14. *Blackwood's Magazine*, xxxiv (1833), pp. 814–19.

15. The brothers in the *Blackwood's Magazine* story are not, however, at enmity with each other. An English translation of Emily's essay by L. W. Nagel is printed in *Brontë Society Transactions*, xi (1950), pp. 339–40.

16. Thomas Aird's pedestrian 'A Father's Curse' is a narrative in verse, *Blackwood's Magazine*, xxxiv (Nov. 1833), pp. 814–19.

17. See above, pp. 96–7.

18. In his pioneering study, 'The Growth of *Wuthering Heights*', in *PMLA*, xliii (1933), pp. 129–46.

19. It is not Lawlor, but Tom Bush, Lawlor's betrayer, who is the 'foundling'; see *Blackwood's Magazine*, xliii (Nov. 1840), pp. 680–704, esp. 685.

20. It should be added that there is a striking similarity between the treatment of Ellen Nugent's last tranquil hours by her window at 'the close of a sweet evening in July' and Emily's handling of Catherine's last hours in *Wuthering Heights*, ch. 15: in both cases calm is broken by the violent intrusion of the lover, an impassioned dialogue follows, and the outcome of the meeting is tragic.

21. For a further discussion of the Shakespearian echoes in Emily's novel, see Lew Girdler, '*Wuthering Heights* and Shakespeare', in *Huntington Library Quarterly*, xix (Aug. 1956), pp. 385–92.

Allott

Miriam Allott The Rejection of Heathcliff? (1958)[1]

The influence of Lord David Cecil's analysis of *Wuthering Heights* in *Early Victorian Novelists* (1934) . . . does not necessarily imply a simple approval of the total meaning he ascribes to the book. . . .

Cecil's main contentions about the principles of storm and calm and their relationship to each other in the novel are the following. First, they are 'not conflicting': they are to be thought of either as separate aspects of a pervading spirit or as component parts of a harmony. Second, they are not in themselves destructive. If in life they become so, it is because 'in the cramped condition of their earthly incarnation these principles are debarred from following the course that their nature indicates . . . the calm becomes a source of

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subject to temporary interruptions because it is self-righting. It operates to restore the equilibrium which is momentarily lost. Of the stormy Earnshaws and the Linton 'children of calm', Cecil asserts, 'Together each group, following its own sphere, combines to compose as cosmic harmony. It is the destruction and the re-establishment of this harmony which is the theme of the story.' These are the conclusions drawn by Cecil from his study of the novel. . . . If they are accepted as self-evident, an interpretation of *Wuthering Heights* can be made which does justice to many elements of Emily Brontë's art, but at the same time the pattern of the novel suffers distortion, and much must be overlooked. . . .

Indeed the whole structure of the novel suggests a deeper and more compulsive concern with the elements of 'storm' than this reading allows for. As very little has noticed, Emily Brontë extends her themes into the story of the second generation of Earnshaws and Lintons; Cecil himself comments on the way in which she uses her two generations to illustrate contrasts between 'calm' and 'storm', and to reveal the workings of inherited characteristics. But . . . most remarkable about the second generation story is the effort it makes to modify the 'storm-calm' opposition in such a way as to eliminate the most violent and troubling elements that give the first generation story its peculiar intensity. . . . She substitutes for the violent Cathy–Edgar–Heathcliff relationship of the first part the milder Catherine–Linton–Hareton relationships of the second; and she alters the earlier savage Hindley–Heathcliff relationship (of victimiser and embittered victim) into the more tenuous Heathcliff–Hareton relationship (where the tyrant has some feeling for his victim, while the victim himself remains loving and unembittered). . . . Hindley's savage and destructive grief for his wife, Frances, and Heathcliff's frenzy at Cathy's death, reappear as Edgar's deep but quiet grief for the same lady, and has Hareton's 'strong grief' for Heathcliff – a grief 'which springs naturally from a generous heart, though it be tough as tempered steel'. Again, while Emily Brontë replaces the wildness of the first-generation story by a quality of energy in the second generation which is more normal and human, she also shows us in the second generation a demoralizing extreme of calm. Thus Heathcliff, the epitome of 'storm', fathers Linton, who

feel'. The atmosphere becomes increasingly tense as Catherine, about to recount her dream, grows 'sadder and graver'. . . . Finally, a 'dream' is told – but Catherine's mood has changed . . . 'I was only going to say that heaven did not seem to be my home; and I broke my heart with weeping to come back to earth; and the angels were so angry that they flung me out into the middle of the heath on the top of Wuthering Heights; where I woke sobbing for joy.' The emotional ambiguity is emphasised when Catherine adds: 'That will do to explain my secret as well as the other.' What the 'other' dream was, or even what her 'secret' is, we are never really told. The implication is, of course, that the untold dream is too strange, too terrible or too startling to tell, but one must suppose that the substituted dream gives a real clue to its nature. If this is so, the strangeness and the horror seem to accumulate round the idea of Catherine's becoming aware that she is a predestined being – that the deepest bent of her nature announces her destiny, since she cannot even desire heaven or feel that it is her home. Her secret – with its 'consolation' – is that her destiny cannot be separated from Heathcliff's: she will be doing wrong in marrying Edgar because this is an attempted evasion of what is already determined. Whatever Catherine meant, a range of emotions and fearful imaginings is suggested for which frustrated union with a natural affinity is too simple an explanation. There is at least a kind of cosmic outlawry, and perhaps this explains why Heathcliff should sometimes remind us of Byron's Manfred or Cain.[3] . . .

III

The altered emphasis in the second part of the book is apparent at once from the nature imagery, which is one of Emily Brontë's most important pieces of dramatic apparatus. The predominantly sombre nature imagery expressive of the elder Catherine's love for Heathcliff now gives place to the brighter images of summer landscape and summer heather which surround the younger Catherine.[4] The conflict eventually destroying the first Catherine . . . is presented figuratively in a whole series of contrasted alternatives; 'a bleak hilly coal country' or 'a beautiful fertile valley' [ch. 8]; moonbeam or lightning; frost or fire [ch. 9]. Catherine's love for Linton, 'like foliage in the woods: time will change it . . . as winter changes the trees', is set against her love for Heathcliff, which 'resembles the eternal rocks beneath: a source of little visible delight

but necesary' [ch. 9]. Again, Heathcliff is 'an unreclaimed creature, without refinement, without cultivation'; and if Isabella Linton marries him it will be like putting a little canary into the park on a winter's day' [ch. 10]. The opposition that these contrasts present to us is a direct one between the extremes of 'storm' and 'calm', between 'Earth' in her dark guise and 'Earth' in her fairer aspect, and the complication arises because Catherine identifies herself with the darker element while allying herself with the fairer one.

The way in which this opposition is modified in the second generation story is perhaps best illustrated by the account of the younger Catherine's quarrel with Linton in chapter 24. Catherine has fallen in love with her young and sickly cousin, Heathcliff's child by Isabella Linton, and she steals away from the 'valley' and Thrushcross Grange in order to be with him as often as she can. But Linton is peevish, irritable and mortally ill, and their relationship is not harmonious [quotes 'One time, however . . . very snappish']. The energetic literary qualities of this passage help to strengthen the point it is trying to make. It is a vivid restatement in fresh terms and with a different emphasis of the conflict expressed in the elder Catherine's dream in chapter 9. Emily Brontë's intention, almost certainly, is that we should recall this dream now when the child of the first Catherine and the child of Heathcliff in their turn discuss ideas of 'heaven's happiness'. It is only one of the many oblique comments that this passage makes on the first generation story that the whole incident should be entirely free from the more troubled feelings that accompany the account of the elder Catherine's dream; the 'quarrel' is a brief one – 'and then we kissed each other, and were friends'. More importantly, the passage shows that whereas for the elder Catherine the bare hard moor is 'heaven's happiness', for her daughter that happiness is identified with a bright animated landscape in which the moors are 'seen at a distance'. Moreover, the brilliant sunlit moors in which Linton lies in his 'ecstasy of peace' have nothing to do with the bleak moors in which his father ran wild when he was young. In fact we now find qualities earlier associated with the 'valley' imposed on the Heights, and *vice versa*. Each quality is modified in transit: 'storm' retains its energy but sheds its destructiveness; 'calm', losing its positive qualities, is a delicious but languorous inactivity (the attitude of the first Lintons to the elder Catherine had involved much more passiveness – 'the honeysuckles embracing the thorn' as Nelly Dean says in chapter 10).

In using this passage as part of her commentary on the first generation story, the author also uses her nature imagery to sharpen and contrast the characters of her two Catherines. The younger Catherine's ideal landscape includes larks, thrushes, blackbirds, linnets and cuckoos, all 'pouring out music on every side'. Her description recalls the delirious fantasies of chapter 12, where her mother, the elder Catherine, tears her pillow in a frenzy, and then pulls out the feathers, arranging them in groups and remembering the creatures to whom they once belonged. It is in keeping with the differences in texture in the two parts of the story that the elder Catherine's birds (she mentions lapwings, moorcocks and wild duck) should not only be more identifiable with a northern, moorland countryside but should also bring with them ideas of violence, vanished childhood, winter and death – ideas which are associated with 'Heathcliff' feelings, and have no comparable urgency in the story of the younger Catherine. The younger Catherine's birds, on the contrary, suggest notions of summer and sunshine and happy vitality.

Determination to prognosticate a brighter future for the new Linton-Earnshaws is revealed in the good-weather imagery lavished on the account of the younger Catherine's childhood and adolescence. One of the earliest Gondal poems, 'Will the day be bright or cloudy', is concerned with weather omens presiding over a child's birth: the poem sketches three alternative kinds of destiny, tranquil, troubled or vitally active, according to the omens, and these alternatives more or less anticipate the differences between Linton and the two Catherines. Now, in her novel, Emily Brontë stresses the fact that for the younger Catherine – and also for Hareton, whom she will marry – the weather omens are favourable. Both children are born in fine weather, the one in spring, the other in the hay-making season. They are both children of love, and it is established that Catherine was conceived in the 'calm' period of Edgar's and the first Catherine's 'deep and growing happiness' before Heathcliff's return (the predominant mood of the six months since their marriage is suggested by Nelly Dean in chapter 10 when she tells Lockwood about Heathcliff's sudden return). Though the second Catherine is 'puny' and unwelcome to begin with (her mother dies in giving birth to her), her first morning is 'bright and cheerful out of doors': and this fine weather lasts throughout the week. There is a resurgence of first-generation violence in chapter

17, when the first Catherine is buried on the Friday, and so enters her 'glorious world' of the moors: 'That Friday made the last of our fine days for a month . . . the wind shifted and brought rain first, and then sleet and snow.' This intervening chapter of storm marks Heathcliff's violent emotional reaction to her death and underlines the supernatural element (explained later, in the 'flashback' of chapter 29, when Heathcliff tells Nelly Dean that he was prevented from opening Catherine's coffin by the sense that her spirit was already standing beside him in the darkness). From the beginning of the next chapter [ch. 18], however, when we are led steadily on into the second generation story, all this violence dies away. Spring and summer images indicate the untroubled years of Catherine's childhood in the valley – her first twelve years are described by Nelly Dean as 'the happiest of my life'. In these years she is almost as secure from the troubling associations of Wuthering Heights as a princess in an enchanted castle, and Penistone Crags in the distance are 'golden rocks', even though Nelly Dean had to explain 'that they were bare masses of stone, with hardly enough earth in their clefts to nourish a stunted tree' [ch. 18]. Catherine's sixteenth birthday is 'a beautiful spring day' [quotes from ch. 21, 'She bounded before me . . . content']. On other occasions she climbs trees, 'swinging twenty feet above the ground' and 'lying from dinner to tea in her breeze-rocked cradle', singing. (Much of this reminds us of Ellen Nussey's account of the Brontë girls out on the moors.)

. . . the importance of Hareton's birth is stressed by the break in Nelly Dean's narrative at the end of chapter 7, when she takes up the story again at his birthday in 'the summer of 1778, that is nearly twenty-three years ago', and her next words, placed prominently at the opening of chapter 8, suggest the auspiciousness . . . attending the arrival of this latest member of the ancient Earnshaw family:

> On the morning of a fine Sunday, my first bonny nursling, and the last of the Earnshaw stock was born. We were busy with the hay in a far-away field, and the girl that usually brought out breakfasts came running out an hour too soon, across the meadow and up the lane, calling as she ran: 'Oh, such a grand bairn,' she panted out. 'The finest lad that ever breathed. . .'

And in almost all the scenes in which Hareton appears in the second generation story his connection with the fertile earth and gentleness with living things are kept before our eyes. Nelly Dean, seeing him for the first time after his many years with Heathcliff (in ch. 18),

detects 'evidence of a wealthy soil, that might yield luxuriant crops under other and favourable circumstances'.

. . . the characters in the second generation story have to contend with Heathcliff's animosity, but their 'dark' scenes of conflict are quite unlike those of the first generation story. In the earlier part of the book storm images establish the prevailing emotional atmosphere. . . . There is no comparable 'stormy' weather in the later story: the 'dark' scenes are not so much different in degree as in kind, their final effect no more sombre than clouds passing over a sunny landscape, an idea suggested more than once by Nelly Dean's descriptions of the second Catherine.

What, then, becomes of the storm-centre, Heathcliff himself, in this second half of the book? Our attention is turned to him once more when he traps Catherine into staying at Wuthering Heights. . . . He inveigles Catherine into the marriage with Linton, he prevents her from joining her dying father, he makes her nurse the mortally sick Linton unaided, he secures her property once Linton is dead, he treats her with systematic harshness. Yet this behaviour seems hardly more sinister than a stage villain's. The strongest emotion Heathcliff arouses throughout the greater part of the later narrative is a kind of angry exasperation at his injustice. He is still capable of making ferocious remarks:

> . . . what a savage feeling I have to anything that seems afraid of me! Had I been born where laws are less strict and tastes less dainty, I should treat myself to a slow vivisection of those two, as an evening's amusement. . .

but this lacks the resonance of such passionate outbursts as his speech to 'Cathy' before her death [quotes from ch. 15, 'You deserve this . . . in the grave']. Angry exasperation is an emotion on too small a scale to suit this earlier Heathcliff. On the other hand, the portrayal of Heathcliff still communicates the kind of sympathy which makes the earlier story so remarkable – it is a story, after all, which not only depicts the 'heroine' and the 'villain' falling in love with each other, but describes their passion with a sympathetic power so intense that it makes nonsense of the more usual responses to such a situation and upsets conventional value judgements. This sympathy is now partly suggested through Nelly Dean – whose function for Heathcliff is rather more than that of *confidante* – and partly through such mitigating circumstances as Hareton's persistent love for him, a feeling that is not unreturned (we also remember

that Heathcliff saved Hareton's life in ch. 9). Again, the bad effect on us of Heathcliff's callousness to his son is complicated by the fact that Linton is a sorry mixture of peevishness and irritability. . . .

But at the very point where his need for vengeance dies, Heathcliff does in fact fully revive . . . as the powerfully compelling and complex figure of the first part of the story. Hitherto, in the second half of the book, Emily Brontë has concentrated on her 'calm' figures, who represent alternatives to Heathcliff and to everything that he stands for, and as long as she makes him serve as a foil to these figures he is merely their vindictive enemy. But when she turns to look directly and exclusively at him again, we see and feel what we saw and felt earlier. . . . This happens with the monologue she gives him late in the story (in ch. 29), when he tells Nelly Dean about his two attempts to open the first Catherine's coffin – once on the night of her funeral, and a second time, successfully, when – years later – Edgar's grave is being prepared beside hers, and, with the help of the sexton, he at last sees her dead face ('It is hers still'). As he watches the growing alliance between the second Catherine and Hareton (the latter resembling the first Catherine in appearance more and more, 'because his senses were alert, and his mental faculties wakened to unwanted activity'), Heathcliff senses the 'strange change approaching', and in another outburst to Nelly Dean, in chapter 33, he resumes much of the intensity and passion of his earlier appearances:

> . . . In every cloud, in every tree – filling the air at night, and caught by glimpses in every object by day – I am surrounded with her image! The most ordinary faces of men and wmen – my own features – mock me with a resemblance. The entire world is a dreadful collection of memoranda that she did exist, and that I have lost her! Well, Hareton's aspect was the ghost of my immortal love; of my wild endeavours to hold my right, my degradation, my pride, my happiness and my anguish —.

Later still, when the tale is nearly at its end and Catherine's ghost seems to walk once more, the old feelings are fully revived, the obsessional pattern of *motifs* reappears, and Nelly Dean, finding Heathcliff lying motionless and soaking wet in the oak bed, his eyes staring, his wrist grazed by the open lattice, cries, 'I could not think him dead', and tries 'to extinguish, if possible, that frightful life-like gaze of exultation'.

It is now that the first of the story's two 'arcs' approaches its final point of rest. It reaches this point, moreover, at the same moment

that the second generation story is coming to its own conclusion, and this 'coincidence' draws attention to ambiguities in the attempted resolution of conflict . . . within the space of a single page, we turn from the phantoms of Heathcliff and the elder Catherine restlessly walking the Heights in rain and thunder . . . to contemplate those other 'ramblers' on the moors, Hareton and the younger Catherine, who halt on the threshold of the old house to take 'a last look at the moon – or, more correctly, at each other by her light'. The closing passage of the book might suggest to an unwary reader that the final victory is to them. It is possible to mistake this last comment of Lockwood's, indicating 'calm' after 'storm', for a statement of calm's ultimate triumph. But such a reading overlooks the departure of Hareton and the younger Catherine to the valley, and their abandonment of the old house to the spirits of the still restless Heathcliff and the elder Catherine. There is, after all, no escaping the compulsive emotional charge identified with Heathcliff; there can only be an intellectual judgement that for the purposes of ordinary life he will not do. It is the artist's business, Tchekov tells us, to set questions, not solve them. . . . It is an indication of the urgency of internal conflict that the tones of an authorial voice can be heard even through the controlled 'oblique and indirect view' of Catherine's and Heathcliff's fated alliance. The tones are those of someone aware that conflicting claims remain unreconciled, and that though moral judgement might desire otherwise no ultimate closure is possible.

SOURCE: *Essays in Criticism* (1958).

NOTES

1. See Introduction, p. 29 above.
2. For example, in her letters of September to December 1848 and in her letter to Miss Wooler, 30 January 1846 (*Life and Letters*, II, 76).
3. And perhaps also why Albert Camus finds it possible to discuss Heathcliff's passion for Catherine in the same context as Ivan Karamazov's 'metaphysical rebellion' in *L'Homme revolté* (1951) ch. 1. On the differences between Heathcliff and the Byronic hero, see Jacques Blondel's discussion (p. 160 above).
4. Jacques Blondel also notes in his comments on this part of the essay the importance of Emily Brontë's use of the adjective 'mellow' ('Emily Brontë, récentes explorations', in *Études anglaises*, XI (1958), p. 328 n).

Mary Visick The Genesi *Heights* (1958)

. . . It is well known that Emily Brontë life with a dream-world which she cor and called Gondal. They peopled characters whose stories they recorde which have not survived (they may hav or by her husband, by Emily herself or The complications of the Gondal r Emily Brontë's poetry appear freak tempting though it is to see in her wor from Gondal, it remains true that beautifully wrought poetry, much of w moments in the Gondal saga, can be are the exquisite double lyric which Children', the famous lament 'Cold in t Emily Brontë is not justly estimated author of half a dozen familiar pieces; l as a fine craftsman, and each poem is

Miss Fannie E. Ratchford has Brontë's poems, including those to whi Gondal context, into a consecutive na *Gondal's Queen* [1955]. . . . Miss Rat compelled the poems to tell a story, b bear much scrutiny. . . . Nevertheles *Gondal's Queen* comes to have a differer it a starting point for *Wuthering He* reworking of Gondal we find ourselves nation in the act not of scrapping l material on which it has so far worked to deny the independent value of th exclusively, those which their author saga.

That *Wuthering Heights* is an extra ment is hardly to be questioned. . . . wants to write a novel. The wildly un-r

I turned me to the pillow then
To call back Night, and see
Your worlds of solemn light, again
Throb with my heart and me!

It would not do – the pillow glowed
And glowed both roof and floor,
And birds sang loudly in the wood,
And fresh winds shook the door.

The curtains waved, the wakened flies
Were murmuring round my room,
Imprisoned there, till I should rise
And give them leave to roam.

O Stars and Dreams and Gentle Night;
O Night and Stars return!
And hide me from the hostile light
That does not warm, but burn —

That drains the blood of suffering men;
Drinks tears, instead of dew:
Let me sleep through his blinding reign,
And only wake with you![12]

Miss Ratchford takes this as a straight Gondal monologue; but its author did not call it a Gondal poem. It is indeed, like the central stanzas of 'The Prisoner', a poem which suggests that Gondal had served its purpose. The poet no longer needs to wear the mask of A.G.A., and nowhere does that passionate but uncomplicated young woman speak with the voice of this poem. It is the quintessence of the Gondal situation, but, paradoxically, once she had grasped the means of expressing it Emily Brontë ceased to need the Gondal people. For the most part they disappeared, but the moments in which they lived most intensely were regrouped, and out of the regrouping rose *Wuthering Heights*, in which the central Gondal people themselves were reborn as Catherine, Heathcliff and Edgar, Cathy, Hareton and Isabella.

SOURCE: *The Genesis of Wuthering Heights* (1958).

NOTES

1. *The Great Tradition* (1948), p. 27.
2. See above, p. 68n.
3. *The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë*, ed. C. W. Hatfield (New York and London, 1941).

4. Anne's diary-paper, 31 July 1845, *Life and Letters*, Shakespeare Head Brontë, II, 52–3.
5. In *The Brontës: Charlotte and Emily* (New York, 1945).
6. For details of this poem, see above, p. 108n.
7. This and the following 'song' are dated 17 October 1838: see *Poems*, ed. Hatfield, pp. 82–3.
8. Emily's diary-paper, 30 July 1845, 'Anne and I went our first long journey by ourselves together, leaving home on the 30th June, Monday, sleeping at York, returning to Keighley Tuesday evening . . . during our excursion we were, Ronald Macalgin, Henry Angora, Juliet Angusteena, Rosabella Esmaldan, Ella and Julian Egremont, Catherine Navarre, and Cordelia Fitzaphnold, escaping from the palaces of instruction to join the Royalists who are hard driven at present by the victorious Republicans. The Gondals still flourish bright as ever. . . . We intend sticking firm by the rascals as long as they delight us, which I am glad to say they do at present' (*Life and Letters*, II, 49–51).
9. See above, pp. 158–9.
10. See above, p. 109.
11. Mrs Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë*, ch. 8.
12. Dated 14 April 1845: *Poems*, ed. Hatfield, p. 225.

Drew

Philip Drew Charlotte Brontë's Insight into *Wuthering Heights* (1964)

Of the critics who comment explicitly on the book's subject and its moral import, one of the earliest is Charlotte Brontë. . . . The points she makes in her Preface to the edition of 1850[1] are so different from those which tr[redacted] modern critics that they are worth careful attention on their own account, to say nothing of their unique value as the comments of an intelligent and informed contemporary, who was peculiarly well placed to understand the nature of the authoress's achievement. . . .

At the beginning of her Preface, Charlotte Brontë apologizes ironically to those too delica[redacted] the story of unpo[redacted] people and to those who are offended by seeing words (presumably 'damn', 'devil' and 'hell') written out in full. She continues by apologizing in the same vein for the rusticity of *Wuthering Heights*, although she is in fact defending it as authentic and inevitable. . . .

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who had not either harmed him or asked for trouble.' One can see that this is simply an inaccurate account of the novel, but as Watson's article shows, it may fairly be taken as representative of much recent criticism of *Wuthering Heights*. How are we to account for the fact that, although Charlotte Brontë describes Heathcliff's conduct accurately, her judgement of his character has commanded virtually no support from later writers, and the very transactions on which this judgement is based are ignored? Why, in short, have critics responded so readily to Heathcliff as the hero of the novel and paid so little attention to his more conspicuous qualifications to be considered the villain?[6]

Most obviously, the characters set in opposition to him are gentle to the point of weakness. Isabella, the younger Catherine and his own son are powerless to resist him, Hindley seems a frail old man, Edgar is not a man of action, and Nelly herself, who is Heathcliff's most persistent opponent, often behaves foolishly at vital points in the action. The reader is thus tempted to admire Heathcliff, as the Romantic critics admire Satan, for his energy and decisiveness, even his ruthlessness. . . .

It is frequently argued that Heathcliff is redeemed by his passionate love for Catherine Earnshaw. This is Charlotte Brontë's comment:

> His love for Catherine . . . is a sentiment fierce and inhuman: a passion such as might boil and glow in the bad essence of some evil genius; a fire that might form the tormented centre – the ever-suffering soul of a magnate of the infernal world: and by its quenchless and ceaseless ravage effect the execution of the decree which dooms him to carry Hell with him wherever he wanders.

. . . I shall hope to show that this is a literally accurate description of Heathcliff's passion for Catherine.

. . . When Catherine is fifteen and Heathcliff sixteen, he hears her say that it would degrade her to marry him. She has in fact already accepted Edgar Linton. Heathcliff leaves Wuthering Heights then for over three years: the implication is that he is in love with Catherine. Before she knows that he has left, Catherine makes an impassioned declaration of her feelings for him [quotes from ch. 9, 'If all else perished . . . I *am* Heathcliff.'] This speech is a fine one; it is quoted *ad nauseam*, and part of its power is transferred to Heathcliff. He is supposed to reciprocate Catherine's selfless love for him and to be redeemed by it. In fact, he reveals to Nelly and

Isabella the selfishness of his love for Catherine and of the means he uses to convince himself that he is actually behaving more nobly than Edgar. This is especially plain in chapter 14, and culminates in Heathcliff's derisive comment on Edgar, 'It is not in him to be loved like me.' . . . Catherine dies when she is eighteen and Heathcliff nineteen. As adults they are together for barely a sixth of the novel: they meet seldom and when they do they usually quarrel, until finally Heathcliff is goaded into marrying Isabella.

There is no doubt that this bond between Catherine and Heathcliff is extraordinarily powerful, but it is not a *justifying* bond. . . . On Heathcliff's side at least, it is selfish, which should warn us not to confuse it with love; it expresses itself only through violence – notice, for example, the extraordinary series of descriptions of violent physical contact during and immediately after Heathcliff's last meeting with Catherine; their passion for each other is so compounded with jealousy, anger and hatred that it brings them only unhappiness, anguish and eventually death. . . . In short, while we must recognise that the forging and breaking of the bond between Catherine and Heathcliff provides the novel with all its motive energy, it is fallacious to argue that this proves that Emily Brontë condones Heathcliff's behavior and does not expect the reader to condemn it. Charlotte's phrase 'perverted passion and passionate perversity' is exact.

We must consider next the argument, as advanced by Cecil, for example, that it was not Emily Brontë's intention that the reader should condemn Heathcliff, since he dictates the whole course of the novel, brings his schemes to a successful conclusion and dies happily. A bitter remark of the younger Catherine's is relevant here. In chapter 29 she says:

> Mr Heathcliff, *you* have *nobody* to love you; and however miserable you make us, we shall still have the revenge of thinking that your cruelty arises from your greater misery! You *are* miserable, are you not? Lonely, like the devil, and envious like him? *Nobody* loves you – *nobody* will cry for you when you die! I wouldn't be you!

Later in the same chapter, Heathcliff himself admits, talking of the older Catherine,

> She showed herself, as she often was in life, a devil to me! And, since then, sometimes more and sometimes less, I've been the sport of that intolerable torture – infernal! – keeping my nerves at such a stretch that, if they had not

resembled catgut, they would long ago have relaxed to the feebleness of Linton's. . . . It racked me. I've often groaned aloud, till that old rascal Joseph no doubt believed that my conscience was playing the fiend inside of me. . . . It was a strange way of killing – not by inches, but by fractions of hairbreadths – to beguile me with the spectre of a hope through eighteen years!

'Strange happiness,' as Nelly says. At the end of the book, Heathcliff's domination over the other characters fails, and he finds himself unable to plan further degradation for Catherine and Hareton [quotes from ch. 33, 'It is a poor conclusion . . . for nothing']. . . . It is clear that his thwarted love of and vain grief for Catherine became perverted into the sadistic desire for revenge which sustained him for so many years. As soon as cruelty lost its savor, he lost all that was keeping him alive. At the end of his life, Nelly reproaches him for his wickedness [ch. 34], and her remarks are clearly just. They accord precisely with the spirit of Charlotte Brontë's Preface.

The only point which Charlotte urges in Heathcliff's favor is what she calls 'his rudely confessed regard for Hareton Earnshaw – the young man whom he has ruined'. There is a strong resemblance between Hareton and Heathcliff, for both were poor dependents – half servant, half adopted-son. Heathcliff perceived the likeness at the time of Hindley's death. 'Now, my bonny lad, you are *mine*! And we'll see if one tree won't grow as crooked as another with the same wind to twist it' [ch. 17]. He takes full advantage of the position [quotes from ch. 21, 'I've a pleasure . . . and weak'].

The crucial difference is that Hareton does not allow his ill-treatment to make him bitter; he even acquires a kind of fondness for Heathcliff. But this tells in his favor, not Heathcliff's, for it shows that Heathcliff was not *necessarily* brutalized by his environment, but rather that Hindley's ill-treatment of him encouraged a vindictiveness which he later deliberately fostered.

These are the strongest arguments I have found in justification of Heathcliff's conduct, and, as I have shown, none of them is of sufficient force to avert the reader's natural censure of his consistent malice and cruelty. The problem therefore is to reconcile our condemnation of his behavior with his dominant place in the novel and in the reader's sympathies. Clearly, our attitude to the main character of a work of fiction need not be one of moral approval (e.g. Macbeth, Giles Overreach, Tamburlaine, Giovanni, Beatrice-

Joanna, Becky Sharp, Pincher Martin), but he must in some way act with the reader's understanding and sympathy. In the remainder of this article, I should like to suggest one way in which Emily Brontë powerfully develops the reader's feelings in Heathcliff's favor.

In the earlier chapters our sympathies go naturally to Heathcliff (i.e. Lockwood's narrative and the first part of Nelly Dean's story – up to chapter 9) since he is seen only as the victim of ill-treatment. As Charlotte wrote to W. S. Williams,

> [Heathcliff] exemplified the effects which a life of continued injustice and hard usage may produce on a naturally perverse, vindictive, and inexorable disposition. Carefully trained and kindly treated, the black gipsy-cub might possibly have been reared into a human being, but tyranny and ignorance made of him a mere demon.[7]

Heathcliff vanishes for three years, and these years are wrapped in mystery. Lockwood makes some historically plausible conjectures about them. 'Did he finish his education on the Continent, and come back a gentleman? Or did he get a sizar's place at college, or escape to America, and earn honours by drawing blood from his foster-country, or make a fortune more promptly on the English highways?' [ch. 10]. Mrs Dean has to admit that she does not know: all she can say is that between the ages of sixteen and nineteen Heathcliff converted himself from an ignorant penniless servant to a man with money and black whiskers, a man of whom Catherine says, 'It would honour the first gentleman in the country to be his friend.' The mystery remains throughout the book.

After Heathcliff's return, he dominates the other characters, but, although he is now strong and his enemies weak, his life is one of continual torment. His sufferings engage the reader's natural sympathies, the more so as he suffers in a particular way, and one that accounts for, even if it cannot excuse, his wickedness. For Emily Brontë implies very strongly that if Heathcliff during his absence has not in fact sold his soul to the devil, he has effectively done so. Every description of him reinforces this implication, starting from Nelly's first meeting with him on his return. He appears suddenly in a patch of shadow, startling her [quotes from ch. 10, 'I have waited . . . in hell till you do.'].

Thereafter, hardly a chapter passes without some indication that Heathcliff is suffering the torments of a lost soul; from the moment of his return he is referred to as 'ghoulish', 'a devil', 'a goblin', 'Judas' and 'Satan'. Edgar says that his presence is 'a moral poison that

would contaminate the most virtuous'. After his marriage Isabella writes to Nelly, 'The second question I have great interest in – it is this – Is Mr Heathcliff a man? If so, is he mad? And if not, is he a devil?' Hindley calls Heathcliff 'hellish' and 'a fiend'. 'Fiend' or 'fiendish' is applied to him some seven times thereafter. Hindley is a powerful instrument for stressing the damnation of Heathcliff. He says,

> 'Am I to lose *all* without chance of retrieval? Is Hareton to be a beggar? Oh, damnation! I *will* have it back, and I'll have his gold too, and then his blood, and hell shall have his soul! It will be ten times blacker with that guest than ever it was before!'

Heathcliff himself makes a revealing comment when he learns of Catherine's illness. He says that if he were ever to lose her, if, for example, she forgot him completely, 'Two words would comprehend my future – *death* and *hell*; existence after losing her would be hell.' Shortly afterwards Isabella introduces the other word commonly used to refer to Heathcliff – 'diabolical'. Heathcliff is described as 'diabolical' or 'devilish' no fewer than six times: some comment on his infernal powers is thus made virtually every time he appears. Heathcliff's own outbursts to Catherine have a similar effect [quotes from ch. 15, 'Are you possessed . . . soul in the grave?']. This idea of souls being separated from bodies and its extension into the idea of ghosts walking the earth because there is no peace for them in the grave are pervasive in the book, and do much to reinforce the suggestion that evil powers are abroad. Heathcliff is particularly given to a belief in ghosts [ch. 29].

For the rest of the book, Heathcliff is referred to variously as 'an incarnate goblin', 'a monster', 'not a human being', and 'a hellish villain'; Iabella refers to his 'kin beneath', and talks of Hell as 'his right abode'. She says to Hindley, 'His mouth watered to tear you with his teeth, because he's only half man – not so much – and the rest fiend!' [ch. 17].

Other characters refer to him as a 'devil' (twice) and 'a goblin'. Nelly wonders whether he is wholly human. '"Is he a ghoul or a vampire?" I mused. I had read of such hideous incarnate demons.' He says of himself to Catherine, 'To you I've made myself worse than the devil.' All through his adult life he undergoes what he describes as 'that intolerable torture – infernal!' He says to Nelly when he is near death, 'Last night I was on the threshhold of

hell,' and when he dies Joseph exclaims, 'Th' divil's harried off his soul.'

This network of references and comment serves to mark out Heathcliff as a possessed soul. If the story were expressly narrated on a supernatural level, his career could be described by saying simply that he sells his soul to the devil in exchange for power, power over others, and specifically power to make himself fit to marry Catherine. When however he attempts to claim his share of the bargain he finds that the devil is, as always, a cheat. He has the power he asked for but loses Catherine herself. He is left simply with power, the exercise of which he finds necessary but intolerably painful. Thereafter, he is consumed inwardly by hellfire and the knowledge of his own damnation.

This would be a metaphorical way of describing what in fact happens. Heathcliff's personality begins to disintegrate when he allows himself to become obsessed by a physical passion for Catherine and deliberately fosters this passion to the point of mania. He sacrifices every other part of his personality to the satisfaction of his passion, until by its very violence it destroys its own object. Once Catherine has gone, Heathcliff is left with no possible emotions except those into which he can pervert his previous obsession with Catherine. He finds that he can demonstrate that he has feelings only by expressing them as cruelty. This brings him no happiness: on the contrary his power for wickedness *is* his punishment, rather than his prize, just as his passion for Catherine was not a blessing but a curse. In short, he is destroying himself throughout the book: each act of wanton brutality is a further maiming of himself. 'Treachery and violence are spears pointed at both ends. They wound those who resort to them worse than their enemies' [ch. 17]. Time moves swiftly on the moors, and senility sets in very early (Hindley is only 27 at his death), but nobody else ages as fast as Heathcliff. Towards his death, he seems to be consuming his life ever more rapidly, as if the processes of nature had been accelerated by the fires within. He acts like a fiend incarnate, but his actions torture him as much as they torture his victims: they are a part, and the worst part, of the torments of the damned which Heathcliff suffers during his life. When he finds himself capable of a good act, even one so neutral as not persecuting Hareton and Catherine, it is as though his sentence had been at last worked out, and he dies almost joyfully.

The sympathy that we give to him is thus not the sort that we give

to the noble tragic hero, nor is it the same as our reluctant admiration of a powerfully defiant villain like Vittoria. It is more nearly akin to the compassion we feel for those who are fated to work out their doom in torment and despair, characters such as Satan himself, Marlowe's Faustus and Mephistopheles, the Wandering Jew, Vanderdecken, or even Captain Ahab.[8] It does not lead us to approve of Heathcliff's actions or even to condone them. Emily Brontë's achievement is to arouse our sympathy for a lost soul while making it quite clear that his actions are damnable.

All this is comprehended in Charlotte's preface. She sees that Heathcliff is embarked on an 'arrow-straight course to perdition', and that his love for Catherine is a fire 'that might form the tormented centre – the ever-suffering soul of a magnate of the infernal world' doomed 'to carry Hell with him wherever he wanders'. She concludes her remarks on his character by saying that but for one or two slight redeeming features 'we should say he was child neither of Lascar nor gipsy, but a man's shape animated by demon life – a Ghoul – an Afreet'. She thus identifies the novel's main source of evil energy and its central metaphor, which is the parallel between diabolical possession and embittered passion. Her concluding paragraph expresses with some subtlety the extent of Emily Brontë's achievement in liberating this terrifying energy and yet controlling it [quotes the passage, '*Wuthering Heights* . . . giant's foot': see pp. 63–4 above].

SOURCE: *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (1964).

NOTES

1. See above, p. 60.
2. 'The Villain in *Wuthering Heights*', in *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, XIII (1958), pp. 199–215. For a rebuttal of the essay, see further John Fraser on 'Nelly Dean and *Wuthering Heights*', referred to p. 34n above, p. 236 below.
3. Cp. Mrs Humphry Ward on Nelly Dean, pp. 99–100 above.
4. The author comments, 'But notice that E. F. Shannon (op. cit.) makes the following point in Heathcliff's favour: "Although a reluctant host he provides Lockwood with a glass of wine, tea and dinner on separate occasions; and during the narrator's illness, he sends him a brace of grouse and chats amiably at his 'bedside a good hour'" . . .'
5. *Trollopian*, III (1948) see p. 1 and n.
6. But they have not always done so. See Introduction, pp. 19–21 above.
7. 14 August 1848: see above, p. 53.

8. The author notes: 'Mrs Allott [see above, p. 174 and n] suggests that Heathcliff sometimes reminds us of Byron's Manfred or Cain. Muriel Spark and Derek Stanford [*Emily Brontë*, 1953] note this also, but as a major weakness in the drawing of Heathcliff who, they say, "is Byron in prose dress".' See also Jacques Blondel on Heathcliff and Byron, p. 160 above.

Terry Eagleton (1) Passion, Social Rebellion, Capitalist Villainy: Contradiction Incarnate in Heathcliff (1976)

. . . Heathcliff is a self-tormentor, a man who is in hell because he can avenge himself on the system which has robbed him of his soul only by battling with it on its own hated terms. If as a child he was outside and inside that system simultaneously, wandering on the moors and working on the farm, he lives out a similar self-division as an adult trapped in the grinding contradiction between a false social self and the true identity which lies with Catherine. The social self is false, not because Heathcliff is only apparently brutal – that he certainly is – but because it is contradictorily related to the authentic selfhood which is his passion for Catherine. He installs himself at the centre of conventional society, but with wholly negative and inimical intent: his social role is a calculated self-contradiction, created first to win her, and then fiercely displace, his asocial passion for Catherine.

Heathcliff's social relation to both Heights and Grange is one of the most complex issues in the novel. Lockwood remarks that he looks too genteel for the Heights, and indeed, in so far as he represents the victory of capitalist property-dealing over the traditional yeoman economy of the Earnshaws, he is inevitably aligned with the world of the Grange. Heathcliff is a dynamic force which seeks to destroy the old yeoman settlement by dispossessing Hareton; yet he does so partly to revenge himself on the very Linton world whose weapons (property deals, arranged marriages) he deploys so efficiently. He does this, moreover, with a crude intensity which is a quality of the Heights world; his wiliness and resilience link him culturally to *Wuthering Heights*, and he exploits those qualities to destroy both it and the Grange. He is, then, a force