack, is both deeply and inappropriately enthusiastic. This is reflected in their soiling obscene imaginations and memories, which they are often ashamed of and which society forbids and punishes. Soiling desires begin with the breath of putridness, rot, and decay, followed by anxieties of suffocation, entrapment, choking, lost homes, dissolved and alienated bodies, and displaced genitals gnawed, devoured by rats and filth (Cocker, 2017).

1.1. Background of Gothic Literature

The Gothic genre reworks the conventional Romantic approach to Nature, the past and the powers of the mind, reshaping them into a history of conflict and obsession, oppression and paranoia, incapacity and desire. This form of writing has associated itself with the fields of psychology, psychiatry and what is popularly regarded as the occult. The Gothic gaze, far from producing a transcendence of reality, has culled its object in all its alien complexities, deformities and splendors. It has realized a poetics of excess, curiously recycling Romantic inspiration in a somber culture of non-fulfillment and inverse illumination. Northern Gothic narratives have most

consistently resisted both the idealized representation of Nature and its association with the impetus of sublime creation. These narratives portray, sometimes in obsessive detail, how Nature remorselessly oppresses and murders its savage and aberrant creations. The works of the Brontë sisters constitute an uneven spread between the contours of obsession described here, with Emily's missioning the most bracing (FU, 2013).

This paper continues the exploration of the Gothic hero beyond the field of monstrosity and towards the less predictable query into the economics of desire, poststructuralism and psychoanalysis. It argues that an object of study as defined as the Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* cannot fail to double as a bizarre detective story. Fixated by the concern of desire's entrapment, suffocation and misappropriation since it was first published in 1847, a number of readers have heroically embarked upon the complex investigation of a bizarre mystery. The problem is relatively simple and unequivocal: despite the ferocious counter interpretive practices deployed by a number of would-be demystifiers and exorcists, Heathcliff stubbornly remains the Gothic hero par excellence. *Wuthering Heights* has, to paraphrase Susan Sontag, never been read as a mere novel (Cocker, 2017).

1.3 Definition and Characteristics

Gothic was first used to refer to the medieval art and architectural movement in the twelfth century, developed in France. It was named so to be derogatory, as it was thought to be barbaric. The designation appeared again in the eighteenth century, marking a literary genre started in Britain, the Victorian Gothic. In its long history, the Gothic has been an object of both fascination and vilification, which continues today. The Gothic has affected people's lives in the West to such an extent that it is today part of the popular global culture. In its basic form, Gothic denotes things associated with the Middle Ages viz. baronial castles, diabolical monks, dark forests, and gasping damsels. Though this basic formula is at work in several popular

contemporary goods such as movies and books, the Gothic has evolved beyond these narrow boundaries to become richer and more complex (Deke, 2011).

The term Gothic has been heavily and variously interpreted throughout its history. Until the sixteenth century, the word "Gothic" served as a denominative adjective to denote the tribes of northern Europe that invaded Rome, its barbarizing power and the arts associated with them, such as the already mentioned Medieval art and architecture. From the sixteenth century onward, the word denoted the barbaric peoples and cultures of the north in general. With the rediscovery of classical antiquity in the fifteenth century, in the Age of Discovery, a new philosophical paradigm based on reason and observation emerged, along with new endeavours in geography, astronomy, mathematics and the natural sciences. This ultimately resulted in the Age of Enlightenment, when conquest, colonization and universal empires came to be celebrated.

2. Historical Context

2.1 An Overview of Emily Brontë's Life and Influences

Emily Jane Brontë, a writer and careless novelist, is among the most famous Women in Literature. Like her sisters, Charlotte and Anne, she set her mark on the spirits of her times as an authentically poetic woman with unusual insight and beauty. Being determinedly visionary, fiery, and proud she was always in opposition to established norms. Brontë's dream-music filled her poems with wild wind and whispering trees, making them so hearty, romantic, and wispy. Emily was born on July 30, 1818, in Thornton. She was the fifth child of Patrick Brontë, an Irishman from County Down, and Maria Branwell. In 1820, her family moved to Hathersage where her father was appointed as a Vicar at St. Micahel's Church. At the age of three, Emily lost her mother which only added more pains to submerged sorrows of her father and aunt. Pious and convent educated, the uncle and relatives came armed with education, religion, hypocrisy, and snare and sought to conquer the heart of children with cares.

This left an indelible impression on all the three sisters, who sought to find consolation from the silent nature and took refuge in the 'kitchen' of hope and happy memories (Kelson Jones, 1997).

Like her sisters, Emily's early education was also at home under the supervision of Birstwith. Nanny was an angel and received a motherly love, but her iron grip upon fanciful whims made the home very lonely for all the three sisters. During this time she was only allowed to play croquet in little gardens or to feast and read like a teacher. She therefore devised her own magic mirror of mental space to ripen her race with Aurora, the undergrown visions of love that sublimated fern, start, moon, & fate. Her letters describing the beauty of trees, huts, and cats filled with golden gashes of sunshine radiated the spark of poetry and mysticism. This unquenchable imagination took precedence over all and constituted her heart song. To please the fairy contentment of delighted mother relics, proud low spirits, and cleanliness returned all these messages in golden clouds and elfin thoughts (Alexandra Guimarães, 2014).

2.2. Background and Context

The Brontë family had always held a strong influence over Yorkshire's North Moors, with Charlotte contemplating this "wondrous country" with a sentiment of supreme reverence, loneliness, isolation, and wildness. It is remarkable that, living in the shadow of Haworth Church, the Brontë sisters were the progenitors of three great poets and novelists, whose works are studied in many languages, and who occupy the same majestic eminence in English literature that they did in life. Charlotte and her two sisters outlived all the larger family circle to maintain a deep, abiding attachment to Yorkshire throughout life. Even after having married and moved away, this abiding passion took them either to seek the companionship of each other or to return to life in Haworth after widowhood (Alexandra Guimarães, 2014).

There were romantic legends of the far-off adventures of their French ancestor, a valiant knight who had gone crusading to the Holy Land and who returned to Yorkshire "brother to the King;" of a later ancestor, a priest, who, but for his knotted cord and cross, would have been arrested for treason; and of the isolated harrowing journeyings of Branwell Brontë's grandfather from Ireland to seek indenture as a clergyman. These ancestral myths were an escapade into the velvet glamor of an Arthurian world which lent itself to the romances of the youth of the Brontë children; or a coming back to the tapestry of their Yorkshire moorland surroundings in the semblance of owls and ravens, wrought into the decorations of gray stone chimneys seen against violet hills and in a dark dim sky, which became in their imaginations a trance "full of the uplifted wings of fairies bound for far-off kings"—a bough broken from a fairy grove "to bring down a curse of wars and woes" upon the disturbers (FU, 2013).

2.3 Key Characteristics of Gothic Literature

Gothic literature arose in the second half of the 18th century, at the time of great political and social turbulence within Europe. The most famous Gothic author, Ann Radcliffe, used terror-laden writing to combat an ominous and dangerous present, creating a plot in the past or with references to the past in the setting. Within Gothic literature, different phenomena evoke feelings of fear, anxiety, terror, horror, and repugnance within the reader. The excessive cruelty, degradation, insanity, bloody images, rebellious creeds, and antagonisms within the family context, present in the works of the most renowned Gothic writers, underscore and magnify the picture of the inhuman world, dealing with the dark desires and urges unspeakable in daily life, big shattered family upsurges, irremediable and unmerited penances, and fears and phobias that haunt imaginary past (Romić, 2019).

The original meaning of the term Gothic was 'to do with the Goths', meaning barbaric, frightful, or 'deriving from the Middle Ages'. The term became a synonym

for 'dark', 'grotesque', 'sublime', and 'supernatural'. The first usage of the term Gothic was in Walpole's novel *The Castle of Otranto*. Gothic story was something new that challenged the views of the rationalistic era. It was dark, mysterious, but beautiful at the same time (N. Van Eck, 1992). The most notable characteristic of Gothic literature is its setting, usually an old castle, mansion, estranged area, or some secluded house. The atmosphere is ominous, foreshadowing some scary or violent events connected to the past.

The Gothic genre views 'Gothic' as a legend, being older than history. Gothic is timelessness and individuality in a world of sameness. Gothic is the moonlight flitting between the trees; a sudden, sharp echo in the night; (convent) bells tolling; the unaccountable cessation of sound and motion; youth in danger of eternal torpidity; a croaking bray of ancient birds. The Gothic can be made from plasticine; run away with the spoon and what's more do it with aplomb (FU, 2013). To a poet, it has been power in silence; tempest on the sea; the mystical longing in a shadowy place. The Gothic is left to a handful of ill-disposed Pictish souls.

In a rapidly urbanizing post-Enlightenment world, a sense of urgency enveloped Gothic literary heroes as they grappled with the curse of desire. Deriving from the tradition of tragic desire, the mystique of the urban Gothic stemmed from the temptation of commodities that alienated the beholder and imposed a onerous cycle of consumption/ reification upon him/her (Cocker, 2017). With original emphasis on desire's mental side, Brontë's tale endows *Wuthering Heights* with the perplexing horror of death, decay, and the spectral traces of insatiable longing.

2.4 The Origins of the gothic novel

The term "Gothic tradition" was first used by writer Horace Walpole in the introduction to the second edition of his book *The Castle of Otranto*. It comes from stories written in the second half of the 1600s. Based on Walpole's description of Robert D. Hume says that "terror" is the main way the author gets the reader's

attention and makes them feel uneasy. Baldwin's new style, which he described as a mix of old romantic and modern styles, wasn't very popular at first. But by the 1790s, it became very popular in the British Isles and then spread to Europe and the New United States.

The genre became even more popular during the romantic period, and its features were included in other types of writing, like Victorian novels, including Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. A hundred years later, the Gothic style still remains popular with some readers of fiction. This is probably because its ideas can be used in many different types of stories, no matter the style. Jerrold Hogle believes that people still love Gothic novels because they quietly look at important human feelings and fears. These feelings can be very personal or connected to society and culture.

The idea of sublimity, used by Gothic writers to describe a strong feeling that comes from fear, was changed by Edmund Burke. He took a concept that was originally connected to beauty and gave it a new meaning. Based on what David B. says Morris Burke combined the different earlier ideas into one system. He clearly separated the concepts of the sublime and the beautiful. Burke believes that all parts of what makes something sublime are controlled by one main force. He explains his idea by saying, "Fear is always, in one way or another, the main reason for the sublime" (Morris 1985, p. 45)

In the beginning of "Gothic" stories, E. JClery explains that Burke starts by talking about the problem of indifference, which is a lack of interest caused by being too used to the same things. He suggests that to reach a deep emotional experience, the feeling of "pleasurable pain" is better than just the simple pleasure we get from beauty (Clery 2002, p. 28)

Gothic fiction has not always been popular, but it is still around today. Gothic fiction has changed a lot over its long history and has been organized in different ways to

meet the needs of its time. Gothic fiction allows people to show their inner feelings, especially negative ones, in a powerful way. This is why it has remained popular over time. Fred Botting believes that the gloomy atmosphere in Gothic stories often shows how the past comes back, just like how Gothic characters hide the progress of modern times by showing the darker side of enlightenment in the 20th century. As a result, Gothic literature is linked to bad, unreasonable, and negative ideas and actions. It looks like the Gothic genre focuses on strong feelings, especially fear, which has led it to contain many unsettling ideas over the years. Because of this, the authors had an opportunity to challenge and criticize the authorities, though their approach was mixed and will be explained more later.

In Gothic fiction, feelings are more important than logic and reason. This is a key feature of the genre. At first, the Gothic novel turned away from society's traditional values, which focused on moral rules, and instead embraced chaos and excitement. Because of this, instead of trying to engage readers' logical thinking, Gothic stories focused on making them feel strong emotions. It is not surprising that Gothic fiction has often been seen as a type of escape writing that creates fear (MacAndrew 4). As the genre grew, many authors found and used new ideas, leading to deeper interpretations of Gothic fiction.

Botting believes that Gothic writing is excessive because it breaks the usual rules of beauty and society. It is filled with strong emotions that stretch the limits of real life and stories. Another key feature of Gothic fiction is that having too much often leads to breaking the rules. Gothic creates a fear of things falling apart and often rebuilds the limits it goes against. As a result, Gothic literature's ideas about going too far and breaking rules are unclear because both focus on the limits they try to push against. Botting says that in the 18th century, the rules about right and wrong were set again at the end of the Gothic story. By the 19th century, social, political, and artistic structures were much less predictable. So, gothic stopped using its old way of

creating fear because it had become predictable. Because of this, the characters' feelings and thoughts caused them fear instead of the things happening around them. Their looks showed that they had mental issues. Fear grew because what was familiar and normal suddenly changed. Instead of feeling awe and deep fear, people experienced horror and strangeness. The extra feelings came from inside, and reason couldn't help deal with it. Botting believes that the worries of the 19th century come back in 20th-century Gothic stories, but in a more varied way. Gothic shows fear as something that can be managed and kept in check because it comes from outside ideas and events. As the genre grew, the characters' feelings and thoughts became the main source of fear, making it harder to handle.

Elizabeth MacAndrew says that Gothic writers use this style to share their thoughts about psychological evil, which comes from within the human mind rather than from outside. She thinks that the main symbols in Gothic fiction are like allegories because the scary elements in the stories represent something else, not just the things that create the fear. She says that the only reason the monsters in Gothic stories are scary is that they are creations of our imagination, and they help us explore the hidden parts of our minds. MacAndrew's definition treats fear as something inside our minds, which is similar to how fear is shown in modern Gothic stories.

2.5 The sublime Landscape

The reader's connection to Wuthering Heights is kept strong by taking them away from their cozy life and placing them in the empty moors of Northern England. The scenery makes people feel alone and trapped. This feeling starts on the first page when Mr. Lockwood says, "I don't think I could have found a place in all of England that is so far away from the busy world. " This feeling is made stronger because the reader stays in the moors the whole time they are with Mr. Lockwood knows the way to the outside world, but he never goes that way. When the story's characters

leave, the reader is left waiting for them to come back or to hear if they have died (Watson 1949, p. 100). "

Additionally, by giving the reader a clear image of vast, open moorlands, Brontë creates a sense of danger. Lockwood is scared of traveling through the moors because they seem dangerous. He highlights how strangers could get hurt by falling into deep pits or drowning in the swamps. The reader felt scared and anxious the whole time because of the strong weather and the rough landscape. So, changes in the weather usually mean something important is happening in the story. The night before Old Mr. When Earnshaw dies, Brontë uses nature's forces to predict a bloody change. A strong wind blew hard around the house and howled in the chimney, as Nelly Dean describes it. Heathcliff is going to be kicked out because Hindley has come back to take charge of the family. A powerful storm hits as Heathcliff leaves Wuthering Heights. He feels like a lowly farm worker and not good enough to be Catherine's husband. The scene is made more dramatic by the statement that it was a really dark summer evening, and the storm came crashing over the Heights with full force. The breakup between the lovers is highlighted by strong wind and thunder that break a tree in half. The tree falls on the roof, causing stones and ash to fall into the kitchen fire. Also, the details are used to show the feelings around Heathcliff and Catherine's deaths. After Catherine died, the weather changed and snow fell, stopping summer from starting for a while. stopping the new flowers from growing and making the birds quiet. But the night before Heathcliff dies, it rains heavily all night, soaking the bed where he passes away, "his face and throat were wet with rain. " (Brontë 2009, p. 298)Gothic fiction often uses special elements to show changes in the story's mood. These elements also hint at the idea that the spirits of those who have died might be watching over the living.

2.6 The Supernatural Effect

At the beginning of *Wuthering Heights*, Brontë hints that strange things might be happening. The narrator, Lockwood, ends up staying the night at *Wuthering Heights* because it unexpectedly snows. Lockwood wakes up from a scary dream where he was stuck in Catherine's old room. He hears tree branches hitting against his window. When he tries to reach out to cut off the limb, he actually ends up holding the hands of Catherine Linton's ghost. Catherine says she has felt lost and alone for twenty years and is wandering in the fields.

Brontë often talks about how the people in *Wuthering Heights* believe that ghosts are real. However, she also allows the reader to wonder if what they experience is just leftover from Lockwood's dream. This is clear when Hareton wouldn't go with Lockwood to Thrushcross Grange, and the younger Catherine said, "I hope the ghost will haunt you." Heathcliff admits to Nelly that he almost dug up Catherine after she died because he felt her spirit around him on the moors. So he understood that her spirit was not buried but was still on the earth, and ever since then, he can feel her presence. Also, before he dies, Heathcliff tells Nelly that if she doesn't bury him next to Catherine, she will find out that "the dead are not gone."

More strange events happen after Heathcliff dies. For example, Joseph says he sees Heathcliff and Catherine walking together on the moors during rainy nights. Nelly meets a young shepherd who shares his worry about crossing the moors because he has seen the ghosts of the couple "under Nab." Nelly admits that she is unsure about believing in such "nonsense," but she still doesn't want to be alone or wander the moors at night. While Brontë suggests that supernatural events might happen in the story, the ghosts are linked to *Wuthering Heights*, which ends up deserted except for Joseph. He decides to stay in his room while the rest of the house will be closed up, "for any ghosts that want to live there," as Lockwood says. In Lockwood's idea, the outsider helps share possible supernatural events with the reader, making them feel more real. So, even though Lockwood doubts if his meeting

with Catherine's ghost is real or just a dream, his final visit to Wuthering Heights shows that by the end of the story, he truly believes in it.

2.7 The Antiquated Castle

The story's name comes from the "ancient castle," which towers over the surrounding area. Its significance as the primary location for the majority of the story's action makes it seem almost like a real, breathing object that reflects the awful characteristics of those who live there. Wuthering Heights is a centuries-old farmhouse that is isolated among the growing moorlands; the name itself alludes to the home's vulnerability to the elements. Lockwood observes that the grass surrounding the house is growing wild and that "cattle are the only hedge-cutters," giving the impression that the mansion has been neglected .

Lockwood describes Wuthering Heights as a home that is clearly intended to keep outsiders out. He explains that the name "Wuthering" is an important local word that describes the wild and stormy weather the place often experiences. They must have fresh, cool air up there all the time. You can tell how strong the north wind is by the way some small, crooked fir trees lean at the end of the house. There's also a group of thin thorn trees all reaching in the same direction, as if they're begging for sunlight. The architect planned well and made the building strong. The windows are small and placed deep in the walls, and the corners are protected with big stones sticking out.

The description creates a strong picture of a closed-off area that feels dark and unfriendly. The outside of the house is rough, with sharp edges and plants that don't get much sunlight, which makes the place seem gloomy. The unfriendly feeling is even stronger because of the locked gates and barred doors. These not only keep people out but also make the house feel like a prison for the people living there. Like its tough outside, the inside of the house feels just as unfriendly because of its aggressive people and dogs that are "not pets. " This is shown clearly when

Lockwood first visits. He gets attacked by the dogs at the house, and then Heathcliff makes fun of him, saying the dogs would have ignored him if he hadn't been holding onto something.

When Lockwood visits Wuthering Heights, he realizes that the place feels dark and gloomy, mostly because of Heathcliff. Heathcliff's harsh behavior saps the energy of everyone living there, making the atmosphere feel bitter and unfriendly, which Lockwood also experiences. When he experiences something strange in Catherine's old room during the snowstorm, and then hears Heathcliff crying and asking for Catherine to come back, it makes Lockwood feel really confused, just like anyone else would.

Lockwood's visits to Wuthering Heights start the story and give readers the outside view they need to understand what's happening. They also make readers curious about the people living there and how everything happened. Brontë introduces another narrator, Nelly Dean, who is just as "normal" as Lockwood. Nelly is the housekeeper, and she tells Lockwood about the story of the house where the main character, Heathcliff, grew up.

2.8 The Villain-Protagonist

Heathcliff left the moors because Catherine left him, and he comes back three years later looking very proud. It looks like he has made money, which makes him seem more mysterious. Heathcliff comes back looking better on the outside, but he still has the same angry and harsh nature inside. He starts causing a lot of trouble for everyone he thinks has hurt him. The story shows how harshly Heathcliff takes revenge on Hindley, Isabella, and their children from Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. However, Brontë keeps reminding us that Heathcliff is angry because he was betrayed. He is not accepted in the fancy place of Thrushcross Grange and has to deal with the idea that part of him belongs to someone else.

The second generation, which some people have doubted was needed for the story, is important for Heathcliff to reach his goal of getting the social status he thinks keeps him away from Catherine. Because of his anger towards the world that led to losing his love, he needs to own both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. He finally manages to do this, but only with the next generation. By gaining financial control over Hindley, he is able to ensure it. The ownership of Wuthering Heights and Hindley's son, Hareton. When Hindley died, Heathcliff said, "Now, my good boy, you belong to me. Let's see if one tree can grow as bent as another when the same wind blows on it. " He wants to get revenge, so he plans for Hareton to go through the same suffering he experienced.

She often creates situations where the man's pain is clear, haunted by the memory of someone he could never be with. As his time of anger is ending, his talks with Nelly reveal how much he wants to be with Catherine again. He can't stop thinking about her; he sees her everywhere, in "every cloud, in every tree. "

When he understands that his journey is almost over and he will soon be with Catherine, he stops being cruel. This leads to a happier ending, allowing Catherine Linton and Hareton to come together. Their coming together gives the ending that Heathcliff and Catherine should have had. In Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff is the main character and also the bad guy in the story. He not only experiences things himself, but he also causes things to happen and makes other people go through difficulties. With his strength, he controls what happens in the story, and his intense feelings and evil power surprise and impress the reader. Heathcliff takes a story that could have been a messy jumble and turns it into a clear and complete tale, going from a scary start to a calm ending (Watson 1949, p. 89)

Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights has all the elements needed for a Gothic novel. From the very beginning, the reader is taken to the moors, a place that feels cut off from the outside world, and stays there for the entire story. He meets storytellers

who see life like he does, and they show him a world filled with love, hate, revenge, and strange events that will scare and surprise him. It also makes him curious about how things got to be this way.

Watson said that Charlotte Brontë, her sister, didn't fully understand the story but still felt its strength. She said that readers rarely get pure enjoyment because even happy moments are overshadowed by dark thoughts. Each page is filled with a kind of strong feeling about right and wrong.

Even though Heathcliff's desire for revenge creates a frightening mood and ruins the lives of those around him, readers can still understand why he acts this way. In her story, Brontë explains the pain that Heathcliff feels in different ways. She does not judge him for the harm he causes to himself and other people. The strong impact of Gothic literature comes from its focus on social and cultural aspects of life (Hogle 2008, p. 4) Looking at Wuthering Heights as just a Gothic love story would leave it out.

Like any kind of research on a social issue (Watson 1949, p. 88) Brontë's stories definitely have enough Gothic features to be called Gothic. However, if we look closer, we can see that she is also speaking about important social issues. To understand the themes in Emily Brontë's Gothic novel, it's important to look at her own views on life.

3. Exploring Gothic as a Subgenre in Literature

Gothic (sub)genre known and loved today, with all the tropes closely associated with it, such as castles, moldering corpses, storms, and gloomy moors. It was in the later part of the elegant, refined, and decorous eighteenth century that a very different set of social and cultural preoccupations came to the fore; and by the 1790s, there was unprecedented public interest in dark, violent and disturbing themes (Bloom, 2020). This set of concerns was satisfied by the emergence of a new genre now known as the Gothic, which flourished across literature and the visual arts. The term initially

applied to romance novels set in medieval buildings (J. Wisley, 2013). These novels were huge bestsellers, with Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* claiming to be a translation of an ancient text by an Italian author, something he repeated in later editions. The literary Gothic expanded and evolved, as did other gothic forms, including the picturesque landscape garden, painting, poetry, and architecture.

An enormous body of literature emerged in close partnership with an explosive growth of gothic architecture, ranging through anecdotes, letters, verse epistles, mementoes, travelogues, extensive faux histories, and—notably—hundreds of ghost stories in periodicals. Artists such as J. M. W. Turner explored the sublime terrors of storms, house fires, and ill-fated shipwrecks on glass, canvas, and paper, while others such as Thomas Girtin pictured the horror of ruined buildings dating back to the dissolutions. Poets such as Robert Blair, William Blake, George Crabbe, and John Byrom investigated extremes of emotional states in meditations on death, the grave, and decay. Painters, poets, architects, and artists were examined, exposed, and condemned by the top aristocracy, the educated middle classes, and the grave moralists.

3.1 Heathcliff: The Complex Protagonist as a Gothic Hero

Heathcliff is one of the most complex and interesting protagonists within Gothic literature. He has often been interpreted as a villain or as an antihero, but his character is much deeper than such simplistic representations. His journey from a harsh, revengeful character to a pensive, sad one demonstrates that, despite social conventions being stumbling blocks of his character, he eventually accepts his own fate through death and transcendence (Villar Rodríguez, 2016). In this respect, and likewise Brontë's novel, there are many elements that suggest that Heathcliff could be regarded as a tragic hero who, in accordance with Gothic tradition, strides the border line between nightmare and romance, a fate even stronger than tragic. Heathcliff overleaps exotic limits becoming half-demon and therefore condemning

himself to eternal suffering. Even despising his own transcendent capabilities, his longing moves him recklessly to seek reunion with Catherine even when it is in vain, Other aspects of Gothic literature, especially nature's defiance of the supernatural, are also essential in the understanding of Heathcliff's character and fate within Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff resembles a wild gale, running with rage through the wild moors and the house that shares his name, no matter whether brimming with happiness or deeply grieving. Throughout the majority of the novel, Brontë presents Heathcliff with a lurking mystique, even making him resemble an Other within English society.

Heathcliff's longing sets a powerful energy trail full of wildness that overwhelms the rest of the society and eventually ruptures it (Pauković, 2016). It is not until the very end of the novel that Brontë sheds light on his nature. Quite paradoxically, in becoming simpler Heathcliff becomes also more complex. While there are still some unsolved enigmas surrounding him, others are explained to form a much more elaborated character, especially in its tragic dimension. Heathcliff's love for Catherine Linton Earnshaw drives him mad with rage and despair to such an extent that Brontë's imagery portrays him as a kind of tragic knight forever doomed to live a nightmare, a dark moor-conditioned battle field where nothing can survive. The phenomenon of his transformation from hatred and revenge to the acceptance of his own tragic fate is an element that contributes to describe his character as a tragic hero. In this respect, Brontë presents Heathcliff for the first time endowed with transcendental capabilities symbolic of a tragic hero.

3.2 The Gothic Imagination: Exploring Fear and Terror

The Gothic novel is a prevalent and popular genre, first emerging during the late 18th century. It has, in many ways, become a national genre, with its most famous early examples hailing from England. The defining characteristics of the Gothic novel are widely acknowledged and widely perceived. Consequently, the genre is readily

identifiable, having an immediate idea of what constitutes a narrative in the Gothic mode. The Gothic novel is characterized by several established features, many of which were apparently the creations of Horace Walpole himself, or at least made fashionable by him. The predominant and most obvious characteristic is an emphasis on fear: stories in the Gothic mode are overtly affective in intent, concerned both with eliciting as well as portraying extremes of emotion, most centrally fear, horror, and terror (Neilson, 2008). In the Gothic novel, fear is both the object of representation and its motivating power. Meaning people and events to be feared are depicted: as a kind of, second nature, perceived as distanced and spectatorial objects. At the same time, the narrative itself actively seeks to generate fear: as an act of, first nature, perceived as implicated and participatory experience. Importantly, however, the genres key emotion has a critical inflection, being suggestive of social anxieties regarding a particular historical moment, the fears articulated therein being intimately connected to a collective consciousness.

In addition, something more than an emphatic interest in fear alone is common to Gothic narratives. Also generally found is a prominent use of the supernatural, a setting in an archaic or exotic locale, an epistolary or framed narrative structure, the depiction of violence, madness, and passion, melodramatic hyperbole, the revolution of social and sexual hierarchies, the portrayal of women and stereotyped characters/character types, as well as narrative and thematic features specific to each of the key masculinist and feminist sub-genres (Bloom, 2020). In terms of the latter there is, for example, the presence of at least a fetishization of desire in the male Gothic, and outrage against it in the female Gothic. There is, consequently, a prominent concern with, among other things, social transgressiveness manifest in a desire to return to a pastoral idyll, a fear of enclosure or imprisonment, and the maintenance of a father, King, or God. In the female Gothic, in contrast,

imprisonment becomes fear of social and sexual domination and the maintenance of the father, God, or King becomes desire to return to subjects as children.

3.3 The Symbolism of the Moors and the House in Wuthering Heights

The moors and house in Wuthering Heights are symbols of man's complicated relationship to nature. The moors are raw, savage, untamed nature where creatures and men alike fight for survival. It is a place of freedom from Victorian convention. Brooding on the moors, Heathcliff and Cathy escape the genteel constraints of Thrushcross Grange. In their quest for a pure state of love, they are drawn to the moors. In their state of otherness, they parallel the natural world around them. But dwelling in paradise comes at a cost. Nature, stripped to its savage core, teaches a hardness that both Heathcliff and Cathy cannot survive (Alexandra Guimarães, 2014). The house is a contrasting symbol of domesticated nature. Once a humble abode, the house is built up into a castle, a seat of power and privilege. Similarly, the inhabitants gradually change from good to evil. This change becomes dramatic in Heathcliff when he is thrust into power, and the house comes to symbolize oppression, confinement, and abuse. Together, the symbols of the moors and the house reflect the inevitable tragedy of man's loss of innocence.

Heathcliff's rebellious spirit and savage isolation are heightened by the house's possession of Cathy and her submission to Linton's gentility. His decision to seek revenge on the Lintons leads to the corruption of innocent souls and the escalation of cruelty and hatred. Heathcliff's obsessive pursuit of Cathy spurs anxious terrors and material desires, resulting in all-consuming spiritual destruction (HUI, 2015).

3.4 Comparative Analysis with Other Gothic Works

The Gothic genre has long held a fascination for readers and critics alike. Whether by virtue of its dark castles, mysterious heroes, persecuted heroines, supernatural horrors, or sweaty thrillers, something in the Gothic has provoked a diverse and committed readership. Consider the sheer volume of Gothic literature: there are over

900 published works in the early Gothic genre alone (N. Van Eck, 1992). What is significant, however, is the nature and implications of the Gothic's popular success. Grandeyar argues for a region of post-Enlightenment literature in which the Gothic notion of heroism is both feasible and noble. Unlike any critique of the trickster or villain tradition, however, no reading seems available to indicate whether it succeeds or fails. The complex relationship between the Gothic hero/villain and its audience in the early Gothic is the larger concern of this investigation. The goal is threefold: first, to lay out the terms of the Gothic herOn/hero tradition, second to trace the progression of textual exchanges between this tradition and its audience, and third to uncover a dialectic between their triumphs and failures.

The Gothic hero/villain appears in a familial form. Indeed, transhistorically, Gothic heroes in general possess great flexibility in this domain. Certainly some are cast in the villain mold, whilst others are transformed into martyrs. That said, the very capacities of the female Gothic hero doom her to victimization. Likewise, actors playing such contrived Gothic anti-heroes as Herbert and Manfred reap tragic fates. From this, it follows that the Gothic hero MUST see familial eyes and thus plot a vengeance play against the others of his clan. Gothic heroes are, by necessity, familial villains. The ensuing Gothic herOn/hero tradition reinforces this premise (L. Horton, 2016). Nevertheless, the debate whether familial devolution constitutes an effective means to this end persists, difficult if not impossible to sort. How the Gothic hero fades in its struggle against quotidian villainy, only to reform into a formidable progenitor of alternatives is, at its best, hazy.

3.5 The Enduring Appeal of the Gothic Hero and Cursed Desire in Wuthering Heights

The curiosity and excitement about the loves and lives of unusual characters can be explored through Emily Brontë's gothic masterpiece Wuthering Heights, replete with passionate romance, music and death. A typical Brontë heroine, Catherine Earnshaw, is vivacious, bold, and wild, and her love with Heathcliff is overpowering and

consuming. It is the love of a lifetime that cannot be fulfilled—not among mortals on this earth. At last, a romantic notion of love arises: the oneness of souls that will unite. The story rattles on amidst the most gothic and ugly imagery. However, much about man's psyche remains the same. Its link with exotic religion is explored as a yearning for eternal bliss among the damp graveyards of this earth.

Since its publication, *Wuthering Heights* has kindled much emotional hue and cry. A thrilling narrative studded with passion and death, it portrays the world that is unthinkable, yet remarkably familiar. Stifling sinewy passions tragically released at the intrusions of aristocratic society, love as slavery in an ancient world of natural gods, the extinction of the earthly world—these dazzling and wild images lend Brontë's work a marvelous and compelling unreality. Particularly fascinating is the theme of doomed love—the love of a princess with wings too beautiful for the earth; destined to be undone by shadows and darkness of the earth, and spiraling desire wrecking joy.

3.6 Conclusions

When Horace Walpole wrote the first "Gothic" story about 250 years ago, he had no idea that he was starting a new style that would lead to many famous books in literature.

Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* is now considered a classic. It started a style of writing that began with Walpole. People continue to be fascinated by it, and every time you read it, you can find a new way to look at the story. Since it has been placed in different categories since it was published, it is clear that it fits within the Gothic style of literature, offering fresh feelings of fear and awe with every reading. The story has many typical Gothic features, like isolation, ghosts, and wild storms. However, the real deeper message is hidden behind these obvious Gothic elements, almost as if it's trying to keep the reader from recognizing the true horror that Emily Brontë wanted to talk about.

In the story, the characters, especially Heathcliff, are often described using animal words to show how wild he is. However, Brontë had a different idea in mind when creating one of the most famous evil characters in English literature. Heathcliff is seen as the best example of what humans really are. He might be the only one who can change her worries about her natural world being taken over by the more "civilized" people in her society. Heathcliff, by getting rid of his "stock" in a very harsh way, shows the true nature of people. He struggles against the rules of society that try to control him. While Brontë might have wanted him to win, she was both a nature lover and a realist.

The end of the story shows how real life is stronger than Emily Brontë's imaginative ideas. Bringing only sadness, the true nature of humanity has declined, making the reader think about future generations. As Cathy and Hareton leave the self-sufficient life at Wuthering Heights for the unhealthy environment of Thrushcross Grange, it looks like the future will just bring kids who are like Edgar and Isabella Linton, walking little dogs together. The real greatness of Emily Brontë's Gothic story isn't just in the typical Gothic elements, but in her idea of people losing their connection to nature.

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استكشاف البطل المرعب والرغبة الملعونة في مرتفعات ويزدينغ لإيميلي برونوت

م . مشعل حرب مخيلف

مركز ذي قار الدراسي

الكلية التربوية المفتوحة - وزارة التربية



mishaalrawan@gmail.com

الكلمات المفتاحية: الرعب، الرعب التقليدي، الخيال، النوع الرعب، البطل الشرير، الشبح

الملخص:

يستكشف هذا البحث العناصر المربعة في مرتفعات ويزدينغ لإيميلي برونوتي ، مع التركيز على سعي هيثكليف ضد البطل للانتقام من حبه ، كاثي إيرنشو. وضعنا الروايات المربعة التي نشأت في القرن الـ 18 ، والتأكيد على الغموض الأخلاقي والأبطال الشريرين ، وعدم وضوح الخطوط الفاصلة بين الخير والشر. غالباً ما يستخدمون العنف والإرهاب وما هو خارق للطبيعة ، مما يخلق التشويق والتشكيك في المعتقدات الدينية. مرتفعات ويزدينغ هي قصة مربعة، مع السيد لوكوود كبطل الرواية. نحن نركز على العناصر الموجودة في مرتفعات ويزدينغ ، حيث يخلق المظهر الخارجي المظلم للمنزل والداخلية المشاكسة جوا يشبه مصاصي الدماء ، ربما بسبب معاملة هيثكليف الوحشية. يضيف الوجود الخارق للطبيعة في غرفة كاثرين الغموض والمكائد. في القسم الختامي ، يفحص البحث أحداث شبح كاثرين وتأثيرها على هيثكليف ، مما أدى إلى استقالته ووفاته في النهاية. دراسة ميزات الرواية المربعة في مرتفعات ويزدينغ هو موضوع واسع يستحق المزيد من الاهتمام.