

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Pictorial View of Victorian Society

The Victorian Period, the years between 1837 and 1901 named after the great Queen Victoria, was a time of immense change. The period witnessed the continuation of industrialization, along with its accompanying changes in the way of life for the working classes and many middle classes. At the same time, Britain became more crowded as the population doubled between 1801 and 1851 to over twenty million people. The period was more significant in terms of the transformation of the former conception of the nature and meaning of the world and life and ways of thinking. The Industrial Revolution brought huge changes in life and perspectives of looking at the things and meaning. The Industrial Revolution involved major shifts in the organization of society and gradually also in the perception of how it was structured. It was hierarchical society in which superior status depended on inherited rank, ownership of land or practice of certain professions.

Major changes according to Karl Marx (1818 – 1883) are a result of new forces of production. He used the change from feudal society run by the noblemen, clergy, and commoners and based upon heredity. So there was little movement within the system. Feudalism was based upon ownership of the land. The commoners who worked in the land had to give part of their production to the landowners; in return, the landowners protected them from rival noblemen. Therefore, the change between this system and capitalism resulted in contradictions. For example, capitalism is based upon wage labor, whereas feudalism was based upon mutual obligations. The new order, capitalism took over, it swept out the old social relationships of feudalism and replaced them with the new. Marx called this a new Epoch.

Eventually, Marx believed there would be a final Epoch where a communistic or socialist society would take over from capitalism. This will not be the result of a new force of production, but will get rid of the contradictions that so far characterized change between Epochs. Collective production would remain but ownership would change dramatically. Instead of the Bourgeoisie, owning the factors of production ownership will be by all. Members would share wealth that their labor produces. This new infrastructure would not be based upon exploitation and contradictions, instead a new final epoch would be born, one, which would have no need to change. It would thus result in the end of history.

Karl Marx was concerned with the forces of history, and his view of history was that it is progressive and, to an extent, inevitable. He adds a further insight to our better understanding:

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guide-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-

masters, journey-men, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again subordinate gradation. (Creation of Knowledge 21)

For Marxists, social reality has a definite shape. This shape is found in history, which Marxists see as a series of struggle between antagonistic social classes and the types of economic productions they engaged in. The shape is also found in any given moment of society, because particular class relationships and particular political, cultural and social institutions are related to the system of economic production in a determinate way. Both the structure of history and structure of society are what Marx and Engels called “dialectical,” a term which draws attention to the dynamic and opposite forces at work within them. The “dialectical” also refers to a method by which history and society can be analyzed in order to reveal the true relationship between their component parts.

Lois Tyson, associate professor of English at Grand Valley State University, makes an account on Marxist perspective:

From a Marxist perspective, differences in socioeconomic class divide people in ways that are much more significant than do differences in religion, race, ethnicity, and gender. For the real battle lines are drawn, to put the matter simply, between the “haves” and the “have-nots,” between the bourgeoisie - those who control the world’s natural, economic, and human resources - and the proletariat, the majority of the global population who live in substandard conditions and who have always performed the manual labor - the mining, the factory work, the ditch-digging, the railroad-building - that fills the coffers of the rich. Unfortunately, the proletariats are often the last to recognize this fact; they usually permit differences in religion, race, ethnicity, and gender

to separate them into warring factions that accomplish little or no social change. Few Marxists today believe, as Marx did, that the proletariat will one day spontaneously develop the class consciousness needed to rise up in violent revolution against their oppressors and create a classless society. (50-51)

One of the basic characteristics of the period was nearly impossible to run a house without at least a servant. Sometimes people showed off by having more servants than they needed and taken servants were a sign of wealth. Servants in a big house were divided in two groups, indoor and outdoor. The outdoor servants were the coachman, groom, gardener and gamekeeper. Where as indoor servants consisted of butler, housekeeper, maid and footman.

As manufacturing industry, commerce, and communication developed from 1775 onwards, the occupation and location of individuals changed: in 1801, when the first national census took place, some more two-third of population lived and worked in the countryside, and rest in towns. By the end of the century these figures were reversed; the urban centers, where labors increasingly lived, were clustered closed to the factories, mills, and mines where they worked but employers and employees no longer had direct personal contact as a matter of necessity. Society became organized as a structure with groups of those engaged in the same work as its basic unit: workers, entrepreneurs and professionals, and landowners. By the early Nineteenth Century a new terminology was used to indicate upper, middle, and lower classes according to their professions, economic status and social prestige.

Physical arrangement spelt out social status: types of clothing, the three different classes of accommodation on trains, saloon bars for the lower middle class public (or working-class) bars in public houses. Even in churches, rented pews in

prominent positions cut off the wealthier from the free seats of those who could not afford to rent. The 1851 census for England and Wales suggested that one reason why 'the laboring classes' disliked going to church was the maintenance of those distinctions by which they are kept separate as a class from the above them. The census makers suggested that the working-classes associated churchgoing with 'having pressed upon their notice some memento of inferiority' and the census itself seems to accept that this 'superiority' and 'inferiority' was real, not just perceived.

The condition of the working-class resembled those in the account of Manchester given by Friedrich Engels:

These workers have no property whatever of their own, and live wholly upon wages, which usually go from hand to mouth. Society composed wholly of atoms, does not trouble itself about them... the dwellings of the workers are everywhere badly ventilated, damp and unwholesome. (V. Kiernan 108)

The details that Engels and other provide are reinforced by accounts of privation in 142 working-class autobiographies written between 1790 and 1850. William Thom, a weaver such as those who worked in Haworth, gives a graphic picture of his family at 11 o'clock one morning during one of the hard times, which so frequently occurred in the first half of the Nineteenth Century:

The four children are still asleep. There is a bedcover hung before the window, to keep all within as much like night as possible; and the mother sits beside the beds of her children, to lull them back to sleep where any shows an inclination to awake. For this, there is a cause, for our weekly five-shilling have not come as expected, and the only food in the house consists of a handful of oatmeal saved from the supper of

last night. Our fuel is also exhausted. My wife and I were conversing in sunken whispers about making an attempt to cook the handful of meal. (David Vincent 52-3)

The introduction of the steam railway and the steamship, at the beginning of the period, in place of the lumbering stagecoach and sailing vessel, broke up the old stagnant and stationary habits of life and increased the amount of travel. The discovery of the electronic telegraph in 1844 brought almost every important part of Europe. The development of the modern newspaper out of few feeble sheets of 1825 carried full accounts of the whole world. The first Reform Bill, of 1832, forced on Parliament by popular pressure, extended the right of voting to men of the middle class, and the subsequent bill of 1867 and 1885 made it universal for men. Meanwhile the House of Common slowly asserted itself against the hereditary House of Lords, and thus England became the most truly Democratic nation.

There was little chance for working classes to improve their circumstances by education though, as the autobiographies indicate; there were some notable autodidacts among working men. These self-improvers gradually found reading matter through mechanics institutes, Sunday school libraries, and religious - tract societies. In his *Autobiography of an Artisan* (1847), Christopher Thomson, born in Yorkshire in 1799 writes his youth that “My great wants was books,” since “cheap literature was not then, as now, to be found in every out-o-the-way hooking.” At about the same time, in her novel *Mary Barton* (1848), Elizabeth Gaskell gives a fictional account of the self-improving weaver Job Legh, one of a class of working men who may yet claim kindred with all the noble names that science recognizes. She supports this with a comment apparently drawn from her own experience in Manchester where she lived:

In the neighborhood of Oldham there are weavers, common hand-loom weavers, who throw the shuttle with unceasing sound, though Newton's 'Principia' lie open on the loom, to be snatched at in work hours, but received over in meal times, or at night. Mathematical problems are received with interest, and studied with absorbing attention by many a broad-spoken common-looking factory-hand.

(Ch. 5)

In the period women were second-class people, hardly to be called citizen since none of them was able to vote. Women's functions were restricted. The way that society was structured left few options for women and built perceived inferiority into the system, with many articles and conduct books to reinforce this characterization of women's nature, which frequently seemed the norm even for the women themselves. When women did achieve what was seen, as their main purpose-marriage-they become not first-class persons but non-persons. The classic statement of a married women's legal status, was made by Sir William Blackstone in 1760s:

By marriage the husband and wife is one person in law: that is the very being of legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least is corporate and consolidated into that of the husband: under whose wing, protection, she performs everything: and is therefore called in our law-French *feme covert*. (47)

In this period, the conditions of women were so miserable. The emancipation of women had become the chief motto most of the women writers, politician, aristocrats as well as workers. Women had to live an element and forbearing life. Although the emancipation was a great challenge, they struggled perpetually for

bringing the success. The real burden of women's emancipation was highlighted in an eloquent passage from Florence Nightingale's autobiographical essay *Cassandra*:

Give us back suffering we cry to Heaven in our heart suffering rather than indifferent-for out of suffering may come the cure. Better to have pain than paralysis. A hundred struggle and drown in the breakers. One discovers a new world. (Rice 145)

Women, in those days, were considered as mere showpieces. They weren't allowed to have their independent existence. In the past, women were taken commodity which could be sold and bought in the open market Klein says:

The Parish officer to Effingham prevailed on cook to sell his wife. The master of the workhouse Chippen was directed to take the woman to Croydon market and there she was sold to John Earl for the sum of one shilling which had been given to Earl for the purchase. (519)

The status of women was gradually improved as the time passed. Women started to work in different field such agriculture, education and so on. Before the agricultural and industrial revolution, there was hardly any job that was not done by women. Gradually their canvas of work increased and they started working in mines, factories, and shops as well as in the workshops and in their homes. Women were now busy assisting their men replacing them in their absence or after their death or even contributing to the family income. Still women were considered as subsidiary to men. Marriage was increasingly felt to be a burden for the men. Henceforth, the endeavor to reinstate women in the economic process has continued from then up to the present day.

In the Victorian Era, the position of women less or more remained the same. With the coming of the Industrial Revolution and technical inventions, domestic

industries declined which again deeply affected women. But with the beginning of the Industrial Revolution the new upper and middle class flourished more and more.

Viola Klein in her *The Historical Background* says, "A man's prestige required that his wife and daughters didn't do any profitable work. The education of girl's was aimed at producing accomplished ladies, not educated woman." (524)

A new dawn of women's emancipation could be seen in the social background; the time passed on the women started claiming political freedom, the right to work as well as the right to equality and freedom. The women now struggle against the male domination. Women now acquired a sense of 'sin' - a sin of hearing the injustice of man, and there evolved a number of female writers who were pioneer like Jane Austin, George Eliot, and Bronte sisters of the time, contributed a lot against the domination of women in the society. The educated society could not avoid the demand of the women writers regarding the equality between the sexes.

The consequences of this non-existence of married women in law were crippling. They could not litigate except through a male person who existed in law, such as a father or brother. Legal separation had to be sought by a wife in this indirect way and in the early 1839 to allow claim for children under 7. Nor had she any control over money previously hers or earned during the marriage unless a special legal settlement had been made before the marriage.

The disparities prevailed in the Victorian Society are successfully depicted by the writers of the society. As a Victorian writer Emily Bronte experienced every change of the period. Her works truly represented the contemporary time. Her *Wuthering Heights* aptly captures the confrontation of social tumult in terms of attitude to life and things, an attitude to the old and new values of the time.

In the Victorian Era, social class was not solely dependent upon the amount of money a person had; rather, the source of income, birth, and family connections played a major role in determining one's position in society. And, significantly, most people accepted their place in the hierarchy. In addition to money, manners, speech, clothing, education, and values revealed a person's class. The three main classes were the elite class, the middle class, and the working class. Further divisions existed within these three class distinctions.

The characters in *Wuthering Heights* demonstrate the nature of this class-structured society. The Lintons were the most elite family in the novel, and Thrushcross Grange was a superior property to Wuthering Heights, yet they were not members of the upper crust of society; rather, they were the professional middle classes.

Although Wuthering Heights was a farmhouse, the Earnshaws were not members of the working class because they were landowners who had servants. Their station in society was below the Lintons but not significantly below. Nelly, a servant of the Earnshaws, represents the lower middle class - those who worked non-manual labor. Servants were superior to manual laborers, which explain the problems created by Heathcliff.

Heathcliff is an orphan; therefore, his station is below everyone else in *Wuthering Heights*. It was unheard of to raise someone from the working class as a member of the middle-to-upper middle class. Even Nelly, who was raised with the Earnshaw children, understood her place below her childhood friends. When Mr. Earnshaw elevates the status of Heathcliff, eventually favoring him to his own son, this goes against societal norms.

This combination of elevation and usurpation is why Hindley returns Heathcliff to his previous low station after the death of Mr. Earnshaw, and that is why Heathcliff relishes in the fact that Hindley's son Hareton is reduced to the level of a common, uneducated laborer. And social class must be the reason Catherine marries Edgar; she is attracted to the social comforts he can supply her. No other plausible explanation exists. Catherine naively thinks she can marry Edgar and then use her position and his money to assist Heathcliff, but that would never happen.

When Heathcliff returns, having money is not enough for Edgar to consider him a part of acceptable society. Heathcliff uses his role as the outcast to encourage Isabella's infatuation. The feelings that both Catherine and Isabella have for Heathcliff, the common laborer, cause them to lose favor with their brothers. Hindley and Edgar cannot accept the choices their sisters make and therefore, withdraw their love. When a woman betrays her class, she is betraying her family and her class - both unacceptable actions. In the novel, adopting the behaviors of the exploiting middle class, Heathcliff works in common with the capitalist landowner Edger Linton to suppress the yeoman class; having been raised in yeoman class, he joins spiritual forces against the squirearchy. Thus, he represents both rapacious capitalism and rejection of capitalist society.

In this regard, various questions can be raised for critical study of novel. Why does Heathcliff give more priority to the wealth? What are the forces behind the destruction of Earnshaw family? This research will attempt to find the answer of the above questions.

Victorian Society and economic progress of the age are chief motif for Heathcliff's life long attempt to fulfill economic interests and social standard. At the same time destruction of Earnshaw family is their failure to confront with the

changing mode and values of Victorian Society. An academic significance of this research work will be evident in its focus on clash of social classes, which will be one of the approaches in understanding the Victorian Age through literary perspective. This research, though very much sociological study will help to penetrate and analyze literary texts as a form of pedagogy.

1.2 Emily Bronte and Class Consciousness

Emily Bronte was born on July 30, 1818 in Thornton, Yorkshire, in the north of England. Her father, the Rev. Patrick Bronte, had moved from Ireland to Weatherfield, in Essex, where he taught in Sunday school. Eventually he settled in Yorkshire, the center of his life's work. In 1812 he married Maria Branwell of Penzance. Patrick Bronte loved poetry; he published several books of prose and verse and wrote to local newspapers. In 1820 he moved to Haworth, a poverty-stricken little town at the edge of a large tract of moorland, where he served as a rector and chairman of the parish committee.

When Emily was three years old, her mother died of cancer, and her Aunt Branwell, a strict Calvinist, moved in to help raise the six children (another daughter, Anne, was born soon after Emily). They lived in a parsonage in Haworth with the bleak moors of Yorkshire on one side and the parish graveyard on the other. When Emily was 6 years old she went to a boarding school run by charity, the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge, where her older sisters Maria, Elizabeth, and Charlotte were already enrolled. The school was in no sense a material improvement over her home environment: it was run with the intention of punishing the pupils' bodies that their souls might be saved. The students were kept hungry, cold, tired, and often ill: Maria in particular, who at her young age did her best to mother her sisters, was treated extremely harshly. In 1825 Maria and Elizabeth both died of tuberculosis, the disease that was later to claim Emily's own life, and that of her younger sister Anne. Following these new bereavements, the surviving sisters Charlotte and Emily were taken home, but they would never forget the terrors and the hardship of their lives at school. Charlotte made it the model for the charity school Lockwood, which figures so prominently in the life of her heroine Jane Eyre.

Steve Davies makes a comment upon the life of Emily Bronte:

Sealed in her art-world, the moor strategically placed for escape above the house, no domesticating and limiting mother to weaken her capacity for identification with whatever sex she chose to impersonate at a particular moment, polite society at a safe distance, and a father who seems to have selected her as an honorary boy to be trusted with fire-arms in defense of the weak, Emily Bronte's life exemplifies a rough joy in itself, its war-games, its word games and its power to extend its own structuring vision out upon the given world. (9)

Life at home was much better for Emily and her siblings: in their isolated childhood on the moors, they developed an extremely close relationship partly based on their mutual participation in a vibrant game of make-believe. In 1826 their father brought Branwell a box of wooden soldiers, and each child chose a soldier and gave him a name and character: these were to be the foundation of the creation of a complicated fantasy world, which the Bronte's actively worked on for 16 years. They made tiny books containing stories, plays, histories, and poetry written by their imagined heroes and heroines. Unfortunately, only ones written by Charlotte and Branwell survive: of Emily's work we only have her poetry, and indeed her most passionate and lovely poetry is written from the perspectives of inhabitants of 'Gondal.' For Emily, it seems that the fantastic adventures in imaginary Gondal coexisted on almost an equal level of importance and reality with the lonely and mundane world of household chores and walks on the moor. One would be mistaken, however, to conclude that the poetic beauty of Gondal was essentially different from that which Emily saw in the world around her. This becomes clear in her novel *Wuthering Heights*, in which her familiar Yorkshire surroundings become the setting

for a tragedy whose passion and beauty is equal to anything that could be imagined elsewhere. Passion is in no way inconsistent with empty moors, cold winters, and brown hills.

Ian Ousby gives an account for better understanding about the Bronte's life and works:

The girls' real education, however, was at the Haworth parsonage, where they had to read their father's books, were thus nurtured on the Bible, Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, Milton, Byron, Sir Walter Scott and many others. They enthusiastically read articles on current affairs, lengthy reviews and intellectual disputes in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazines and The Edinburgh Review. They also ranged freely in Aesop and in the colorfully bizarre world of The Arabian Knights' Entertainments. (*Cambridge Guide* 118)

The lonely purple moors became one of the most important shaping forces in the life of the Bronte sisters. Their parsonage home, a small house, was of grey stone, two stories high. The front door opened almost directly on to the churchyard. In the upstairs were two bedrooms and a third room, scarcely bigger than a closet, in which the sisters played their games. After their mother died in 1821, the children spent most of their time in reading and composition. To escape their unhappy childhood, Anne, Emily, Charlotte, and their brother Branwell (1817-1848) created imaginary worlds - perhaps inspired by Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). Emily and Anne created their own Gondal saga, and Branwell and Charlotte recorded their stories about the kingdom of Angria in minute notebooks. After failing as a painter and writer, Branwell took to drink and opium, worked then as a tutor and assistant clerk to a railway company. In 1842 he was dismissed and joined his sister Anne at Thorp

Green Hall as a tutor. His affair with his employer's wife ended disastrously. He returned to Haworth in 1845, where he rapidly declined and died three years later.

Between the years 1824 and 1825 Emily attended the school at Cowan Bridge with Charlotte, and then was largely educated at home. Her father's bookshelf offered a variety of reading: the Bible, Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, Milton, Byron, Scott and many others. The children also read enthusiastically articles on current affairs and intellectual disputes in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, *Fraser's Magazine*, and *Edinburgh Review*.

Christine Alexander and Margaret Smith give an account about Bronte in *The Oxford Companion to the Brontes*:

Emily, the most esteemed of the Brontes' at mid century, was especially thought of as a writer whose work was above the temporal and local conditions to which the Marxist critics attends. Wilson was well aware that his study of *Wuthering Heights* in light of West Riding social history presented Emily in a new light. As later Marxist critics such as Terry Eagleton were to note, Wilson's article provides a very useful account of the history of class conflict in the Brontes' part of Yorkshire; it also presents convincing evidence that the Brontes must have seen the ravaging consequences of industrialization and class oppression in the streets of Haworth on an almost daily basis. Wilson looks at Emily's poems and novel for direct expression of (her) opinion upon the political and social conflicts' of the days, and he claims that she had a close understanding and sympathy with (working class) people, who are represented in her novel through the figure of her embattle hero, Heathcliff. (320)

In 1835 Emily Bronte was at Roe Head. There she suffered from homesickness and returned after a few months to the moorland scenery of home. In 1837 she became a governess at Law Hill, near Halifax, where she spent six months. Emily worked at Miss Patchet's school - according to Charlotte - "from six in the morning until near eleven at night, with only one half-hour of exercise between" and called it slavery. She further adds:

My sister Emily is going to a situation as teacher in a large school of near forty pupils near Halifax. I have had one letter from her since her departure it gives an appalling account of her duties-Hard labor from six in the morning until near eleven at night. With only one half hour of exercise between-this is slavery. I fear she will never stand it. (*The Brontes A Life in Letters* 59)

To facilitate their plan to keep school for girls, Emily and Charlotte Bronte went in 1842 to Brussels to learn foreign languages and school management. Emily returned on the same year to Haworth. In 1842 Aunt Branwell died. When she was no longer taking care of the house and her brother-in-law, Emily agreed to stay with her father.

Unlike Charlotte, Emily had no close friends. She wrote a few letters and was interested in mysticism. Her first novel, *Wuthering Heights* (1847), a story-within-a-story, did not gain immediate success as Charlotte's *Jane Eyre*, but it has acclaimed later fame as one of the most intense novels written in the English language. In contrast to Charlotte and Anne, whose novels take the form of autobiographies written by authoritative and reliable narrators, Emily introduced an unreliable narrator, Lockwood. He constantly misinterprets the reactions and interactions of the inhabitants of *Wuthering Heights*. More reliable is Nelly Dean, the housekeeper, who

has lived for two generations with the novel's two principal families, the Earnshaws and the Lintons.

Lockwood is a gentleman visiting the Yorkshire moors where the novel is set. At night Lockwood dreams of hearing a fell-fire sermon and then, awakening, he records taps on the window of his room.

. . . I discerned, obscurely, a child's face looking through the window - terror made me cruel; and, finding it useless to attempt shaking the creature off, I pulled its wrist on the broken pane, and rubbed it to and fro till the blood ran down and soaked the bedclothes: still it wailed, "Let me in!" and maintained its tenacious gripe, almost maddening me with fear. (Ch.3)

The hands belong to Catherine Linton, whose eerie appearance echo the violent turns of the plot. In a series of flashbacks and time shifts, Bronte draws a powerful picture of the enigmatic Heathcliff, who is brought to Heights from the streets of Liverpool by Mr Earnshaw. Heathcliff is treated as Earnshaw's own children, Catherine and Hindley. After Mr. Earnshaw's death Hindley bullies Heathcliff and he leaves the house, returning three years later. Meanwhile Catherine marries Edgar Linton. Heathcliff's destructive force is unleashed. Catherine dies giving birth to a girl, another Catherine. Heathcliff curses his true love: ". . . Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest, as long as I am living! You said I killed you - haunt me then!"(Ch. 4) Heathcliff marries Isabella Linton, Edgar's sister, who flees to the south from her loveless marriage. Their son Linton and Catherine are married, but the always-sickly Linton dies. Hareton, Hindley's son, and the young widow became close. Increasingly isolated and alienated from daily life, Heathcliff experiences visions, and he longs for the death that will reunite him with Catherine.

Wuthering Heights has been filmed several times. William Wyler's version from 1939, starring Merle Oberon as Cathy and Laurence Olivier as Heathcliff, is considered one of the screen's classic romances. However, the English writer Graham Greene criticized the reconstructing of the Yorkshire moors in the Conejos Hills in California. How much better they would have made *Wuthering Heights* in France, wrote Greene:

They know there how to shoot sexual passion, but in this Californian-constructed Yorkshire, among the sensitive neurotic English voices, sex is cellophane; there is no egotism, no obsession.... So a lot of reverence has gone into a picture which should have been as coarse as a sewer. (62)

Charlotte, Emily, and Anne published their poem in 1846 by pseudonym Currer, Ellis and Action Bell. Despite the fact that it received two encouraging reviews, only two copies were sold. Charlotte edited Emily's poems and rewrote some for the 1850 edition of her sisters' poems and novels. She included seventeen previously unpublished poems from Emily's manuscripts and one poem not found in Emily's manuscript. Emily Bronte has been called one of the great English lyric poets and has found admirers among other poets. Emily Dickinson thought so highly of Emily Bronte's poetry that she chose 'No coward soul' to be read at her funeral.

In her poem 'Riches I hold in light esteem' (March 1, 1841), she expressed her inner understanding of actual identity in relation to the time and condition:

And if I pray, the only prayer
That moves my lips for me
Is—"Leave the heart that now I bear
And give me liberty. (5-8)

Upon Emily Bronte's poetry, Ian Jack makes a comment:

Of course, I was not surprised, knowing that she could and did write verse: I looked over, and something more than surprise seized me,-a deep conviction that these were not common effusions, not at all like the poetry women generally write. I thought them condensed and terse, vigorous and genuine. To my ear, they had also peculiar music-wild, melancholy, and elevating. (359)

In her poem '*The Two Children*' (May 28, 1845), she talks about Heathcliff as a melancholic boy and expressed her feeling:

Never has a blue streak
 Cleft the clouds since morn -
 Never has his grim Fate
 Smiled since he was born -
 Frowning on the infant,
 Shadowing childhood's joy;
 Guardian angel knows not
 That melancholy boy. (9-16)

Paul Lieder also comments her poetry:

In her poetry, Emily Bronte achieves a remarkable effect by the energy and sincerity and often by the music, with which she portrays her stoicism, independence, and compassion in stanzas which in many instances are the commonplace vehicles used by mere rhyme. It is as though she was brought up to feel that certain form of verse were the patterns, and had, with dogged

acceptance, poured into them her emotions with an honesty that made the outward form seem negligible. (287-288)

While his sisters were on their way to becoming famous authors, Branwell had failed as a painter and lapsed into alcoholism and drug abuse. He died in September of 1848, and his death marked the beginning of Emily's own illness. Tuberculosis killed her rapidly, perhaps because she stoically refused to make any concession to her ill health, continuing to get up early every day to feed her numerous animals even when she could barely walk. She died with heroic fortitude on December 19th, 1848, at the age of 30, and did not have time to appreciate the last flowering sprig of heather, which Charlotte had found on the moors for her wild sister. Emily Bronte's stern self-discipline and passionate creative vision have continued to entrance modern readers through her poetry and especially her masterpiece, *Wuthering Heights*.

In this way, her works are shaped by the ongoing changes, current affairs, and disputes of Victorian Society. At the same time, her lonely life in moor was also another shaping force, which ultimately led her to express unspoken pain she experienced. Her works aptly represent the contemporary issues and offer a way of understanding the relationship between the Victorian novels and its historical contexts.

Chapter Two

Economic Impacts on Victorian Novels

For Marxism, literature does not exist in some timeless, aesthetic realm as an object to be passively contemplated. Rather, like all cultural manifestation, it is a product of the socioeconomic and hence ideological conditions of the time and place in which it was written, whether or not the author intended it so. Because human beings are themselves products of their socioeconomic and ideological environment, it is assumed that authors cannot help but create works that embody ideology in some form.

In the *Marxist Literary Theories*, David Forgacs gives interesting insight regarding the relationship between literature and society:

Despite their diversity, all Marxist theories of literature can only be understood within a larger framework of social reality. Marxists hold that any theory which treats literature in isolation (for instance as pure structure, or as a product of a writer's mental process) and keeps it in isolation, divorcing it from society and history, will be deficient in its ability to explain what literature is. This premise tells us part of what distinguishes Marxist theories from many others. (167-168)

In this regard, more or less Marxist literary theories attempt to depict the social reality, so literature as a reflection of social structure. They believe a literary work reflects not individual phenomena in isolation, but the full process of life.

Lois Tyson states about literature through the Marxist perspective:

If a theory does not foreground the economic realities of human culture, then it misunderstands human culture. For Marxism, getting and keeping economic power is the motive behind all social and

political activities, including education, philosophy, religion, government, the arts, science, technology, the media, and so on. Thus, economics is the base upon which the superstructure of social/political/ideological realities built. Economic power therefore always includes social and political power as well, which is why many Marxists today refer to socioeconomic class, rather than economic class, when talking about the class structure.

The fact that literature grows out of and reflects real material, historical conditions creates at least two possibilities of interest to Marxist critics: (1) the literary work might tend to reinforce in the reader the ideologies it embodies, or (2) it might invite the reader to criticize the ideologies it represents. Getting and keeping economic power is the motive behind all social activities, including education, philosophy, religion, government, the art, science, technology, and the media. Thus, economics is the base upon which superstructure of social, political, ideological realities are built. (50-51)

For some Marxists, realism is the best form for Marxist purposes because it clearly and accurately represents the real world, with all its socioeconomic inequalities and ideological contradiction, and encourages readers to see the unhappy truths about material/historical reality, for whether or not authors intend it; they are bound to represent the real world. Marxist fans of realist fiction often have been inclined to reject non-realistic, experimental fiction for being inaccessible to the majority of readers and for being too exclusively concerned with the inner workings of an individual mind rather than with the individual's relationship to society.

The relation between literature and the historical context or the socio-economic condition under which the certain work of art created is significant and Christine Alexander and Margaret Smith make more give more insight for better understanding:

. . . A number of fundamental principles of Marxism have remained unchanged, however, and these can be recognized as the underpinning of any form of Marxist literary criticism. First, Marxism holds that in modern societies, literature-like religion, politics, law, philosophy, and the non-literary arts- is part of a 'superstructure' to which it is tied. As a result, literature cannot be properly understood without reference to the socio-economic condition of its production, dissemination, and reception. Marxism thus insist on 'materialist' reading of the literary text, which it views both as a product of labor and as the means by which the work of ideology is conducted by, and upon, the members of particular society. (319-320)

Class is a complex term, in use since the late eighteenth century, and employed in many different ways. Different social classes can be distinguished by inequalities in such areas as power, authority, and wealth, working and living condition, life span, education, and culture.

Early in the nineteenth century the labels "working classes" and "middle classes" were already coming into common usage. The old hereditary aristocracy, reinforced by the new gentry who owed their success to commerce, industry and the professions. The working classes remained shut out from political process, and became increasingly hostile not only to the aristocracy but to the middle classes as well.

The Victorian fiction is marked by these changes and offers the reader an insight into the cultural, political, and social contexts. It encompasses a wide-range of authors including Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Wilkin Collins, Elizabeth Gaskell, Charlotte Bronte, Emily Bronte, Anthony Trollop, Robert Loius Stevenson, Oscar Wilde and Thomas Hardy.

Charles Dickens's (1812 - 1870) works are marked by his childhood experience and time. As a child, poor and lonely, longing for love, he laid the foundation for those heart-rending pictures of children. He learned to understand both the enemies and the victims of society. He began with a great sense of life and little sense of form, capturing the individual oddity, the extravagant moment, with remarkable skill, and then making time, as it were, until he could introduce another such oddity and another such moment.

His *Pickwick Paper* (1836) began as burlesque, but soon moved into a more substantial kind of picaresque comedy, where the interest lies not only in particular absurd incidents but also in the way in which given characters react to new kind of environment. Each of the characters soon develops his moral, physical, and emotional qualities. *Oliver Twist* (published serially, 1837 – 39) is the first of Dickens's novel to concentrate on specific social ills. It is a portrait gallery together with a series of vividly etched pictures of physical location and single incidents. This novel had serious purpose of mitigating the evils under which the poor were suffering. Its hero is a poor child, and the unfortunate victim of society. *Nicolas Nickleby* (issued in monthly, 1838 - 39) shows injustice and suffering, humor and pathos, tears and laughter prevailed in society. *Barnaby Rudge* (1841) is a more controlled work. His next novel *Dombey and Son* (1846 – 48) joins richness of character and incident to unity of moral purpose with a new maturity.

Among the novels of Dickens *David Copperfield* (1849 – 50) is regarded as his masterpiece. It gives us of the author's own boyhood and family. Here self-pity is submitted into ironic observation. In *Hard Time* (1854) Dickens depicts social situation around him, and concerns with morality of the utilitarian industrialists. In a sense, his most of the works are conditioned by the economic progress of the time and successfully depicts these changes. Though his works embody no systematic social or political theory, from the first he took himself very serious as a social reformer. His novels aroused public interest in many of the evils of his day, among them boarding school, in *Nicholas Nickleby*, the workhouse, in *Oliver Twist*, the new manufacturing system, in *Hard Times*, and the Court of Chancery, in *Bleak House*. Difference to the fastidiousness of his public excluded the crudest realism from his pictures of poverty, and he seems to have built his hopes for improvement on the spread of the spirit of benevolence rather than upon political upheaval or formal legislation. In this way, as Marxist believes, his works successfully represent the contemporary issues and provide a way to correct these inequalities.

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811 – 63), Dickens's contemporary, intended to depict situations of a more middle class flavor than Dickens. He is best known for his novel *Vanity Fair*, in which very recent history is captured. It was intended to express his views of the social life, and to protest against the overdrawn heroes of popular novels. In his second novel, *Pendennis* (1848 – 50), he makes satire on society. The hero is a typical young man of society. In fact Thackeray's view of life and society is reflected in his novels. *The History of Henry Esmond* (1852) is a historical novel of great length and complexity, showing the previous excellence of Thackeray in almost undiminishing force, as well as immense care and forethought, a minute and accurate knowledge of the times of the Queen Anne. In this novel an

eighteenth-century story is told in an eighteenth-century style, which has the merit of eliminating Thackeray's garrulous interventions. His novel *The Newcomes* (1853 – 55) is supposed to be edited by Pendennis. In fact his novels are a protest against the convention of the contemporary society. In the sense, his works truly capture the practices prevailed in the Victorian Society.

Mary Ann Evan (1819 – 80) known to us by her pen name of George Eliot, began to write late in life, when nearly forty years of age, and attained the leading position among living English novelists in the ten years between 1870 and 1880. In her novel the characters are usually drawn from the lower classes of the society, and her studies of the English countryman shows great understanding and insight and they develop gradually as we come to know them. They go from weakness to strength, or strength to weakness, according to the works that they do and the thought they cherish. In *Romola* (1862 – 63), for instance, Tito, as time passes, we see him degenerate steadily because he follows his selfish impulses, while Romola grows into beauty and strength with every act of self-renunciation. In all her fiction, George Eliot concerned with moral problems of characters, but she never abstracted her characters from their moral dilemmas. She was familiar with and responsive to the varied social contests in which nineteenth-century men and women could live. She saw the relationship between town and country, between landed families and living in an ever-diminishing feudal atmosphere, banker and politician jolted each other in a world of perpetually interesting interests. She knew England, both town and country, metropolitan and provincial, agricultural, commercial, industrial, and professional, and she used her knowledge to make her characters move naturally in their daily occupations. *Adam Bede* (1859), her first full-dress novel, has an element of pastoral idealism in the character of hero which recurs at intervals in George Eliot's work; but

it is significant that this note is connected with the dignity of work. *The Mill of the Floss* illustrates moral problems of characters. There is an autobiographical impulse in this novel. Her great novel *Middlemarch* (1871 – 72) shows the different characters and different contexts of living in town and country in their interests and activities and relationship between the individual and society. Country squire, clergyman, farmer, agricultural labor, banker, doctor, worker and idlers in town and country, are shown in the complex network of interrelationships which itself is a microcosm of man in the world. As Marxist theories believe literature should represent realities, her most of the works are based on ongoing contemporary issues.

Charles Reade (1814 – 84), another Victorian novelist, depicts the romantic side of the society and common life, and uses the novel as the instrument of social reform. His *Peg Woffington* (1853) is a study of life from behind scenes. *A Terrible Temptation* is a study of social reforms and reformers. *Put yourself in the Place* is the picture of a workingman who struggles against the injustice of the trade unions. His masterpiece, *The Cloister and the Hearth* (1861) is a somewhat laborious study of student and vagabond life in Europe.

Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Bronte were the daughters of an Irish clergyman, Patrick Bronte. Their childhood experience ultimately led them to write books. Charlotte Bronte's (1816 – 55) first novel, *The Professor*, failed to find a publisher and only appeared in 1857 after her death. Following the experiences of her own life in an uninspired manner, the story lacks interest, and the characters are not created with passionate insight that distinguishes her later portraits. *Jane Eyre* (1847) is her greatest novel. The love story of the plain, but very vital, heroine is unfolded with a frank truthfulness and a depth of understanding that are new in English fiction. In her next novel, *Shirley* (1849), Charlotte Bronte reverts to a more normal and less

impassioned portrayal of life. Again the theme is the love story of a young girl, here delicately told, though the plot construction is weak. *Villette* (1852) is written in a reminiscent vein, and the character of Lucy Snow is based on the author herself. The truth and intensity of Charlotte's work are unquestioned; she can see and judge with the eye of a genius.

Throughout his long life George Meredith (1828 – 1909) produced much poetry that can be regarded as the complement to his novels. In all his poetry thought is more important than form. Accepting the contemporary theories of evolution and natural selection, he sees life as a long struggle to raise man from the near animals. His first novel of importance is *The Ordeal of Richard Fever* (1859), in plot rather weak, and almost incredible toward the end. It deals with a young aristocrat educated on a system laboriously virtuous; but youthful nature breaks the bonds. Most of the characters are of higher rank of society. His next novel *Evan Harrington* contains some details of his own family life.

Benjamin Disraeli (1804 – 81) was born in London of a Jewish family. He studied law at Lincoln's Inn but early showed his interest in literature. After the success of his first novel he spent three years making the Grand Tour of Europe. *Vivian Grey* (1826 – 27), his first novel, set the fashionable world talking of its author. It dealt with fashionable society, it was brilliant and witty, and it had an easy arrogance that amused, incensed, and attracted at the same time. Disraeli wrote a good number of novels, the most notable of which were *Contarini Fleming*, *A Psychological Autobiography* (1832), *Henrietta Temple* (1837), *Coningsby: or the New Generation* (1844) and *Sybil*. Edward Albert says about Disraeli:

These books were written when experience of public affairs had added depth to his vision and edge to his satire, are polished and powerful

novels dealing with the politics of his day. (*History of English Literature* 404)

Edward Bulwer Lytton (1803 – 73) was the son of General Bulwar. On the death of his mother he succeeded to her estate and took the name of Lytton. His earlier efforts in literature were rather feeble imitations of the Byronic manner. His first novel was *Falkland* (1827), and then came *Pelham* or the *Adventures of a Gentleman* (1828). These were pictures of current affairs and issues of the contemporary society, and are immature in their affection of wit and cynicism.

Anthony Trollope (1815 – 82) is another Victorian novelist who just missed greatness. A prolific novelist, Trollope began his career with Irish tales such as *The Kellys and the O'Kellys* (1848), which had little success, and then produced the Barsetshire novels on which his fame rests. Trollope is the novelist of the middle class and upper-middle classes. With urbane familiarity and shrewd observation he presents an accurate, detail picture of their quiet, uneventful lives in a matter-of-fact way, which gives his works the appearance of chronicles of real life. His main concern is with character rather than plot, but his characters though clearly visualized and described in great detail, lack depth.

Charles Kingsley (1819 – 75) was Devonshire man, being born Holne and brought up at Clovelly. His works naturally divided themselves into three classes. In the first class are his social studies and problem novels, such as *Alton Locke* (1850), having for its hero a London tailor and poet and *Yeats* (1848), which deal with problems of the agricultural laborer. In the second class are his historical novels. In the third class are his various miscellaneous works.

Mrs. Elizabeth Gaskell (1810 -1865) began with the idea of making the novel instrument of social reform. As the wife of a clergyman in Manchester, she had come

in close contact with the struggles and ideas of the industrial poor of a great city, and she reflected her sympathy as well as her observation in *Mary Barton* (1848) and in *North and South* (1855). Between these two problem novels she published her masterpiece *Cranford* in 1853. *Sylvia's Lovers* is a moralistic love story in a domestic setting, with which scenes of wilder beauty and human violence are well blended.

Thomas Hardy (1840 - 1928) seems to belong to the present rather than to a past age. He is direct and simple, aiming at realism in all things. He makes man an insignificant part of the world, struggling against powers greater than himself—sometimes against system, which he cannot reach or influence, sometimes against a kind of grim world-spirit delights in making human affairs go wrong. His earlier works *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) and *A Pair of Blue Eyes* are the most interesting. *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874) uses a wider canvas and takes a closer look at the nature and consequences of human emotions. *The Return of the Native* (1878) and *Woodlanders* (1887) are generally regarded as Hardy's masterpieces. *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886) shows a greater mastery of his material than can be found in any other of Hardy's nature novels. The course of action projected by Michael Henchard's original selling of his wife is determined in its later stage by a complex combination of factors.

Though Emily Bronte wrote less than Charlotte, she is in some ways the greatest of the three sisters. She is deeply influenced by the ongoing social changes as well as her own childhood. As a motherless child of Victorian Period she had very bitter experience. Her isolated childhood on moor became one of the most important shaping forces in work of arts. Her one novel, *Wuthering Height*, is unique in English literature.

The novel opens with Lockwood, a tenant of Heathcliff's, visiting the home of his landlord. A subsequent visit to Wuthering Heights yields an accident and a curious supernatural encounter, which pique Lockwood's curiosity. Back at Thrushcross Grange and recuperating from his illness, Lockwood begs Nelly Dean, a servant who grew up in Wuthering Heights and now cares for Thrushcross Grange, to tell him of the history of Heathcliff. Nelly narrates the main plot line of *Wuthering Heights*.

Mr. Earnshaw, a Yorkshire farmer and owner of Wuthering Heights, brings home an orphan from Liverpool. The boy is named Heathcliff and is raised with the Earnshaw children, Hindley and Catherine. Catherine loves Heathcliff but Hindley hates him because Heathcliff has replaced Hindley in Mr. Earnshaw's affection. After Mr. Earnshaw's death, Hindley does what he can to destroy Heathcliff, but Catherine and Heathcliff grow up playing wildly on the moors, oblivious of anything or anyone else - until they encounter the Lintons.

Edgar and Isabella Linton live at Thrushcross Grange and are the complete opposites of Heathcliff and Catherine. The Lintons welcome Catherine into their home but shun Heathcliff. Treated as an outsider once again, Heathcliff begins to think about revenge. Catherine, at first, splits her time between Heathcliff and Edgar, but soon she spends more time with Edgar, which makes Heathcliff jealous. When Heathcliff overhears Catherine tell Nelly that she can never marry him (Heathcliff), he leaves Wuthering Heights and is gone for three years.

While he is gone, Catherine continues to court and ends up marrying Edgar. Their happiness is short-lived because they are from two different worlds, and their relationship is strained further when Heathcliff returns. Relationships are complicated even more as Heathcliff winds up living with his enemy, Hindley (and Hindley's son,

Hareton), at Wuthering Heights and marries Isabella, Edgar's sister. Soon after Heathcliff's marriage, Catherine gives birth to Edgar's daughter, Cathy, and dies.

Heathcliff vows revenge and does not care who he hurts while executing it. He desires to gain control of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange and to destroy everything Edgar Linton holds dear. In order to exact his revenge, Heathcliff must wait 17 years. Finally, he forces Cathy to marry his son, Linton. By this time he has control of the Heights and with Edgar's death, he has control of the Grange.

In this way, most of the Victorian novelists truly represent the confrontation of social tumult, as Marxism believes literature should represent realities. Their novels are specially influenced by contemporary socio-economic changes and these books basically deal with social stratification and confrontation of different opposite forces created by the radical changes of the time. Being one of the novelist of the Victorian Period, Bronte's novel *Wuthering Heights* also truly represents these socio-economic and confrontation.

Wuthering Heights breathes the very spirit of the wild, desolate moors. Its chief characters are conceived in gigantic proportions, and their passions have an elemental force which carries them into the realms of poetry. They reveal the great courage and strength of her passionate nature. In conclusion, her works successfully render all the social classes of the Victorian Society.

Chapter Three

Critical analysis through Marxist Perspective

3.1 Characters in their Social Identity

Emily Bronte's novel *Wuthering Heights* depicts many polarized characters coming into contact with each other in a variety of ways from the different socio-economic background. One pair of seemingly opposite characters, that clash in this text are Heathcliff and Edgar Linton from opposite socio-economic background. Even the names of their residences indicate them as opposites. "Wuthering" is described in the reference to Bronte's work as being a significant provincial adjective, descriptive of the atmospheric tumult to which its station is exposed, in stormy weather. The Thrushcross Grange evokes a more harmonious, country farmhouse, with songbirds fluttering around, nature and people living harmoniously together.

Heathcliff, characterized by a stormy temper, violent, and confrontational, is reminiscent of his residence, just as Edgar is reserved, calm, and non-confrontational. The difference between these two very different characters is brilliantly depicted by Bronte to demonstrate how different people are conditioned by socio-economic factors and find purpose in life. It not only examines how different individuals make decisions about their lives, but to what extent those decisions are made through both intrinsic and extrinsic forces.

Throughout the novel characters are shaped by their socio-economic status, class, race and education. Indeed, Victorian Period itself was accelerated by these factors. People were motivated by these characteristics. When Heathcliff is first time introduced, he is described as a dark skinned boy with dark hair, and because of this people are prejudiced against him. He is called a 'gypsy' numerous times, and the

Lintons treat him badly and send him away from their house because of his appearance. Heathcliff also quickly dislikes his son because of his light skin and hair.

Heathcliff is a waif picked up by Earnshaw on the streets of Liverpool, classified as a gipsy, a nomadic alien who is an outcast from society and referred to as 'nameless,' an epithet which is literary accurate since his name unknown and he is given that of both first name and surname. He is also legally "nullius filius," nobody's son, a child with no legitimate father whom Nelly says, "as dark almost as if it came from the devil." (Ch. 4)

Through the duration of Heathcliff's life, he encounters many tumultuous events that affects him as a person and transforms his rage deeper into his soul, for which he is unable to escape his nature. From the beginning of the novel and most likely from the beginning of Heathcliff's life, he has suffered pain and rejection. When Mr. Earnshaw brings him to Wuthering Heights, he is viewed as a thing rather than a child. Mrs. Nelly makes an account the first arrival of the boy Heathcliff in the Earnshaw family:

We crowd round, and, over miss Cathy's head, I had a peep at a dirty, ragged, black-haired child; big enough both to walk and talk- indeed, its face looked older than Catherine's- yet, when it was set on its feet, it only stared round, and repeated over and over again some gibberish that nobody could understand. I was frightened, and Mrs. Earnshaw was ready to fling it out of doors: she did fly up-asking how he could fashion to bring that gipsy brat into the house, when they had their own brains to feed, and fend for? What he meant to do with it, and whether he was mad? (Ch. 4)

Without having done anything to deserve rejection, Heathcliff is made to feel like an outsider. Following the death of Mr. Earnshaw, Heathcliff suffers cruel mistreatment at the hands of Hindley. In these tender years, he is deprived of love, friendship, and education, while the treatment from jealous Hindley is barbaric and disrupts his mental balance. He is separated from the family, reduced to the status of a servant, undergoes regular beatings and forcibly separated from his soul mate, Catherine. The personality that Heathcliff develops in his adulthood has been formed in response to these hardships of his childhood. The final sense of alienation and the most implicating occurs with Catherine's marriage to Edgar, Heathcliff considers this a betrayal of his love for her, since she wants the social status and existence at the Grange.

Christine Alexander and Margaret Smith make an account of Heathcliff:

Heathcliff, a boy found starving in the streets of Liverpool by Mr. Earnshaw, named after son of the Earnshaws, and rose as one of the family at Wuthering Heights. He is a dirty, ragged, gipsy-looking child, 'as dark almost as if it came from the devil.' (ch. 4)

Yet Mr. Earnshaw favors him over his own son, Hindley, and his daughter Catherine and Heathcliff roam the moors as inseparable companions. Heathcliff is however proud and determined and does not cower when opposed by those consider themselves to be superiors. Finally, when he realizes that Catherine has chosen status, wealth and position over him, he disappears for three years and returns in the manner of a gentleman. As he returns to Wuthering Heights, he is engulfed with this passion to revenge himself on all those who have abused him as a child. He ruins Hindley by encouraging his excessive drinking and gambling. His revenge is also directed towards Edgar Linton, whom he sees as having stolen Catherine from him. His sullen,

vengeful, cruel and impatient characteristics still exist, which have been present since childhood, but have grown deeper. He is, in reality, a man torn between love and hate. Since his depths of his passions, he hates as deeply as he loves. As Heathcliff approaches death and a reunion of Catherine, he no longer has an interest for revenge. He falls deeply into a spiritual torment.

Heathcliff is a many faced character, in his early years he is characterized by his hot temper, his irritability, his fierce attachment to Catherine and his limit for hatred. The adult Heathcliff, who returns to Wuthering Heights after a three year absence, is a powerful villain driven by revenge, distorted by the sense of the wrongs done to him and made emotionally unstable by Catherine's marriage. Later Heathcliff is characterized by coldness by an incapacity to love and ultimately by consuming passion for revenge against those who have abused him and for connection with his beloved Catherine. Just as he begins life, he ends life as an unloved, lonely outsider.

Heathcliff is both despicable and pitiable. His one sole passion is Catherine, yet his commitment to his notion of a higher love does not seem to include forgiveness. In deed his all attempt to possess social assertion of dignity as a human being is motivated by the economic condition of the time. He has no real aspiration to gentility for its own sake and he shows no real interest in luxurious lifestyle nor is signs of rejoicing at his improved social standing-his new wealth and acceptability merely weapons in his vengeful armory. Since he has come to connect status and property and he now has money, he chooses to seize the opportunity to create a possible revenge on Hindley for treating him as a non-person. He knows of Hindley's taste for gambling and uses this as his entree to the Heights, basing all his action on careful calculations in the pursuit of money and property which will achieve his ends.

It is significant that Heathcliff begins his life as a homeless orphan on the streets of Liverpool. When Bronte composed her book, in the 1840s, the English economy was severely depressed, and the conditions of the factory workers in industrial areas like Liverpool were so appalling that the upper and middle classes feared violent revolt. Thus, many of the more affluent members of society beheld these workers with a mixture of sympathy and fear. In literature, the smoky, threatening, miserable factory-towns were often represented in religious terms, and compared to hell. The poet William Blake, writing near the turn of the nineteenth century, speaks of England's "dark Satanic Mills." Heathcliff, of course, is frequently compared to a demon by the other characters in the book.

Considering this historical context, Heathcliff seems to embody the anxieties that the book's upper- and middle-class audience had about the working classes. The reader may easily sympathize with him when he is powerless, as a child tyrannized by Hindley Earnshaw, but he becomes a villain when he acquires power and returns to Wuthering Heights with money and the trappings of a gentleman. This corresponds with the ambivalence the upper classes felt toward the lower classes—the upper classes had charitable impulses toward lower-class citizens when they were miserable, but feared the prospect of the lower classes trying to escape their miserable circumstances by acquiring political, social, cultural, or economic power.

On the other hand Catherine Earnshaw is the daughter of Mr. Earnshaw of Wuthering Heights. Her name and childhood diary entry of an escapade on the moors with Heathcliff precipitate Lockwood's second nightmare in which she appears as a ghostly 'waif.' She and the 'gipsy-brat' Heathcliff form an inseparable bond in childhood that survives even her marriage to the more civilized Edger Linton. She believes it would degrade her to marry the

uneducated Heathcliff, yet realizes she is violating her own soul nature by marrying. Her every activity was motivated by the social and economic conditions. Patricia Ingham makes an account for understanding of her character:

. . . Her taste for the Lintons' life style persists and she begins to occupy herself with their society. Heathcliff is excluded, partly because Hindley's maltreatment grows worse and partly because Mr. Linton wishes it. Seeing Catherine become more and more overtly a fine lady, Heathcliff wallows in his own degradation, becoming surlier and dirtier: a perceived difference of class has been created between Catherine and him and he recognizes it. (124)

Catherine is torn between two worlds. On one hand, she longs to be with Heathcliff, her soul mate: their life together, growing up and playing on the moors, represents the freedom and innocence of childhood. On the other, she recognizes what a marriage to Edgar can do for her socially, and she enjoys those things that Edgar can provide for her. Ultimately, she agrees to marry Edgar - largely to consolidate her new status. Heathcliff overhears as she tells Mrs. Dean that her motive is that Edgar will be rich, and "I shall like to be the greatest woman of the neighborhood, and I shall be proud of having such a husband." (Ch. 6)

6) Her concern with Edgar's social standing has a consequence for her relationship with Heathcliff, yet she still regards her love for him unaffected by her decision to marry:

My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods; time will change it, I'm well aware, as winter changes the trees. My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath - a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, I am Heathcliff! He's always, always in my mind-

-not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself, but as my own being. (Ch. 7)

She truly loves Heathcliff but the Victorian consciousness doesn't let her to get married with that homeless boy.

I've no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven; and if the wicked man in there had not brought Heathcliff so low, I shouldn't have thought of it. It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now. (Ch. 9)

The location of Catherine's coffin symbolizes the conflict that tears apart her short life. She is not buried in the chapel with the Lintons. Nor is her coffin placed among the tombs of the Earnshaws. Instead, as Nelly describes, Catherine is buried "in a corner of the kirkyard, where the wall is so low that heath and bilberry plants have climbed over it from the moor" (Ch. 16). Moreover, she is buried with Edgar on one side and Heathcliff on the other, suggesting her conflicted loyalties. Her actions are driven in part by her social ambitions, which initially are awakened during her first stay at the Lintons', and which eventually compel her to marry Edgar. However, she is also motivated by impulses that prompt her to violate social conventions - to love Heathcliff, throw temper tantrums, and run around on the moor. In fact she is a Victorian lady influenced by materialism, social prestige and high society.

Edgar Linton represents the upper class of Victorian Society. He is born and raised a gentleman. He is graceful, well-mannered, and instilled with civilized virtues. These qualities cause Catherine to choose Edgar over Heathcliff and thus to initiate the contention between the men. Nevertheless, Edgar's gentlemanly qualities ultimately prove useless in his ensuing rivalry with Heathcliff. Edgar is particularly humiliated by his confrontation with Heathcliff, in which he openly shows his fear of

fighting Heathcliff. Catherine, having witnessed the scene, taunts him, saying, “Heathcliff would as soon lift a finger at you as the king would march his army against a colony of mice” (Ch. 11). As the reader can see from the earliest descriptions of Edgar as a spoiled child, his refinement is tied to his helplessness and impotence.

Charlotte Bronte, in her preface to the 1850 edition of *Wuthering Heights*, refers to Edgar as “an example of constancy and tenderness,” and goes on to suggest that her sister Emily was using Edgar to point out that such characteristics constitute true virtues in all human beings, and not just in women, as society tended to believe. However, Charlotte’s reading seems influenced by her own feminist agenda. Edgar’s inability to counter Heathcliff’s vengeance, and his naïve belief on his deathbed in his daughter’s safety and happiness, make him a weak, if sympathetic, character.

He and Catherine Earnshaw fall in love and marry. He indulges his tempestuous wife, and lavishes her with affection. But she does not love Edgar the way she loves Heathcliff, and she scorns her husband's nonviolent nature. After Catherine's death, Edgar is a caring and protective father to Cathy. He is afraid Heathcliff will get his revenge through Cathy, and he tries his best to keep his daughter away from the Heights.

Hindley Earnshaw is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Earnshaw, brother to Catherine and Heathcliff. He hates Heathcliff, who is father's favorite. When he returns from college after his father's death, he and his new wife become the heads of the house. He turns Heathcliff into a servant, and treats his other sibling like she is an annoyance. His wife dies after Hareton is born, and Hindley cannot stand the grief. He is a selfish man, and he cannot understand why someone so important was taken from him. He ignores his new son, and starts drinking. He becomes more drunken, crazy, and

violent as time wears on. He loses Wuthering Heights to Heathcliff, and dies soon after his sister. Hindley resents it when Heathcliff is brought to live at Wuthering Heights. After his father dies and he inherits the estate, Hindley begins to abuse the young Heathcliff, terminating his education and forcing him to work in the fields. When Hindley's wife Frances dies shortly after giving birth to their son Hareton, he lapses into alcoholism and dissipation.

Mr. Earnshaw, father of Catherine and Hindley's, adopts Heathcliff and brings him to live at Wuthering Heights. He represents the middle class people because he can send his son to peruse higher studies. He prefers Heathcliff to Hindley but nevertheless bequeaths Wuthering Heights to Hindley when he dies. He loves his children, but wishes Catherine and Hindley were better behaved. Catherine is too wild, and Hindley is often mean to Heathcliff, his favorite. When he dies, the property falls to Hindley, who treats the former favorite as a servant. Mrs. Earnshaw, Catherine and Hindley's mother, neither likes nor trusts the orphan Heathcliff when he is brought to live at her house. She is not happy to see that her husband has brought home a strange orphan boy for them to raise. She dies shortly after Heathcliff's arrival at Wuthering Heights.

Hareton Earnshaw is the son of Hindley and Frances Earnshaw, and the cousin of Cathy and Linton. He is the rightful heir of Wuthering Heights, but his father's gambling debts allow Heathcliff to take over as the new owner. Hareton doesn't know what he lost, and is made to work in the fields, without education, manners, or affection. He is not dumb, but his gifts have gone uncultivated. He begins to teach himself to read, hoping to gain the approval of the young Catherine, but she constantly insults him, thinking him too vulgar to be her cousin. After the death of Linton, Catherine warms to Hareton. She helps him with his learning and his manners,

and the two falls in love, planning to marry soon. Despite his poor treatment, Hareton loves Heathcliff like a father, and he is the only one who mourns him when he dies. After Hindley's death, Heathcliff assumes custody of Hareton, and raises him as an uneducated field worker, just as Hindley had done to Heathcliff himself. Thus Heathcliff uses Hareton to seek revenge on Hindley. Illiterate and quick-tempered, Hareton is easily humiliated, but shows a good heart and a deep desire to improve himself. At the end of the novel, he marries young Catherine.

Linton Heathcliff is the Heathcliff's son by Isabella. Weak, sniveling, demanding, and constantly ill, Linton is raised in London by his mother and does not meet his father until he is thirteen years old, when he goes to live with him after his mother's death. Heathcliff despises Linton, treats him contemptuously, and, by forcing him to marry the young Catherine, and uses him to cement his control over Thrushcross Grange after Edgar Linton's death. Linton himself dies not long after this marriage.

Isabella Linton Heathcliff is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Linton, sister to Edgar Linton. She falls in love with Heathcliff despite his ill nature. Her brother disapproves, so she runs away with him. At first she is dazzled by Heathcliff, and turns a blind eye to his violent and cruel tendencies. Her own violent and cruel tendencies come out, and she finally escapes from Heathcliff. She moves away and secretly has their child, Linton. Ultimately, she ruins her life by falling in love with him. He never returns her feelings and treats her as a mere tool in his quest for revenge on the Linton family. She dies twelve years later.

Joseph is the long-winded, fanatically religious, elderly servant at Wuthering Heights. He is strange, stubborn, and unkind, and he speaks with a thick Yorkshire

accent. It is also one of the characteristic of having servant to run the house of the Victorian Society.

Frances Earnshaw is the Hindley's silly wife, who treats Heathcliff cruelly. She dies shortly after giving birth to Hareton. As a Victorian woman she has not any significant role in the movement of the action of the novel. She is a very passive and loving mother for her children. Mr. Linton is father of Edgar and Isabella and the proprietor of Thrushcross Grange when Heathcliff and Catherine are children. An established member of the gentry, he raises his son and daughter to be well-mannered young people. He behaves with other people according to their socio-economic status in the society indeed his all activities are conditioned by contemporary norms and values.

Mr. Linton has somewhat snobbish wife, who does not like Heathcliff to be allowed near her children, Edgar and Isabella. She teaches Catherine to act like a gentle-woman, thereby instilling her with social ambitions. Her all activities resemble the so-called standard Victorian values that a Victorian people were supposed to follow.

Zillah is the housekeeper at Wuthering Heights after Hindley's death and before Heathcliff's during the latter stages of the narrative. She doesn't particularly understand the people she lives with, and stands are marked contrast to Ellen, who is deeply invested in them. She is an impatient but capable woman. Mr. Green is the Edgar Linton's lawyer, who arrives too late to hear Edgar's final instruction to change his will, which would have prevented Heathcliff from obtaining control over Thrushcross Grange.

All the characters of this novel more or less represent the Victorian values and norms. They are guided by the underlying socio-economic force of the contemporary

time. Their every activity is motivated and directed unknowingly. Heathcliff, the major character of the novel involves in perpetual conflicts with Catherine and most of the other characters because he is the outcaste, homeless, waif and dark skinned among the so-called standard society. So his struggle is not motivated by revenge but by the so-called standard norms and values of the time. He is badly treated by the other people and deserted because he is not the real member of their society which makes him realize his actual position in the society and understand how to possess the prestigious position in the society.

In conclusion, all characters of the novel represent the Victorian people having motivated by the values and norms of the time. They give more priority to the social status rather than their emotion and feeling. So there are a lot of clashes due to their socio-economic status in the society. The hierarchies created by these factors motivate them to involve in the perpetual struggle to raise their social standing.

3.2 Plots as a Portfolio of Victorian Society

Wuthering Heights is remarkable for the way its torturous and violent plot is given credibility and subtlety by the shifting narratives point of views which are influenced by the economic and social status of the time. The central narrative which spans over twenty years is told by Nelly (Ellen) Dean, an uneducated country house maid, who doesn't have any knowledge about outer world and punctuated by intense personal stories of participant and by Zillah, a temporary housekeeper from the local village of Gimmerton. This is framed by the two-year narration of the stranger Mr. Lockwood, a sophisticated, educated, affluent gentleman; he is an outsider, a city man. Neither of the main narrators, however, is reliable and the reader is plunged into a world of conflict that ranges over two generations and that defies any neat interpretation.

The story opens with the 1801 journal entry of Lockwood, the new tenant of Thrushcross Grange. He describes a visit to his morose landlord, the gipsy-like Heathcliff of *Wuthering Heights*, an imposing though somewhat neglected farmhouse situated high on the Yorkshire moors:

1801-I have just returned from a visit to my landlord-the solitary neighbor that I shall be troubled with. This is certainly a beautiful country! In all England, I do not believe that I could have fixed on a situation so completely removed from the stir of society. A perfect misanthropist's Heaven-and Mr. Heathcliff and I are such a suitable pair to divide the desolation between us. A capital fellow! He little imagined how my heart warmed toward him when I beheld his black eyes withdraw so suspiciously under their brows, as I rode up, and

when his fingers sheltered themselves, with a jealous resolution, still further in his waistcoat, as I announced my name. (1)

Despite his unwelcome reception, Lockwood is intrigued and repeats his visit the next day. He receives a hostile reception not only from the dogs but from the intimates of the Wuthering Heights, the young Catherine (Heathcliff's daughter-in-law) and the loutish Hareton Earnshaw, who reflect the isolation of their habitation and its distance from standard Victorian Society. Lockwood's alienation and misplaced courtesy create the effect of black humor, but there is also a sense of real danger and threat. The landscape is equally inhospitable and Lockwood, having been attacked by the dogs, is forced by a snowstorm to stay the night at Heights. He is shown to a disused bedroom where he finds the name Catherine linked with those of Earnshaw, Heathcliff, and Linton, scratched in the windowsill and some books inscribes Catherine Earnshaw. In the margin of one, he reads her account of a wet Sunday 25 years ago when she and Heathcliff had to listen to a sermon by the old servant Joseph in cold attic, while her brother Hindley and his wife enjoyed themselves downstairs. They are later punished by Hindley for scampering on the moors. Lockwood dreams that he is listening to an interminable sermon that ends in a fight; he wakes and finds a fir tree outside tapping on the lattice window. He describes the event:

On opening the little door, two hairy monsters flew at my throat, bearing me down and extinguishing the light while a mingled guffaw, from Heathcliff and Hareton, put the copestone on my rage and humiliation.

Fortunately, the beasts seemed more bent on stretching their paws, and yawing, and flourishing their tails, than devouring me alive;

but they would suffer no resurrection, and I was forced to lie till their malignant masters pleased to deliver me: then, hatless and tremble with wrath, I ordered the miscreants to let out-on their peril to keep me one minute longer-with several incoherent treats of retaliation that, in their indefinite depth of virulence, smacked of King Lear. (16)

He doses again and the knocking becomes nightmare: he breaks the window to stop the noise and his fingers are grasped by a “little, ice-cold hand!” (Ch. 3). As a child’s voice cries to be let in, he panics and tries to free himself, savagely rubbing the wrist against the broken pane “till the blood ran down and soaked the bedclothes.” His cries bring Heathcliff to the room and Lockwood hears his host’s anguished cry for Cathy, his “heart’s darling.” Lockwood’s perplexity is that of reader. Returning to Thruscross Grange in deep snow, he contrasts a fever, and to while away his convalescence, he asks Nelley Dean to tell him what she knows of Heathcliff and his strange household. Nelley, who spent her girlhood at Heights and was in service there and at Thruscross Grange, takes over the story.

One day in 1771, her master old Mr. Earnshaw returns from Liverpool with a black-haired orphan, “as dark almost as if it came from the devil,” whom he calls Heathcliff after a son who died. Heathcliff is brought up with Mr. Earnshaw’s two children Hindley and Cathy Earnshaw and becomes Earnshaw’s favorite, earning Hindley’s hatred and forming a powerful bond with dark-haired’ dark eyed Cathy. When Mr. Earnshaw dies, Hindley returns from college with a wife, Frances Earnshaw, and Heathcliff is neglected to the status of a farm-laborer. He and Cathy are still inseparable and spend time together on the moors, Penistone Crag being their favorite place. One day they trespass into the park of Thruscross Grange, spying on the affluent young fair-haired Lintons, Edger and Isabella. Cathy is bitten by a guard

dog while escaping and spend five weeks while her ankle recovers, indulging in the comfort and manners of a civilized life. She returns to Wuthering Heights as an elegant young lady, who mocks her former playmate's uncouth appearance. Hindley's wife dies leaving a son, Hareton, and the heartbroken Hindley begins drinking heavily and further degrades Heathcliff, who vows undying revenge. When Edger Linton courts Cathy and she agrees to marry him, Heathcliff overhears her tell Nelly that it would degrade her to marry Heathcliff. He slips away and disappears during a furious storm, too early to hear her declare that by accepting Edger she is betraying her own soul:

My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods. Time will change it, I'm well aware, as winter change the trees. My love Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath - a source of little visible delight.

Nelly, I am Heathcliff - he's always, always in my mind. (Ch. 9).

Three years later, Cathy marries Edger Linton and becomes mistress of Thruscross Grange.

The peaceful existence at the Grange is shattered by the sudden return of Heathcliff, who having acquired an imposing stature, education, and wealth by mysterious means, now seeks vengeance. He lodged at the Heights, exploiting Hindley's degeneracy and gradually winning possession by gambling. He encourages Isabella Linton's infatuation for him and elopes with her. He treats her despicably so that she escapes to the south. There she gives birth to a fair-haired son, Linton. Turn by the enmity between Edger and Heathcliff and weakened by pregnancy, Cathy dies giving birth to a girl, another Catherine. During the next twelve years Catherine grows up beautiful but spoiled. Isabella dies and Heathcliff claims his sickly petulant son Linton, planning to marry him to Catherine before he dies. Edgar objects, but while he

is dying Catherine and Nelly are lured to the Heights and imprisoned until the marriage takes place. After Edgar's burial, Catherine returns to the Heights and nurses Linton, who dies leaving everything to his father. Heathcliff is now the possessor of both Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights, but his satisfaction is abated by his obsession with Cathy's ghost and the prospect of spiritual reunion with her. He tells Nelly now he opened Cathy's coffin and held her in his arms; he has loosened the side panel in her coffin so that when he is buried next to her they will merge eternally.

Nelly, having brought the story up to the present time, is replaced again by Lockwood as narrator. He visits the Heights to tell Heathcliff he is giving up the tenancy of Thrushcross Grange. He finds that Catherine has been hardened by circumstances since Nelly's description and that she treats the boorish but handsome Hareton with contempt, though he would like to become friends. In September 1802, on a visit to the area, Lockwood again visits Wuthering Heights, where he finds Catherine teaching Hareton to read and realizes they are in love. They are to be married and to move to Grange, where life promises this younger generation happiness denied to the earlier lovers. Heathcliff, thwarted in the end by the vision of Cathy's ghost and fixated by the idea of reunion with her, dies mysteriously in her former bed one night, with the lattice window flapping to and fro. He is buried on the other side of Cathy to Edgar, in the corner of the graveyard closest to the moors. Joseph and the villagers claim to have seen the ghost of Heathcliff and Cathy, but Lockwood, passing the three graves, wonders how anyone could imagine the dead not sleeping peacefully there amongst the heath and harebells, under such a benign sky.

Three years later, Catherine meets Heathcliff on the moors, and makes a visit to Wuthering Heights to meet Linton. She and Linton begin a secret romance conducted entirely through letters. When Nelly destroys Catherine's collection of

letters, the girl begins sneaking out at night to spend time with her frail young lover, who asks her to come back and nurse him back to health. However, it quickly becomes apparent that Linton is pursuing Catherine only because Heathcliff is forcing him to; Heathcliff hopes that if Catherine marries Linton, his legal claim upon Thrushcross Grange - and his revenge upon Edgar Linton - will be complete. One day, as Edgar Linton grows ill and nears death, Heathcliff lures Nelly and Catherine back to Wuthering Heights, and holds them prisoner until Catherine marries Linton. Soon after the marriage, Edgar dies, and his death is quickly followed by the death of the sickly Linton. Heathcliff now controls both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. He forces Catherine to live at Wuthering Heights and act as a common servant, while he rents Thrushcross Grange to Lockwood.

Nelly's story ends as she reaches the present. Lockwood, appalled, ends his tenancy at Thrushcross Grange and returns to London. However, six months later, he pays a visit to Nelly, and learns of further developments in the story. Although Catherine originally mocked Hareton's ignorance and illiteracy (in an act of retribution, Heathcliff ended Hareton's education after Hindley died), Catherine grows to love Hareton as they live together at Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff becomes more and more obsessed with the memory of the elder Catherine, to the extent that he begins speaking to her ghost. Everything he sees reminds him of her. Shortly after a night spent walking on the moors, Heathcliff dies. Hareton and young Catherine inherit Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, and they plan to be married on the next New Year's Day. After hearing the end of the story, Lockwood goes to visit the graves of Catherine and Heathcliff.

The story of *Wuthering Heights* is told through flashbacks recorded in diary entries, and events are often presented out of chronological order - Lockwood's

narrative takes place after Nelly's narrative, for instance, but is interspersed with Nelly's story in his journal. Nevertheless, the novel contains enough clues to enable an approximate reconstruction of its chronology, which was elaborately designed by Emily Bronte. For instance, Lockwood's diary entries are recorded in the late months of 1801 and in September 1802; in 1801, Nelly tells Lockwood that she has lived at Thrushcross Grange for eighteen years, since Catherine's marriage to Edgar, which must then have occurred in 1783. We know that Catherine was engaged to Edgar for three years, and that Nelly was twenty-two when they were engaged, so the engagement must have taken place in 1780, and Nelly must have been born in 1758. Since Nelly is a few years older than Catherine, and since Lockwood comments that Heathcliff is about forty years old in 1801, it stands to reason that Heathcliff and Catherine were born around 1761, three years after Nelly. There are several other clues like this in the novel (such as Hareton's birth, which occurs in June, 1778). The following chronology is based on those clues, and should closely approximate the timing of the novel's important events. Before a date indicates that it cannot be precisely determined from the evidence in the novel, but only closely estimated. The stone above the front door of Wuthering Heights, bearing the name of Hareton Earnshaw, is inscribed, possibly to mark the completion of the house.

The fact that Catherine and Hethcliff, the two characters are emotionally detached from the events of the plot - and therefore not culpable for any social conventions those events may ignore - makes them less objectionable to readers. By distancing her narrators from the action of the novel, Bronte is consequently protecting herself by not linking herself too closely with the unconventional and even revolutionary nature of her novel. Ultimately, she successfully collects the values and norms prevailed in the contemporary society.

3.3 The Clash of Social Classes

Written and set during the Victorian Age, Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* can be seen as a social and economic depiction of the period. This novel, however, does not celebrate the heady feudal culture it portrays but, as a Marxist interpretation of the novel makes especially clear and reveals its underbelly. Through its characterization of those at the top of the Victorian Society gives a significant insight in terms of old and new values and norms of the period and their clash. With Brontë's rich educational heritage of the Romantics, it is tempting to picture *Wuthering Heights* in the context of social and economic forces.

Such a view of the novel actually helps to expand our understanding of it, and specifically, of characters' motivations throughout the novel. Such an investigation also provides a perspective on why Brontë wrote the novel as she did. Heathcliff's motivation throughout *Wuthering Heights* is obsession with taking revenge on his old enemies, Edgar Linton and Hindley Earnshaw, as well as their descendants. Marxist theory provides a perspective on the way in which he goes about seeking his retaliation: social and economic hegemony. Heathcliff's method of taking revenge on his enemies is to degrade them socially and dominate them economically.

The Marxist notion of ideology provides readers with a basis for perceiving Heathcliff's behavior. Louis Althusser explains that "ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence." (294) He goes on to say that this imaginary reality is usually imposed on a population by a small group of people who use the false reality to oppress that population. In the case of *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff is at once the deceiver and the deceived. His hegemony puts him in the seat of power, but in using his power, he deceives himself, not others. He convinces himself that vengeance will bring him satisfaction;

vengeance is the ideology by which Heathcliff fools himself into believing he can find contentment in life. Such is not the case, as he admits later - after causing much grief to his enemies, he avoids another opportunity (that of separating Hareton and young Catherine), saying: "I have lost the faculty of enjoying their destruction." (226)

Heathcliff's obsession with taking vengeance blinds him to the realities and possibilities of the world around him. This idea is best described by the way in which he views others:

I am afraid, Nelly, I shall lose my labor,' he muttered to me. 'Miss Catherine, as the ninny calls her, will discover his value, and send him to the devil. Now, if it had been Hareton - do you know that, twenty times a day, I covet Hareton, with all his degradation? I'd have loved the lad had he been some one else. But I think he's safe from her love. I'll pit him against the paltry creature, unless it bestirs itself briskly. We calculate it will scarcely last till it is eighteen. Oh, confound the vapid thing!' (194).

Heathcliff regards his son in humiliating and dehumanizing terms: "the ninny", "the paltry creature", "the vapid thing." Even Linton's personal pronoun changes from a human "him" to an inhuman "it." Such references demonstrate the social hegemony that Heathcliff wields over his enemies. Linton, because he is connected with Edgar, is a target of Heathcliff's retaliation, which he exerts by reducing him in social importance from person to object.

Such a demotion of status is in keeping with Heathcliff's purpose for his young son: to use him as a commodity to augment his economic power. Heathcliff thinks of Linton in terms of "his value" - his usefulness as a pawn in a marriage scheme by which means Heathcliff can gain control of the Grange. He even talks

about his anticipation of Linton's future in materialistic terms, saying he "calculate[s]" his life expectancy.

Heathcliff includes Catherine in his world of materialism. Assuming that Catherine will think as he does, Heathcliff worries that she will "discover [Linton's] value" and decide not to marry him, at which point Heathcliff will "lose his labor." Heathcliff supposes that others will take the same pragmatic view of the situation as he does.

Perhaps, Heathcliff's assumptions about Catherine's materialistic tendencies are based on his prior experience of his own marriage to Isabella. Heathcliff marries for purely mercenary reasons. Hoping to gain control of the Grange by marrying into the Linton family, he woos Isabella and allows her to believe he loves her.

Catherine's motivations for marriage, on the other hand, are not darkened by materialism. Although naive, she does genuinely seem to love Linton. There is sincerity in her attempt to explain her feelings to Nelly. When charged with forwardly pursuing a connection with Linton, Catherine exclaims: "I didn't! I didn't! I didn't once think of loving him till" (201). Presumably, she meant to say that she didn't love Linton until he pursued her. In any case, the distress expressed by Catherine conveys an air of frankness.

Catherine's involvement with Linton could not be further removed from thoughts of money. She has a "capacity for intense attachments", as Nelly tells us, which she demonstrates by her treatment of Linton (171). She tells Nelly that she is "certain Linton would recover quickly if he had me to look after him" (213). Such a demonstration of (naive) selflessness immediately places Catherine in another sphere than that of Heathcliff, who was obsessed enough with the idea of vengeance to use the institution of marriage to reach his goals.

While Heathcliff's life revolves around the idea of attaining retribution at the cost of any and all in his way, Catherine's outlook on life is much more compassionate. Therefore, it is wrong of Heathcliff to assume that Catherine would automatically leave Linton due to his peevish behavior; instead, it is quite possible that she would take it on herself to remedy his attitude by care and attention. Heathcliff's way of seeing everything in the tainted light of economic power is not the way of young Catherine.

Heathcliff's treatment of Hareton also reflects his fixation on economic and social power. He explains to Nelly that he "covet[s] Hareton, with all his degradation." First of all, "covet" brings to mind the idea of jealously desiring something that belongs to another. In fact, Heathcliff has only himself to blame for the divide between that which he covets and him. The reason for Heathcliff's separation from Hareton is Heathcliff's overpowering drive for vengeance on the Earnshaws. He has retaliated against Hindley by degrading his son, denying him an education and relegating him to the position of a servant in what is, by tradition, his own household. Desire for revenge overpowers Heathcliff's desire to befriend Hareton and even look upon him as his own son. Thus, while in one sense Heathcliff has power - to take revenge - he is left powerless to form emotionally satisfying relationships.

Resigning himself to the methods of retribution, Heathcliff decides to "pit [Hareton] against the paltry creature [Linton]." Hareton, whose emotional claims on his master are brushed aside, has once again been designated a weapon in Heathcliff's arsenal.

Yet, it is important that Heathcliff describes Linton as "paltry", which means "contemptible" or "petty", but also can mean "of worthless nature." (*Oxford English*

Dictionary 114) As has been discussed, Linton is certainly not worthless economically; his value as a trading object for the Lintons' property is great. Perhaps, Linton's worthlessness is an emotional one; his father can never have regard for him. Such an idea returns readers to Heathcliff's comment that he would have loved Hareton had circumstances been different. Heathcliff simultaneously respects and exploits Hareton, while all he can do to his son is exploit him, since he can never respect him. Heathcliff's overriding desire for retribution blinds him to the possibility of a meaningful relationship with a son-like figure.

Thus, the influence of vengeance as "ideology" on Heathcliff's actions - where vengeance will supposedly make all right - has led him to several grievous errors. He views people not as humans but as commodities (Linton), is blinded to the true intentions of people (like Catherine), and suppresses his own better feelings (like his regard for Hareton). Such misconceptions of reality result from, as Terry Eagleton puts it, the "delusory freedom of exploiting others." (402)

Other characters base their actions on vengeance, but not to the same extent as Heathcliff. For these characters, vengeance is useful, but not deluding. Unlike Heathcliff, they realize that revenge will not actually satisfy them.

The older Cathy, for example, willingly revenges herself on Heathcliff for his part in her sufferings. When she is dying, she verbally tortures him, accusing him of having essentially killed her and of being liable to forget her after she dies. Heathcliff responds, pointing out that she will have the peace of the grave while he suffers from her cruel words for the rest of his days. Cathy's response: "I shall not be at peace" (149). Even as Cathy retaliates against Heathcliff for his desertion of her and his part in the development of Cathy's illness, she realizes that such retribution will not bring her peace.

The younger Catherine likewise prides herself in being able to take revenge while still realizing its fruitlessness. After marrying Linton and discovering the true horror of her situation, she speaks to Heathcliff of the dark joy she can derive from her bleak situation. She explains that she loves Linton despite his bad attitude, and that this fact gives her the joy of knowing that she has the ability to love, unlike Heathcliff, who loves no one. Catherine enjoys Heathcliff's misery as a form of revenge while simultaneously recognizing that she has nothing much ahead of her but the cruelty of her father-in-law and the bad temper of her husband. Revenge is a consolation, but not a solution to her afflictions.

Thus, other characters are not blinded by vengeance, but instead recognize its downfall: it may maim an enemy, but in the end it will not solve the problems of the avenger.

The notion of ideology is not only useful for delving into the characters' motivations, but also becomes important when considering why Bronte wrote *Wuthering Heights* as she did. The society into which Bronte brought her novel was steeped in ideologies which presented problems for the writer. The ideological power found in Victorian society's morals, for example, was influential on Bronte's writing techniques. The reviews of *Wuthering Heights* expressed the offense caused by the novel to those who upheld such morals. One reviewer called the book a "disagreeable story" and denounces the author for seeming to "affect painful and exceptional subjects."

Emily Bronte's sister, Charlotte, assessed the situation succinctly in her preface to the second edition of *Jane Eyre*: "Conventionality is not morality. Self-righteousness is not religion. To attack the first is not to assail the last." (*Jane Eyre* 2) What society approves is not always right and what hypocritical religious devotees

believe is not necessarily right, either. Thus, to attack conventionality and self-righteousness (which Emily does implicitly in *Wuthering Heights*) is not the same as being immoral or irreligious.

In the light of such ideology, it is interesting to consider the very structure of *Wuthering Heights*. It is composed in a way that attempts to shield the author from guilt due to too close an association with the events of the novel. The nested narratives remove the author from the action of the novel; readers are told the story by Mr. Lockwood, who hears it from Nelly Dean, who sometimes has her version of the story from another source. Mr. Lockwood is an outsider from the city; Nelly is a cool-headed observer of events. Nelly's detachment from the highly emotional nature of various events is particularly striking. For example, Nelly witnesses Heathcliff violently bashing his head against an oak tree with the words: "It hardly moved my compassion - it appalled me" (155).

The fact that these two characters are emotionally detached from the events of the plot - and therefore not culpable for any social conventions those events may ignore - makes them less objectionable to readers. By distancing her narrators from the action of the novel, Bronte is consequently protecting herself by not linking herself too closely with the unconventional and even revolutionary nature of her novel.

The contrast and relationship between the two houses, the Heights and the Grange, is one of the basic thematic and structural techniques of the novel. As with every other aspect of *Wuthering Heights*, this conflict has been interpreted in various different ways. Clearly there is social difference between the two families, the Earnshaw and the Linton families, though this has to be defined rather precisely. Both the Earnshaw and Linton families belong to the class of the gentry; the families are at

least socially compatible, if not of equal status. Heathcliff describes the first sight of Grange:

Ah! It was beautiful-a splendid place carpeted with crimson and crimson-covered chairs and tables, and a pure white ceiling bordered by gold, a shower of glass-drops hanging in silver chains from the centre, and shimmering with little soft tapers. Old Mr. and Mrs. Linton were not there. Edger and his sister had it entirely to themselves; shouldn't they have been happy? We should have thought ourselves in heaven! (Ch. 4)

At the same time the Earnshaw family is a substantial yeoman farmer, rich enough to send his son away to college for three years so that his children's status and respectability consequently makes them socially acceptable to the local gentry. Heathcliff, by contrast, is a waif picked up by Earnshaw on the streets of Liverpool, classified as a gipsy, a nomadic alien who is an outcast from society and referred to as 'nameless,' an epithet which is literary accurate since his name unknown and he is given that of both first name and surname. He is also legally 'nullius filius,' nobody's son, a child with no legitimate father, and although he is at first treated as a member of the family by Earnshaw, that ceases when Hindley succeeds to the ownership of the Heights on his father's death.

As members of the gentry, the Earnshaws and the Lintons occupy a somewhat precarious place within the hierarchy of late eighteenth - and early nineteenth-century British society. At the top of British society was the royalty, followed by the aristocracy, then by the gentry, and then by the lower classes, who made up the vast majority of the population. Although the gentry, or upper middle class, possessed servants and often large estates, they held a nonetheless fragile social position. The

social status of aristocrats was a formal and settled matter, because aristocrats had official titles. Members of the gentry, however, held no titles, and their status was thus subject to change. A man might see himself as a gentleman but find, to his embarrassment, that his neighbors did not share this view. A discussion of whether or not a man was really a gentleman would consider such questions as how much land he owned, how many tenants and servants he had, how he spoke, whether he kept horses and a carriage, and whether his money came from land or “trade” - gentlemen scorned banking and commercial activities.

Considerations of class status often crucially inform the characters’ motivations in *Wuthering Heights*. Catherine’s decision to marry Edgar so that she will be “the greatest woman of the neighborhood” is only the most obvious example. The Lintons are relatively firm in their gentry’s status but nonetheless take great pains to prove this status through their behaviors. The Earnshaws, on the other hand, rest on much shakier ground socially. They do not have a carriage, they have less land, and their house, as Lockwood remarks with great puzzlement, resembles that of a “homely, northern farmer” and not that of a gentleman. The shifting nature of social status is demonstrated most strikingly in Heathcliff’s trajectory from homeless waif to young gentleman-by-adoption to common laborer to gentleman again (although the status-conscious Lockwood remarks that Heathcliff is only a gentleman in “dress and manners”).

Chapter Four

Conclusion

Clash, according to Oxford Dictionary, is confrontation between opposite forces. The confrontation of different classes can clearly be observed in the Victorian Period. Class is a complex term, used since the late eighteenth century, and employed in many different ways. In our context, classes are the more or less distinct social groupings, which exist at any given historical period. Different social classes can be distinguished by inequalities in such areas as power, authority, wealth, and working and living conditions, life-styles, life span, education, religion, and culture.

Early in the nineteenth century the labels "working classes" and "middle classes" were already coming into common usage. The old hereditary aristocracy, reinforced by the new gentry who owed their success to commerce, industry, and the professions, evolved into an "upper class" which tenaciously maintained control over the political system, depriving not only the working classes but the middle classes of a voice in the political process. The increasingly powerful (and class conscious) middle classes, however, undertook organized agitation to remedy this situation: the passage of the Reform Act of 1832 and the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846 were intimations of the extent to which they would ultimately be successful.

The working classes, however, remained shut out from the political process, and became increasingly hostile not only to the aristocracy but to the middle classes as well. As the Industrial Revolution progressed there was further social stratification. Capitalists, for example, employed industrial workers who were one component of the working classes (each class included a wide range of occupations of varying status and income; there was a large gap, for example, between skilled and unskilled labor), but beneath the industrial workers was a submerged "under class" - contemporaries

referred to them as the "sunken people" - which lived in poverty. In mid - century skilled workers had acquired enough power to enable them to establish Trade Unions (Socialism became an increasingly important political force) which they used to further improve their status, while unskilled workers and the underclass beneath them remained much more susceptible to exploitation, and were therefore exploited.

This basic hierarchical structure (presented here in highly oversimplified form), comprising the "upper classes," the "middle classes," the "working classes" (with skilled laborers at one extreme and unskilled at the other), and the impoverished "under class," remained relatively stable despite periodic (and frequently violent) upheavals, and despite the Marxist view of the inevitability of class conflict, at least until the outbreak of World War I. Such confrontation is successfully depicted in the book.

The novel opens in 1801, in order to fix its happenings at a time when the old rough farming culture based on a naturally patriarchal family life, was to be challenged, tamed and routed by social and cultural changes that were to produce the Victorian class consciousness and unnatural ideal of gentility. In 1801 the Industrial Revolution was under way in England; when Emily Bronte was writing in 1847, it was a dominant force in English economy and society, and the traditional relationship of social classes was being disrupted by mushroom-new fortunes and an upwardly-aspiring middle class. The criterion for defining a gentleman was shifting to money, from character, breeding, or family. This social-economic reality provides the context for socio-economic readings of the novel.

Heathcliff journeys from an orphaned infant to a disheartened slave to a heartless equal in his society. The power of a higher social status ultimately brings an end to this highly complicated character. In *Wuthering Heights*, Bronte's complex

characters, involved in a theme of violence and destructive conflicts, provide the antithesis to the Marxist's point of view. He rose in status to gain equal footing to achieve the "classless" society from the Marxism point of view but then contradicts the theory when he goes beyond his limits and starts to act as a "dictator," having control over everyone.

Social position and respectability in this period were directly tied to possession of property. A country house owned by landed gentry like the Earnshaws and the Lintons was known as a position a broad term that included both the tangible assets (for instance, the house and land) and intangible assets (for instance, the family name and any hereditary titles) of the family that owned it. In *Wuthering Heights*, the first Catherine tells Nelly that she is marrying Edgar Linton because to marry Heathcliff would degrade her (they would be beggars) and because she plans to use Linton's money to help Heathcliff to rise.

Position passed from father to first-born male or to the next closest male relative if there were no sons in a family. The only way around this process was to invoke a device called strict settlement, in force between 1650 and 1880, which allowed a father to dispose of his holdings, as he liked through a trustee. Because Edgar Linton dies before ensuring that his daughter Catherine will inherit Thrushcross Grange, the land passes first to her husband, Linton, and after Linton's death to his father, Heathcliff.

In contrast to earlier times when incest was forbidden by law, in eighteenth-century England marriage between first cousins was looked upon favorably as a way of preserving position and property. A typical union was one of a woman who married her father's brother's son, which kept the seat of the bride's family under their control. In *Wuthering Heights*, in a perverse twist, the second Catherine Linton

marries her father's sister's son, and in the absence of a strict settlement ends up losing her family's position.

Landholding families typically maintained a large staff of servants who fulfilled the functions (for a man) of steward, valet, butler, and gardener, or (for a woman) of lady's maid, housekeeper, cook, and nurse. In a household the size of *Wuthering Heights*, whose inhabitants did not entertain, combining functions made economic sense. In the novel Joseph serves as both valet and steward, and Ellen as housekeeper, though her duties are fairly broadly defined.

To the characters of *Wuthering Heights*, property ownership and social standing are inextricable. The Earnshaws and the Lintons both own estates, whereas Heathcliff is a foundling and has nothing. The first Catherine plans to marry Linton to use her husband's money to raise Heathcliff's social standing, thus freeing him from Hindley's domination. Her plan is foiled when Heathcliff disappears after hearing Catherine say that to marry him would degrade her. When he returns, he exerts great efforts to do people out of their property: first Hindley, then Isabella, then the second Catherine Linton. He takes revenge on Hareton by ensuring that the boy is raised in ignorance, with loutish manners, so that he will never escape his station. The story comes full cycle when Catherine Linton teaches Hareton to read, thus winning his love. The understanding at the end of the novel is that the couple will move to Thrushcross Grange.

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