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EMILY BRONTË'S RELATION TO GONDAL AS SUBJECT
OF WUTHERING HEIGHTS.

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1974

EMILY BRONTË'S RELATION TO GONDAL
AS SUBJECT OF WUTHERING HEIGHTS

by

GERALD L. GOULD

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of
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1974

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Abstract

"
EMILY BRONTË'S RELATION TO GONDAL
AS SUBJECT OF WUTHERING HEIGHTS

by

Gerald L. Gould

Adviser: Professor Coleman Parsons

The publication of the Brontë sisters' Poems (1846) was precipitated by Charlotte's discovery of a MS volume of Emily's verse. It is probable that these were the A MS. (non-Gondal) verses. Fannie Ratchford's scholarship, by emphasizing Gondal, has tended to obscure the differences between these and the B MS. (Gondal) poems. The A poems are nearly equal in number and superior in quality, and they speak of Emily's personal concerns, notably her death wish and her mystical relationship with a Gondal muse. They express deep disappointment in the world of conscious adulthood and a desire for permanence in the mystical spiritual world she experienced as Gondal.

Gondal very likely derives its power from death, as compensation for the deaths during her childhood of Emily's mother and sisters. The Brontë sisters began their literary play only months after the deaths of Emily's older sisters.

Wuthering Heights is an attempt to resolve the conflict between the death- and childhood-oriented, solipsistic religion of Gondal and the world of ordinary consciousness and adulthood. Cathy is a figure of the author. Heathcliff, who arrives at the Earnshaw household under strikingly similar circumstances to the box of toy soldiers that precipitated the literary games at Haworth, is a figure of the world of Gondal. A variant of Emily's God of Visions, he is associated with the disintegration of the family and the society and with death, beginning with the death of Cathy's mother.

As an externalization of an internal crisis, Wuthering Heights is often nonrealistic. Characters are fragments or projections of the central Cathy personality. Death has a distinctly nonrealistic function, as with virtually every new character's entrance a death occurs. The overall effect of this close correspondence is to create a sense of a certain quan-

tity of life which through births and deaths alters its own shape. The whole life presence (or the central personality) eventually reorders itself from the profound disorder generated by the injection of Heathcliff. It processes Heathcliff and finally expels the evil he had carried and the evil of the world he had entered, with the sacrificial death of Linton Heathcliff, a figure of all that is unsatisfactory.

Threshold and barrier imagery, the second most frequent image pattern in this novel, is examined. Many of the images function to suggest an anthropomorphic quality of houses (the house as self), or to dramatize claustrophobia, or to indicate changes in the relationships of characters or parts of the larger self. The author's compulsive attention to this imagery expresses her ambivalence about the world of Gondal.

The second Catherine is an alternate figure of the author, a self untroubled by the Gondal presence. In contrast to the influence of Heathcliff upon Cathy 1 is the influence of Nelly Dean, symbol of motherhood, upon Cathy 2. To mother, for Emily Brontë, is to civilize. The ultimate antithesis in Wuthering Heights is between Heathcliff and Nelly, pure forms of the requirements of imagination and the requirements of civilization. Emily Brontë is unable to forge this antithesis into a synthesis and instead divides the world at the end of the novel into two parts, spirit and matter, or Gondal and civilization: Heathcliff and Cathy ghosts on the moors, Catherine and Hareton the new domus at Thrushcross Grange.

FOREWORD

"A kind of sport" is F. R. Leavis's phrase for Wuthering Heights, and though condescending, it suggests the uniqueness of Emily Brontë's great and puzzling novel. My contemplation of its mysteries began about ten years before this dissertation was written when, a student in Harrison Meserole's Bibliography class at Penn State, I prepared an edition of a few Gondal poems. Exposure to Fannie Ratchford's scholarship on the Brontë juvenilia convinced me that the meaning of Wuthering Heights and its author's lifelong involvement with the imaginary world of Gondal were necessarily connected, though neither Ratchford's nor other explanations of the connection were convincing to me. It was not until much later, when I fully appreciated the differences between Emily's Gondal and her non-Gondal verse, that I began to see how Wuthering Heights expresses her obsession with Gondal. This essay begins by rejecting all reconstructions of Gondal as too tentative. It argues, on the basis of a reading of the personal poems, that the Cathy-Heathcliff relationship is modeled after the Emily Brontë-Gondal relationship and that the novel is Emily's attempt to work out the problem of the admixture of mystical, solipsistic, death-oriented imaginative experience in the civilized adult life.

I would like to thank Prof. Coleman Parsons, who directed this dissertation. He was always available with good advice, sound criticism, and the many small kindnesses that distinguish his character. It is no exaggeration that his support enabled me to finish the present work. Prof. Allen Mandelbaum, another rare and gracious gentleman, I also thank, for his exemplary generosity of spirit.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>BST</u>	<u>Brontë Society Transactions</u>
<u>KR</u>	<u>Kenyon Review</u>
<u>MLR</u>	<u>Modern Language Notes</u>
<u>NCF</u>	<u>Nineteenth-Century Fiction</u>
<u>TLS</u>	<u>Times Literary Supplement</u>
(I,iii,22)	Emily Brontë, <u>Wuthering Heights</u> , ed. Frederick T. Flahiff (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1968), volume 1, chapter 3, page 22
(<u>Poems</u> , 141)	<u>The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë</u> , ed. C. W. Hatfield (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1941), page 141

Chapter 1:

THE SCHOLARLY DIFFICULTIES OF GONDAL STUDIES

No serious critic of the Brontë novels can hope to write intelligently about them without somehow coming to terms with the Brontë juvenilia. "Juvenilia" is, indeed, a partial misnomer for imaginative materials that occupied the three sisters, and especially Emily, during much of their adult life as well as during their childhood. The story¹ is well known: From a trip to Leeds in the summer of 1826 Patrick Brontë brought home a box of 12 wooden soldiers for his son Branwell. The toys were transformed imaginatively by the four young Brontës into various public personalities of the day and given plots to act out. In a continuous line of evolution, this game yielded to several others like it, eventually culminating in the Angria and Gondal games, about imaginary kingdoms presided over, respectively, by Branwell and Charlotte, Emily and Anne. Although Branwell's dissipation drew him from Angria quite early, and although Charlotte suffered severe pangs of conscience because of her continued involvement in Angria after adolescence, Emily's interest in and commitment to Gondal apparently remained strong and unequivocal until her death in 1848 at the age of 30. Anne, her partner in Gondal, like the other siblings evidently would have dispensed with the childish game well before her last reference to it in 1845, but Emily held her to it.²

It is an unavoidable inference that the roots of the sisters' novels are to be found in the soil of Angria and Gondal and the earlier imaginary

worlds. A full understanding of the novels is certainly impossible without intelligent analysis of the "juvenilia." But to taste this apple from the tree of knowledge is not only to see the Brontë world with new eyes but to experience eternal restlessness, because the Gondal literature is largely unavailable. Fannie Ratchford's reconstruction of Angria is awesome and convincing.³ But Gondal is impenetrable, because so much of it is lost. Most of what Emily and Anne wrote of Gondal was extensive histories in prose; all that survives is a handful of poems celebrating certain lyric moments in these histories. Indicative of the critical problems is the wide disagreement among very able Brontë scholars as to how many and which of Emily's poems are of Gondal, and which (if any) are not.⁴ There is even disagreement about the authorship of some poems. The problem facing the Brontë scholar is comparable to that facing the anthropologist who attempts to reconstruct a skeleton from a tooth and a fragment of februs--much of his work, one senses, must be fantasy.

Nonetheless there is a compulsion and an obligation to peruse such Gondal literature as has survived, and what has been written about it. Perhaps, one hopes, some new reading, some very sensible but somehow previously unturned perception, will await one's critical spade. But this hope is vain.

Even on such fundamental matters as the identity of characters, Gondal is sphinx-like. There is a confusing morass of exotic personal names--Augusta Geraldine Almeda, Rosina of Alcona, Julius Brenzaida,

Gerald Exina, Alexandrina Zenobia Hybernia, and dozens of others--which, some evidence suggests, may not even represent individual identities: one character may have several different names, representing him at different points in the story or in different functions. And the identities of characters seem to overlap and shift. The published reconstructions of Gondal differ on the most essential information, such as for whom a set of initials stands and whether certain major characters actually exist.⁵

The reconstructions also, it need not be added, are strongly at variance about the plot or history of Gondal. Of the scholarship, W. D. Paden's is the most careful and least tendentious. He ventures convincingly enough:

We start with the discouraging knowledge that a large amount of information, concerning those portions of Gondalan history which did not happen to enter into Emily's private imaginings, will not appear beneath the most exhaustive inspection of the evidence. Some basic facts of Gondalan history will appear only as the subjects of opaque allusions. Any reconstruction of Gondal must contain large sectors filled in by unbased, or insecurely based, hypotheses and a number of arbitrary decisions upon ambiguous points. . . . We cannot suppose that the evidence is entirely consistent.⁶

Moreover, many of the MSS which one would consider essential to examine for clues are not only near to impossible to read because of their microscopic handwriting but also are now scattered over the entire western hemisphere and perhaps beyond, several of them lost to view or their whereabouts unknown.⁷

The Brontë Gondal scholar typically works from the Hatfield edition of Emily's complete poems.⁸ Although Hatfield was an excellent scholar,

several exceptions have been taken to his readings or to other aspects of his editing. Even a most troubling question of whether a series of lines on a MS page is one or more poems occasionally arises:

It is necessary to consider the record-sheets a little further. On them two successive fragments or poems are usually divided by a heading, a date, a line, or a row of asterisks; a fragment or poem which fills the bottom of a page is usually followed by a line or a row of asterisks. Although Mr. Hatfield's single explicit reference to these facts deals only with the sheet D12, he seems to have carefully transferred to his text all headings, dates, lines, and asterisks from all the record-sheets he has inspected. Upon this supposition, we may note that on sheet D6 the poems #36 and #37 were not separated by Emily in any way; nor on D8 were the poems #160 and #161.⁹

And the plot, no matter how it is reconstructed, is a childish romance having no obvious parallels to Wuthering Heights.

Some of the emotions and attitudes that the Gondal poems express could conceivably be voiced by Heathcliff or Cathy or another Wuthering Heights character, but they could just as easily be the expressions of very different characters. Mary Visick, who mistakenly attempts to trace the development of Wuthering Heights in the Gondal fragments, largely relies upon such similarities in mood or character as she perceives. For example, she theorizes that the following poem is about a character like Edgar Linton:

AGA to AS

Yes, holy by thy resting-place
Wherever thou mayst lie;
The sweetest winds breathe on thy face,
The softest of the sky.

And will not guardian Angels send
 Kind dreams and thoughts of love,
 Though I no more may watchful bend
 Thy loved repose above?

And will not heaven itself bestow
 A beam of glory there
 That summer's grass more green may grow,
 And summer's flowers more fair?

Farewell, farewell, 'tis hard to part
 Yet, loved one, it must be:
 I would not rend another heart
 Not even by blessing thee.

Go! we must break affection's chain,
 Forget the hope of years:
 Nay, grieve not--willest thou remain
 To waken wilder tears?

This wild breeze with thee and me
 Roved in the dawning day;
 And thou shoulst be where it shall be
 Ere evening, far away.

Visick's comment on this poem is typical of the general style of her arguments:

[AS] is a Linton-like figure--entitled to a "holy" resting-place, religious, slightly devitalized (even Nelly, Edgar's most consistent partisan, says "he wanted spirits in general") and also, like Edgar, not small or ridiculous. . . . From his personality and fate spring the sense of irretrievable wrong, which checks even the passionate A.G.A. and which destroys Catherine. "If I have done wrong, I'm dying for it" she moans.¹⁰

There is no basis for the perception of a similarity in the personalities of AS and Edgar, for AS is given no personality. The mood of quiet reverence, entirely within AGA, Visick projects outward and unconvincingly attaches to AS. Moreover, where in this poem is ASA expressing a

"sense of irretrievable wrong"? I, for one, do not find it. And the plot of Wuthering Heights is distorted to fit Visick's needs. No sense of such a wrong destroys Catherine, nor is her "If I have done wrong, I'm dying for it" addressed to Linton. It is addressed to Heathcliff, and concerns wrongs dealt him, not Linton--specifically the wrong of choosing Linton over him. And Catherine dies not because of the moral weight of these wrongs but because she cannot bear the consequence of having chosen Linton rather than Heathcliff: separation from Heathcliff.

Another passage from Visick equally points up how tenuous her arguments may be:

The actual process by which this blurred story, revealed as it is in a series of lyric moments, was transformed into the novel is one at which we can only guess. It is instructive enough to set the two side by side. In Gondal, the uncomplicated heroine can go from one man to another with a few words of apology--often trite enough: but for Catherine Earnshaw the betrayal of Heathcliff sets her inevitably on the road that ends in virtual self destruction, and yet she cannot spiritually desert Edgar without remorse.¹¹

As Visick admits, the plot and characters of Gondal are "blurred" and only to be guessed at from "a series of lyric moments." But the difference in shape between these moments and those of Wuthering Heights is very great. Not only is the Gondal heroine uncomplicated, her betrayal of lovers causes her no grief. Is it possible to be more different from Catherine Earnshaw? Visick's contrast here would seem to be good evidence that Catherine is not AGA disguised; apparently the only similarity of the characters is that they are both women with problems in love--and

of what heroine is that not true?

Gondal is simply not available to us, and its connection to Wuthering Heights is obscure. Any criticism of Emily Brontë's novel that depends upon a reconstruction of Gondal is presently impossible.

NOTES

¹ Fannie E. Ratchford, The Brontës' Web of Childhood (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1941).

² From Anne's Birthday Note of July 31, 1845 (exchanged with Emily, and intended to be opened four years later): "I have begun the third volume of Passages in the Life of an Individual. I wish I had finished it. . . . We [Emily and I] have not yet finished our Gondal Chronicles that we began three years and a half ago. When will they be done? The Gondals are at present in a sad state. . . . The Gondals in general are not in first-rate playing condition." Ruth H. Blackburn, ed., The Brontë Sisters: Selected Source Materials for College Research Papers (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1964), pp. 102-03.

Emily's note of the previous day, in contrast, expresses exuberance over the continuing enchantment of the Gondals.

It is uncertain whether Passages in the Life of an Individual is a Gondal work or an early draft of Agnes Grey. I incline toward the former interpretation.

³ Ratchford, op. cit.

⁴ See my own argument in the next chapter.

⁵ The three major reconstructions are Fannie E. Ratchford, Gondal's Queen: A Novel in Verse (Austin: Univ. Texas Press, 1955), a revision and expansion of her earlier work on Gondal in The Brontës' Web of Childhood; Laura L. Hinkley, Charlotte and Emily (New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1945), pp. 177 ff., and Appendix A, pp. 353-63; and W. D. Paden, An Investigation of Gondal (New York: Bookman Associates, 1958). Pioneering attempts were May Sinclair, The Three Brontës (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1912), pp. 192-210; and Madeleine Hope Dodds, "Gondaliland," MLR, 18 (January 1923), 9-21; "A Second Visit to Gondaliland," MLR, 21 (October 1926), 373-79.

One example of the scholarly disagreement attending these reconstructions is Hinkley's argument that the internal dates of the poems are not, as Ratchford and others assume, the dates of the events described in the poems but of Emily's first inspirations. This crucial difference of course determines a very different reconstruction. Paden disagrees sharply with Ratchford on several details, notably the identity of characters. Ratchford insists, for example, that Augusta Geraldine Almeda and Rosina are not two characters but one; Paden thinks them three (AGA, Geraldine S., Rosina).

⁶ Paden, pp. 17-18.

⁷ See John Hewish, "A Location List of Manuscripts," Emily Brontë: A Critical and Biographical Study (London: Macmillan, 1969), pp. 174-76, for a nearly current accounting. Hewish's book is among the most careful on Emily Brontë.

⁸ C. W. Hatfield, ed., The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1941).

⁹ Paden, p. 15; also see Philip Henderson, ed., "Introduction," The Complete Poems of Emily Brontë (London: Folio Society, 1951), p. ix, for criticism of Hatfield's unwarranted regularization of Emily's punctuation. Henderson's edition restores the manuscript punctuation, but in other respects it is less useful and reliable than Hatfield's edition.

¹⁰ Mary Visick, The Genesis of Wuthering Heights (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 1958), p. 30.

¹¹ Visick, p. 32.

Chapter 2:

A DISCOVERED MANUSCRIPT

Let us leave, for the time, this question of how Wuthering Heights can be most fully understood and turn to some biographical and textual questions that bear on the importance of Gondal in Emily Brontë's life. They will direct us to an examination of Emily's personal (non-Gondal) verse in the next chapter and then back to Wuthering Heights, by another route, in Chapter 5.

A principal source of information about Emily's personality and the circumstances that led to the sisters' publication of a volume of poetry in 1846 is the "Biographical Notice of Ellis and Acton Bell" prepared by Charlotte for a second edition of Wuthering Heights and Agnes Grey in 1850. It is by now a famous story and hardly needs retelling:

About five years ago, my two sisters and myself, after a somewhat prolonged period of separation, found ourselves reunited, and at home. . . . The highest stimulus, as well as the liveliest pleasure we had known from childhood upwards, lay in attempts at literary composition; formerly we used to show each other what we wrote, but of late years this habit of communication had been discontinued; hence it ensued, that we were mutually ignorant of the progress we might respectively have made.

One day, in the autumn of 1845, I accidentally lighted on a MS. volume of verse in my sister Emily's handwriting. Of course, I was not surprised, knowing that she could and did write verse: I looked it over, and something more than surprise seized me,--a deep conviction that these were not common effusions, nor at all like the poetry women generally write. I thought them condensed and terse, vigorous and genuine. To my ear, they had a peculiar music--wild, melancholy, and elevating.

My sister Emily was not a person of demonstrative charac-

ter, nor one, on the recesses of whose mind and feelings, even those nearest and dearest to her could, with impunity, intrude unlicensed; it took hours to reconcile her to the discovery I had made, and days to persuade her that such poems merited publication.

[Anne, too, unknown to Charlotte, has written some verse, which she now brings forth and which Charlotte approves.]

We had early cherished the dream of one day becoming authors. This dream, never relinquished even when distance divided and absorbing tasks occupied us, now suddenly acquired strength and consistency: it took the character of a resolve.¹

Charlotte's account, famous though it is, raises numerous questions for the biographer as for the critic. These are a few of them: What is the "MS. volume of verse" that Charlotte discovered? What poems did she read, to move her so? If she was familiar with some of her sister's verse, why did these strike her as so unusual? How is it that Emily had secreted her poems; hadn't the sisters shared their work in the past?

Let us begin with the last question. If it is true (which seems unlikely) that for the last several years the sisters had fallen from the habit of reading each others' work, Charlotte would have been unfamiliar with the verse she found. But that does not explain why these poems would have been hidden, as they evidently were. They must have been hidden to prevent them from being read. Charlotte's rather lame explanation that a "prolonged period of separation" had estranged her from her sister's writing is completely fabricated. She and Emily had been together at Haworth for nearly two years previously. This is evidently an attempt to obscure the fact that Emily had a justifiable reason for hiding her poems.

Charlotte's characterization makes Emily seem neurotic and oversensitive --it implies that the discovered poetry would, under normal circumstances, have been freely shown to Charlotte.

But by whom did Emily not want these poems read, by Charlotte only or by anyone in the Haworth household? This is an extremely important question because it raises the issue of Gondal. If they were hidden from Charlotte and others but not from Anne, then they were probably Gondal poems, as the writing of Gondal documents was shared by Anne and Emily.²

It is clear from many structural, thematic, and name parallels of Gondal with Angria that Branwell and Charlotte were conscious of Emily and Anne's work, and vice versa, at least during the earlier phases of Gondal,³ and Ratchford, probably correctly, has Emily and Charlotte writing about their respective fantasies in the same cramped room in Brussels as late as 1842.⁴ If the discovered MS consisted of Gondal poems, then, hidden from Charlotte but not from Anne, we would have to conclude that Gondal had become the two younger sisters' secret at some time after 1842.

For this to have been the case Emily and Anne would have had specifically and falsely to avow to Charlotte sometime in these three years that they had abandoned Gondal. There is little if any evidence to support such a conjecture. In their Birthday Notes of 1845 both Emily and Anne refer to Gondal quite comfortably and un-self-consciously.⁵ We can hypothesize only one reason they might have pretended to give up Gondal: some pressure from Charlotte to renounce it as she had nearly renounced

Angria in her late adolescence. Ratchford documents Charlotte's own anguish at being overinvolved in her internal world.⁶ This is evidence, however, only of Charlotte's concern about her own, not about her sisters' psychic life. C. Day Lewis presumes, I think correctly, that Emily Brontë, unlike Charlotte, "never felt a revulsion from her fantasy."⁷ And, as Charlotte says in the passage quoted above, "Emily was not a person . . . on the recesses of whose mind and feelings even those nearest and dearest to her could, with impunity, intrude unlicensed." It is highly improbable then, that Charlotte would have attempted to extract such an avowal from Emily, or could have done so. So that in 1845 Charlotte was most probably as aware as she had always been of the continuing Gondal saga and current Gondal writings.

There is of course the possibility that the discovered MS contained Gondal poems hidden from Anne as well as from Charlotte, but this also seems unlikely. There is some slight evidence to support such a conjecture, in addition to our knowledge that Anne and Emily worked for the most part on separate aspects of the Gondal story. It is the following remark in Anne's Birthday Note of 1845:

Emily is engaged in writing the Emperor Julius's Life. She has read some of it, and I want very much to hear the rest. She is writing some poetry, too. I wonder what it is about? I have begun the third volume of "Passages in the Life of an Individual." I wish I had finished it . . . We have not yet finished our Gondal Chronicles that we began three years ago.

Some critics have inferred from this passage that Emily kept her poetry

secret from Anne.⁸ That would seem a strained reading, however. The context suggests very strongly that this is a Gondal poem Emily is writing, and Anne's easy, mild interest in knowing what it is does not suggest that it will be withheld from her. Most likely, Emily refrained from showing her Gondal poems to Anne until they were finished or nearly finished. If Emily wished to hide her poetry from Anne, would she make it known that she was writing it? (The same question could be asked with reference to Charlotte in Brussels.) Almost certainly not. Finally, the best argument against the possibility that the discovered MS was Gondalan but hidden from Anne is the nature of the Gondal game and of the poetry. Gondal was a shared enterprise; much of the joy was in working it together; the poetry, lyric and dramatic, has an essentially public tone. There would be no cause for Emily to hide her Gondal poetry from either Anne or Charlotte. The MS volume Charlotte discovered was in all probability, then, not Gondal poetry.

In his 1941 edition of The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë, Hatfield employs a shorthand system to refer to extant MSS and other sources; this has become the standard form of reference. The sources are lettered A through J, with A through F being MSS and G through J being previous editions of the poems. It is principally with MSS. A and B that we are concerned. These are matching transcript (fair copy) books begun by Emily in February, 1844. They contain most of her complete poems (no fragments) in their most finished state. The title pages of the two books

are virtually identical except that one (B) says "Gondal Poems" and the other (A) has no equivalent title. Ratchford has argued that these matching MSS both contain Gondal materials.⁹ She is almost certainly mistaken on this and the related issue of how many of Emily's poems are not Gondalan (Ratchford allows for only eight, whereas there are 31 poems in the A MS.).¹⁰ The commonsense explanation of the existence of the two MS books, in view of the B MS. title, is that the B MS. was for Gondal poems and the A MS. for non-Gondal poems, and internal evidence supports this explanation. Most of the B poems contain Gondal place and character references; none of the A poems do. So if we assume the volume Charlotte discovered in 1845 was not Gondal poetry, then it was certainly not the B MS. although it may have been the A MS.

In an excellent and ingenious piece of scholarship, Herbert Dingle provides additional support for the position that Charlotte discovered the A MS. Observing that nearly all Emily's poems in the A and B MSS. make passing reference to the weather, Dingle examined Haworth weather records for the dates of the individual poems. He discovered that "while the majority of the B poems purport to have been written in natural conditions quite incompatible with those obtaining at the recorded dates of writing . . . not one of the A poems shows any discrepancy at all, and in some the agreement is impressive."¹¹ The clear inference is that the B poems are Gondal materials and the A are personal, hence that Ratchford is incorrect in asserting that both MSS contain Gondal materials.

It is instructive to digress for a moment on the influence Ratchford's mistake has had. It was Hatfield's assumption, as he carefully states, that the discovered MS was the A MS.: "One of them was headed with the inscription 'Gondal Poems' . . . The other manuscript book was used for her finished poems which apparently did not relate to Gondal; and this was doubtless the manuscript book which her sister Charlotte found and read on that momentous day in the autumn of 1845."¹² Such had also been the assumption of earlier scholars, such as Davidson Cook.¹³ However, Ratchford's landmark study of the juvenilia, The Brontës' Web of Childhood, published in the same year as Hatfield's edition of the poems, takes the sharply divergent view I have described in the previous paragraph. Ratchford's impressive book completely revolutionized Brontë studies, opening as it did to view, and explicating, Brontë materials of clearly the most fundamental importance. Ratchford seemed so utterly reliable on so many points that many scholars doubtless accepted her argument whole. And as it is very difficult, after all, in the labyrinth of Brontë studies to keep clearly in mind what is known fact and what is common inference or conjecture, so it is understandable that many critics who may not have accepted her complete argument were nonetheless influenced by it to make unwarranted assumptions. Rather than clearly distinguishing fact from hypothesis, Ratchford's style unfortunately encourages confusion.

Ratchford presents as fact her hypothesis that the B MS. is what Charlotte discovered:

[Charlotte] was not surprised, she says, at the existence of the poems, for she was aware that her sister wrote verse; nor was the heading of the notebook: "Gondal poems transcribed February 1844," which she does not quote, strange to her. She was, however, profoundly impressed by the quality of the poems . . . Despite their distinctly Gondalan character, they possessed a universality of appeal that gave them, in Charlotte's opinion, claim to publication.¹⁴

One example of the confusion Ratchford has sown in Brontë criticism is in the work of Mary Visick, seventeen years later. Visick has clearly absorbed Ratchford. The younger critic does not apparently accept the assumption that Charlotte discovered the B MS.; nonetheless, she makes an unwarranted inference based on that very assumption:

Although Charlotte only mentions one book, the poems in the sisters' volume are actually drawn from two manuscripts. Either Charlotte found two, or Emily voluntarily produced the second and selected from both.¹⁵

Visick's scenario is possible only if Emily had kept both volumes, including the Gondal B MS., hidden from Charlotte. The contrary assumption, based on the primary sources, that Charlotte had full knowledge of the Gondal materials makes nonsense of Visick's reconstruction.

A snowballing effect occurs, as the image of Emily hiding her Gondal world from Charlotte is augmented by writers whose scholarship is more casual than Ratchford's or even Visick's. Thus one of its members addressed the Brontë Society in 1965:

Even Anne, Emily's collaborator in the Gondal chronicles, did not always know what Emily's poems were about and Charlotte had never set eyes on them until she accidentally discovered them, to Emily's fury and dismay.¹⁶

Ratchford is accepted uncritically here, and hence it is assumed that all of Emily's poetry is Gondalan and that Charlotte had no knowledge of it. Such whole-cloth "scholarship" reached new proportions the following year in Brontë Society Transactions:

Emily had the self-sufficiency of a cat; she told no one, not even her sisters, much about her writing, particularly in her later years. She locked it away in her desk when not working, and turned away questions with a brusqueness that was the despair of her milder and more sociable sisters.¹⁷

This is fantasy.

It is unfortunate that a recent and acclaimed biographer of the Brontë family should not only be subject to the effects of such uncritical statements but should repeat and amplify them. The Winifred Gérin biographies, despite the wide praise they have received for their scholarship,¹⁸ repeatedly violate the basic scholarly tenet of distinguishing fact from assumption. For example, in Charlotte Brontë (1967) Gérin states without qualification that Charlotte discovered Emily's notebooks, whereas Charlotte's account indicates unequivocally that it was only one volume she found.¹⁹ In her biography of Emily (1971) Gérin has altered the reconstruction considerably. To do so is, of course, her privilege, but once again she presents an elaborate scenario of her own imagining as though it were documented fact. One detail of this reconstruction, totally unwarranted as I have shown, is that it is the B MS. Charlotte found:

Emily, who had just finished copying out a new poem in her "Gondal" notebook, either forgot to put it away in her desk or was called away before being able to do so. She left it

open and on the desk, and there Charlotte found it. Whatever the cause of her absence, she was gone long enough²⁰ for Charlotte to read all the forty-three poems it contained.

But to return to the main line of argument. Ratchford is mistaken about the MS discovered by Charlotte in 1845; it was not the B MS. (Gondal Poems). Could it, however, have been other than the A MS.? This is of course possible, but it is highly improbable. Most of Emily's poetry from 1837 to 1845 appears to be extant. The A and B MSS. were clearly intended to contain her best poems in a finished state. Moreover, there is only one other MS "volume" (i.e., poetry in a bound format) in Emily's handwriting, which Hatfield denotes the C MS. Hatfield says of it: "The book appears to have been used for transcripts (fair copies) of poems from about the end of 1839. When the later transcript books ('A' and 'B') were commenced, poems from it were copied into them, and when the contents of a whole leaf had been copied the leaf was removed from the book."²¹ All Emily Brontë's mature poems extant from 1840 are found either in the A or B MS.; none in the C MS. We can conclude that the discovered MS, which evidently contained recent poems of high quality, was not the C MS.

In addition, Poems by Ellis, Acton, and Currer Bell (1846), which was the fruit of Charlotte's discovery, contained twenty-one of Emily's poems, only six of which were from the B MS. The others were all from the A MS. These were the poems Charlotte encouraged Emily to publish and apparently felt were her best work.

Below one of the poems in the A MS., "How Beautiful the Earth is Still," there is written in Charlotte's handwriting, "Never was better stuff penned."²² This poem--which was published in the 1846 edition--is dated in the manuscript June 2, 1845, only a few months before Charlotte's great discovery. We may hypothesize that it was one of the poems to which Charlotte refers in her "Biographical Notice":

Something more than surprise seized me,--a deep conviction that these were not common effusions, nor at all like the poetry women generally write. I thought them condensed and terse, vigorous and genuine. To my ear, they had also a peculiar music--wild, melancholy, and elevating.

External evidence would indicate that in all likelihood it was the A MS., and no other, that Charlotte discovered.

NOTES

¹ Widely reprinted with modern editions of Wuthering Heights. The text of the novel I use throughout is edited by Frederick T. Flahiff (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1968), here pp. xli-ii. Flahiff's is a careful reprint of the first edition (1847), typographical errors and all. Most readers are familiar with the second edition (1850), prepared and "corrected," with a few substantial editorial changes, by Charlotte after Emily's death. See Flahiff, "Note on the Text," pp. xxvii-xl.

² Paden theorizes, however, that the sisters worked on separate materials within Gondal: "As far as the evidence allows us to see, in their attempt to fabricate Gondal Emily and Anne agreed upon a vague geography and a brief chronology; then each sister concentrated upon entirely distinct groups of characters and unrelated sequences of events. Emily seems to have dealt with the central figures, Anne to have echoed themes and sentiments in connection with comparatively minor characters." An Investigation of Gondal (New York: Bookman Associates, 1958), pp. 10-11.

³ Fannie E. Ratchford, "Introduction," Gondal's Queen: A Novel in Verse (Austin: Univ. Texas Press, 1955), pp. 15-16, 22-23; John Hewish, Emily Brontë: A Critical and Biographical Study (London: Macmillan, 1969), p. 29; Daphne du Maurier, The Infernal World of Branwell Brontë (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1960), pp. 65-66.

⁴ Fannie E. Ratchford, The Brontës' Web of Childhood (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1941), p. 158.

⁵ Ruth H. Blackburn, ed., The Brontë Sisters: Selected Source Materials for College Research Papers (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1964), pp. 101-03.

⁶ Ratchford, "Conscience vs. Angria," The Brontës' Web of Childhood, pp. 104 ff.

⁷ C. Day Lewis, "The Poetry of Emily Brontë," BST, 13, Part 67 (1957), 89.

⁸ For example, J. Hillis Miller, The Disappearance of God (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1963), p. 161.

⁹ Ratchford, Gondal's Queen, pp. 31-32.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Herbert Dingle, "An Investigation of Emily Brontë's Poetry from an Unaccustomed Angle," BST, 14, Part 74 (1964), 7.

¹² C. W. Hatfield, ed., "Introduction," The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1941), p. 4.

¹³ Davidson Cook, "Emily Brontë's Poems," The Nineteenth Century and After (August 1926), 248-62.

¹⁴ Ratchford, The Brontës' Web of Childhood, p. 168.

¹⁵ Mary Visick, The Genesis of Wuthering Heights (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 1958), p. 12.

¹⁶ L. P. Hartley, "Emily Brontë in Gondal and Gaaldine," BST, 14, Part 75 (1965), 2.

¹⁷ Edgar Jean Bracco, "Emily Brontë's Second Novel," BST, 15, Part 76 (1966), 30.

¹⁸ Gérin's Charlotte Brontë: The Evolution of Genius (Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press, 1967), as the paperback cover indicates, "earned for its author the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for the best biography of 1967, the W. H. Heinemann Award for 1968, and the British Academy Rose Mary Crawshay Prize of 1968." Lavish praise from reviews by The Times of London, the Sunday Times, and the Sunday Telegraph is also quoted.

¹⁹ Gérin, Charlotte Brontë, p. 304.

²⁰ Winifred Gérin, Emily Brontë: A Biography (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), p. 181.

²¹ Hatfield, p. 25.

²² Hatfield, p. 233.

Chapter 3:

THE QUALITY OF THE A MS. POEMS

The legitimate interest in Gondal sparked by Miss Ratchford's scholarship has, as I have indicated, somewhat confused the difference between Gondal and personal verse. Thus, as excellent a critic as J. Hillis Miller can state that "there is no real distinction between the Gondal poems and those which are direct expressions of Emily Brontë's own inner experience,"¹ and Denis Donoghue says, somewhat more accurately, "if we distinguish between the Gondal poems and the personal poems, the distinction should admit the consideration that, at a certain level of description, the local differences tend to disappear."² In fact, although they were written by the same person and express certain concerns typical of her, to state that there are no real differences between the two groups of poems is like stating that there are no real differences between "Il Penseroso" and Milton's sonnets of the Republican period.

Gondal is a wonderland with all the accoutrements and artifacts of a literary fantasy, and its poetry lacks the force of reality; the personal poetry is just that, and from its source in lived experience acquires an authenticity and power that raise it to the level of something very special indeed, in contrast to the mostly third-rate stuff of Gondal. The Gondal poetry is a response to literature, whereas the personal poetry is a response to life.

In a famous essay, F. R. Leavis contrasts a Gondal poem with a poem of Hardy and finds the latter superior in both "reality" and "sincerity." Leavis observes, accurately I think, that in "Cold in the earth-- and the deep snow piled above thee," Emily Brontë "conceives a situation in order to have the satisfaction of dramatizing herself in a tragic role--an attitude, nobly impressive, of sternly controlled passionate desolation."³

We might wish that Leavis had contrasted a Gondal poem with one of Emily Brontë's personal poems, for they are rich in reality and sincerity. There is, for example, the vividly felt death wish in "The Night-Wind":

THE NIGHT-WIND

In summer's mellow midnight,
A cloudless moon shone through
Our open parlour window
And rosetrees wet with dew.

I sat in silent musing,
The soft wind waved my hair:
It told me Heaven was glorious,
And sleeping Earth was fair.

I needed not its breathing
To bring such thoughts to me,
But still it whispered lowly,
"How dark the woods will be!

"The thick leaves in my murmur
Are rustling like a dream,
And all their myriad voices
Instinct with spirit seem."

I said, "Go, gentle singer,
Thy wooing voice is kind,
But do not think its music
Has power to reach my mind.

"Play with the scented flower,
The young tree's supple bough,
And leave my human feelings
In their own course to flow."

The wanderer would not leave me;
Its kiss grew warmer still--
"O come," it sighed so sweetly,
"I'll win thee 'gainst thy will."

"Have we not been from childhood friends?
Have I not loved thee long?
As long as thou hast loved the night
Whose silence wakes my song."

"And when thy heart is laid at rest
Beneath the church-yard stone
I shall have time enough to mourn
And thou to be alone."⁴

This poem has extraordinary delicacy and precision; it murmurs and rustles as a dream, or as the wind in the fourth stanza. There is not a word out of place or the slightest hint of role-playing or inauthenticity. On second reading, even the "open parlour window" of the first stanza seems quietly threatening, almost like the furniture of a paranoid dream, the opening in which the death-carrying wind dallies. And the phrase "rosetrees wet with dew," like the "summer's mellow midnight," conveys a fullness, a biological ripeness, a relaxation that is vulnerable to death's subtle encroachment. "The soft wind waved my hair"--again the language and imagery of the dream, deviating almost imperceptibly from ordinary reality. These are but a few examples of the appropriateness of the wording. What happens in the poem? There is a quiet and not very intense resistance to the spirit of death, a resistance finally given up. The curious-

ly polite, formal tone of the fifth and sixth stanzas imparts the vulnerability of the speaker to death's wooing, as does the more direct statement in the third stanza: "I needed not its breathing / To bring such thoughts to me." Except for the last two lines of the fourth stanza, which nonetheless are entirely appropriate, the syntax is direct and simple, avoiding the rhetorical excesses of the Gondal poetry. Even the rime scheme, xaxa, in its alternation of dissonance and consonance, returning always to consonance, is appropriate to the mood and movement of the poem.

Though it lacks the Gondal scaffolding, the situation Emily Brontë has chosen to write about, the wind embodying a personification of Death as a courtly lover, is fraught with the very dangers of literary excess evident in the Gondal poems. But she entirely avoids those dangers. Her achievement is not one merely of technical proficiency. Rather, the poem is "genuine"--a significant adjective used by Charlotte Brontë to describe the poetry in the MS volume she discovered, an adjective that would be totally inappropriate to the Gondal verse. Not all, of course, of the poems in the A MS. achieve the quality of this one, and sometimes Emily Brontë in her personal poetry falls into the awkward Cowperian diction, syntax, and imagery, and the Byronic posing, of the Gondal verse. But as a whole, these poems are genuine and the Gondal poems are not.

NOTES

- ¹ J. Hillis Miller, The Disappearance of God (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1963), p. 157.
- ² Denis Donoghue, "Emily Brontë: On the Latitude of Interpretation," Harvard English Studies, 1 (1970), 117.
- ³ F. R. Leavis, "Reality and Sincerity: Notes in the Analysis of Poetry," Scrutiny, 19 (1952), rpt. in A Selection from Scrutiny, comp. F. R. Leavis (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1968), I, 252.
- ⁴ C. W. Hatfield, ed., The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1941), pp. 146-47. Hereafter quotations from this volume will be noted parenthetically in text, e.g. (Poems, 146-47).

Chapter 4:

THEMES OF EMILY BRONTË'S PERSONAL POETRY

The B MS. poems are the words of the Gondalan personae; the A MS. poems are the unmasked words of Emily Brontë. The B poems are concerned with love and loss, betrayal, imprisonment, and various other subjects typical of a romantic melodrama. The A poems speak of Emily's private world of mysticism, her death wish, and her relationship with her muse of Gondal. It is the interconnection of these three themes in the personal poetry that I shall discuss in this chapter. Again and again, the A poems suggest that Emily's mystical visions were of the Gondal world and a particular muse or genius who came to represent Gondal for her. The poems also indicate that her strong death wish expressed deep disappointment in the world of conscious adulthood and a desire for permanence in the spiritual world she experienced as Gondal. Thus the death wish, the mysticism, and the preoccupations with Gondal are facets of the same bright gem.

Winifred Gérin attempts to distinguish Emily's mystical visions from those of other famous mystics:

Her experiences were . . . different from those of other known mystics like Traherne, Vaughan, and Wordsworth in this . . . respect: childhood had for them been the period of greatest revelation. With Emily Brontë, the contrary appears to be true: she was nineteen when at Law Hill [where she first records in her poetry the mystical visitation of a kind of deity]. It was only from then on that such manifestations became the purpose and fulfillment of her life, as physical love is to other women. They were the inspiration of her poetry.¹

There is a grain of truth here, but on the essential point Gérin is mistaken. Emily had visions from a very early age--visions of Gondal. But at Law Hill she was away from home, alone, for the first extended period of her life; some investigators believe the Law Hill period may have been as long as eighteen months.² What appears to have happened is that in combination with keen homesickness (probably intensified by fear or consciousness of death, as I shall argue) the Gondal visions thrust themselves upon her with such violence as to seem to take shape in a deification. The seriousness and objectivity of Gondal were borne home to her so that it took on an absolute, external identity.

That Emily had visions at an early age is easily documented. In the address to the night wind examined in the previous chapter, the wind is associated with visions of a glorious Heaven (and with the death wish). The wind asks rhetorically, "Have we not been from childhood friends?" A short poem dated April 1840 has the most direct references to the early visions:

It is too late to call thee now:
I will not nurse that dream again;
For every joy that lit my brow
Would bring its after-storm of pain.

Besides, the mist is half withdrawn;
The barren mountain-side lies bare;
And sunshine and awaking morn
Paint no more golden visions there.

Yet ever in my grateful breast,
Thy darling shade shall cherished be;
For God alone doth know how blest
My early years have been in thee!

(Poems, 141-42)

The last two lines refer to the "early years" the poet has spent in the presence of the creature addressed in the poem. This creature, the context makes clear, is a muse whom "sunshine and awaking morn" have driven away; hence--"It is too late to call thee now." It is a detail of many poems that the mystical visions are experienced late at night. This poem is set at daybreak, just past the time when the muse can be evoked. The final line, then, its reference to early years, parallels the lost midnight of possible visions with the lost childhood of visions. Noteworthy, too, is the suggestion in the first stanza of depression and pain at the passing of the vision.

In a personal poem from the Bonnell collection of manuscripts the poet declares directly:

Dreams have encircled me . . .
 From careless childhood's sunny time;
 Visions by ardent fancy fed
 Since life was in its morning prime.
 (Poems, 49)

This poem is another clear indication that Emily had early visions. And a B MS. poem of July 19, 1839, relates the mystical visitation upon a six-year-old child resulting in the child's special musical and poetical powers (Poems, 116-17).

Emily uses "visions" in the lines quoted above in the sense of poetic inspiration; the poem in which they occur is a lament for the temporary loss of inspiration. These are lines often cited as direct allusion to the Gondal experience. Indeed, it is likely that whenever Emily Brontë speaks of her

early childhood visions she is referring precisely to Gondal, the imaginative experience that was so central to her being.

Gondal was probably the subject and object of Emily's mystical visions³ after the Law Hill period as well. Her mysticism was not something else. It is hard to imagine that Emily could have had two foci of her spiritual and imaginative life, and there is no evidence that Gondal diminished in intensity after Emily had reached her twenties. (In fact, it is the very intensity of this "juvenilia" during a period of adulthood when we might expect it to have died out that makes Gondal so unusual.)

In a poem from the A MS. addressed "To Imagination," the personified object is thanked for the visions of "real worlds" that it provides:

. . . thou art ever there to bring
The hovering visions back and breathe
New glories o'er the blighted spring
And call a lovelier life from death,
And whisper with a voice divine
Of real worlds as bright as thine.

I trust not to thy phantom bliss,
Yet still in evening's quiet hour
With never-failing thankfulness
I welcome thee, benignant power,
Sure solacer of human cares,
And brighter hope when hope despairs.

(Poems, 206)

Imagination is treated as an external muse in these lines, but earlier in the same poem it is "the world within." The vividly imagined world of Gondal is the world within, a world of the poet's own imagining. Here Emily calls "Imagination" the creature she elsewhere addresses as the "God

of Visions," as her "Comforter," and sometimes simply as "Thou" or "it." It is about the poems addressed to this being that critics speak when they discuss Emily's mysticism, as well as about one important Gondal poem from the B MS., "The Prisoner" (discussed later). As "The Prisoner" is the only one of Emily's poems clearly to describe a white-hot mystical ecstasy, it may be that the idea of Emily's mysticism has been overemphasized. There is a mystical element in the author's relationship to her world of Gondal, but in the A MS. it is never given the fine intensity of "The Prisoner."

The degree of mystical transformation in Emily's experience of her muse is expressed in a poem about the evening wind:

Aye, there it is! It wakes to-night
Sweet thoughts that will not die
And feeling's fires flash all as bright
As in the years gone by!

And I can tell by thine altered cheek
And by thy kindled gaze
And by the words thou scarce dost speak,
How wildly fancy plays.

Yes, I could swear that glorious wind
Has swept the world aside,
Has dashed its memory from thy mind
Like foam-bells from the tide--

And thou art now a spirit pouring
Thy presence into all--
The essence of the Tempest's roaring
And of the Tempest's fall--

A universal influence
From thine own influence free;
A principle of life, intense
Lost to mortality.

Thus truly when that breast is cold
 Thy prisoned soul shall rise,
 The dungeon mingle with the mould--
 The captive with the skies.

(Poems, 165)

The subject of the poem (one part of the author's self observed by another part?) is transformed into pure spirit, as the fourth stanza indicates.

Denis Donoghue's explication of this poem is useful as a basis for further discussion.

[It is] a ritual, designed to break the chains of time, place, and body. . . . The movement of feeling arises from within the soul of the speaker; the transformation is effected by calling upon a natural force already hospitable to such changes. . . . The wind is invoked as the natural force of action, the Aeolian lyre, the "correspondent breeze," life itself as motion and spirit. Spirit is universal, wind is the form it takes, and the form of the poem is the process by which, from first word to last, every objective image is transformed into spirit. The change is complete when the recipient is entirely spirit.⁴

Donoghue's interpretation errs, I believe, in placing the action in the general Romantic context without reference to Emily Brontë's specific experience of Gondal. Donoghue allows the wind only the rather vague meaning of "natural force of action" or "life itself," whereas in the A MS. poems the wind often represents the arrival of Emily's spirit creature. Here the wind is associated with memory first, with "sweet thoughts that will not die" and "feeling's fires" as bright as in a distant past, an allusion to the roots of Emily's imaginative world in her own childhood, and to its continuity in her adulthood.

That childhood was a better time, and the evocation of it is now utopian. The wind is associated with memories of the past and with "fancy,"

and it is the activity of fancy that occurs as the poet is spiritualized. Gondal is, of course, the act of fancy, and the reality of the everyday world is swept aside by it. The first stanza tells us that the power symbolized by the wind is a recurring visitant: "Aye, there it is!" suggests that "it" is just come into focus once again, is being re-cognized. The speaker is familiar with the spiritual visitant and has been for many years. This work of fancy would appear to be the evocation of Gondal.

Utopian also is the push toward death in the final stanza. It is useful to examine the death wish in this poem, as the intensity of mystical feeling in the post-Law Hill period is most often found in poems that also express a death wish. The poem tells us that when the subject becomes conscious of the spiritual presence, she herself becomes spiritualized. This experience is a prototype of the spiritual bliss she imagines death will be: "Thus truly [my emphasis] when that breast is cold / Thy prisoned soul shall rise," and the soul will blend into a pure spiritual state. If, as I suggest, the spiritual presence is her muse of Gondal, then the poem indicates that Gondal can provide her only temporary spiritualization, and the wish for death is a wish for permanence in the Gondal state.

We should note in addition that the "sweet thoughts. . . will not die." They will not, but her body will. To understand these lines is to understand that Emily thought of Gondal not as an extension of her imagination but as a spiritual product of it, which now had an independent and permanent spiritual existence. Miller observes:

Nothing is more curious or revealing than the way Anne and Emily in their various diary and birthday notes speak of the Gondal stories. Notations of everyday happenings in the Brontë household, or historical events like Queen Victoria's ascent to the throne are juxtaposed against records of the Gondal world as if the two existed on exactly the same plane of reality.⁵

That Emily Brontë had an active death wish has been disputed by C. Day Lewis.⁶ It is difficult to understand this point of view, for it would seem to deny that the poems in the A MS., so many of which express a death wish, have any biographical reference. It seems probable, indeed, that Emily's discomfort upon Charlotte's discovery of the A MS. was precisely embarrassment at her own open expression of the death wish in these intensely personal poems. (There is no conceivable reason she would have been embarrassed by discovery of Gondal poems.)

The address to the Night Wind discussed in the previous chapter clearly documents the attractiveness of death. So does the poem "To Imagination," in which the author declares, "thou art ever there to . . . call a lovelier life from death." An apparent attempt to achieve mystical spiritualization leads the author, in "Enough of thought, Philosopher," to cry, "O let me die, that power and will / Their cruel strife may close. . . ." A variant final stanza of the same poem is even clearer:

O for the lid that cannot weep,
The Breast that needs no breath--
The tomb that brings eternal sleep--
For Life's Deliverer, Death!
(Poems, 222)

A poem dated April 10, 1845, begins:

Death, that struck when I was most confiding
 In my certain Faith of Joy to be,
 Strike again, Time's withered branch dividing
 From the fresh root of Eternity!

(Poems, 224)

The poem "Aye, there it is!" establishes in its final stanza that the mystical condition of spiritualization, which I take to be the condition of contact with the Gondal world, is a prototype of a welcome death. If so, then the desire for Gondal and the appreciation or wish for death would appear to have the same source in rejection of the world of adult reality. This conclusion would seem warranted, also, from a reading of an A MS. poem of June 2, 1845, in which one part of the self asks another part, "Why dost thou hold the treasure fast / Of youth's delight, when youth is past / And thou art near thy prime?" (Poems, 232). The question asked would seem to be, Why, at the mature age of 27, do you still remain so attached to the delight of your childhood, the imaginary world of Gondal? The answering self responds that the visions have kept her from the disappointments associated with "dull unlovely day," the world of adulthood and of the reality opposite to her midnight transports. She refers to "a thoughtful Spirit," who has taught her to concentrate her hope on the distant and immutable, upon eternity, upon death: "Glad comforter, will I not brave / Unawed the darkness of the grave? / Nay, smile to hear Death's billows rave, / My Guide, sustained by thee?" The association of the Spirit with the "treasures of youth's delight" is yet additional evidence that

Emily's mysticism and her visions of Gondal are one and the same thing.

We have seen how Emily's death wish finds expression in Gondal. Gondal, very likely, derives its power from death, as compensation for the deaths during her childhood of Emily's mother and sisters. Gérin records the profound effect the deaths of Maria and Elizabeth Brontë, at ages twelve and ten in 1825, had upon Charlotte and Branwell, but claims "the early deaths of her sisters had no comparable effects upon Emily."⁷

Emily's sisters died as a result of tuberculosis contracted at the Cowan Bridge school. Emily was six when they died and was also at school there with Charlotte, away from home for the first time. The association of death with separation from home no doubt explains her lifelong aversion to leaving Haworth. Mrs. Brontë had died when Emily was three and a half, and in her later life Emily may well have retained ghostly, fragmentary memories of her; there is no plain record of that or of how she took the early deaths of her sisters, but it seems likely they were a horrible fulfillment of the threat of family disintegration experienced with her mother's death.⁸

In his analysis of Wuthering Heights and the poems, Irving Buchen employs the familiar Platonic and Freudian idea of birth as the loss of paradise: "The separation of Heathcliff and Catherine from each other re-enacts the initial state of being born."⁹ And Miller argues in a similar vein, perceiving that for Catherine and Heathcliff consciousness brings with it separation, a separation that symbolizes, he believes, the disjunction of sinful man from a hopelessly stern, Protestant God with whom

death can provide the only union.¹⁰ In my final chapter I discuss these ideas with reference to Wuthering Heights; they provide a somewhat inaccurate interpretation of the separation that is the subject of the poetry. The personal poems in the A MS. are plainly autobiographical. They frequently refer to a moment of happiness in the distant past. That moment is most naturally explained not as prenatal or pre-conscious of sin but as before the core family's disintegration that begins with Mrs. Brontë's death. Denis Donoghue finds in all of Emily's work a four-part figura of ecstatic childhood; followed by a sudden discomfort and alienation; then a desire for rest, calm, release; and finally a moment of transcendence.¹¹ For the child Emily Brontë, among the earliest memories must have been sudden consciousness of death, loss, and disintegration; the deaths in the Bronte family plainly reinforce the first two phases of Donoghue's figura.

Two of Emily's personal poems refer to the dead mother. In the middle of a rumination on mortality and mutability the author suddenly breaks off and addresses her mother in heaven. Her mother, she imagines, is herself unhappy, despite paradise, because she is separated from her children:

Ah mother, what shall comfort thee
 In all this boundless misery?
 To cheer our eager eyes a while
 We see thee smile; how fondly smile!
 But who reads not through that tender glow
 Thy deep, unutterable woe?
 Indeed, no dazzling land above
 Can cheat thee of thy children's love.

(Poems, 167)

The rest of the poem indicates that union with mother is preferable to "any world beyond the Tomb." Earlier in the same poem, Emily Brontë refers to irremedial loss in the past:

. . . my eyes cannot hold the tears
That memory hoards from vanished years;
For Time and Death and Mortal pain
Give wounds that will not heal again.

These losses are so great that "Heaven itself, so pure and blest, / Could never give my spirit rest." This is a specific and meaningful rejection of the Christian heaven, on the grounds that the author's personal experience warrants and will be satisfied only with something different, union with the mother. One of course is reminded of Catherine's dream in Wuthering Heights, where she fell sobbing to the earth in thankfulness for having been rejected by an inappropriate heaven. Like Catherine and Heathcliff separated by the former's death, here neither mother nor child is happy, and cannot be until both are united in death, even though the mother is presently in heaven.

A poem dated April 28, 1839, also explicitly mentions the mother. It is a mild spring day, the speaker is stretched out on the grass rhapsodically receiving a kind of moral sustenance from her memories of childhood:

Laid on the grass I lapsed away,
Sank back again to childhood's day;
All harsh thoughts perished, memory mild
Subdued both grief and passion wild.
(Poems, 105)

Beside her on the grass, evidently asleep, is an "iron man" with a "stern

and swarthy brow." The author knows that her visions of childhood purify her; perhaps the same is true for this iron man:

That iron man was born like me,
And he was once an ardent boy:
He must have felt, in infancy,
The glory of a summer sky.

Though storms untold his mind have tossed,
He cannot utterly have lost
Remembrance of his early home--
So lost that not a gleam may come;

No vision of his mother's face
When she so fondly would set free
Her darling child from her embrace
To roam till eve at liberty:

Nor of his haunts, nor of the flowers
His tiny hand would grateful bear
Returning from the darkening bowers,
To weave into her glossy hair.

She hopes that as in sleep this man's soul returns to memories of innocence and mother love, it will experience a transformation, a turning away from sin; but this is a vain hope:

Perhaps this is the destined hour
When hell shall lose its fatal power
And heaven itself shall bend above
To hail the soul redeemed by love.

Unmarked I gazed; my idle thought
Passed with the ray whose shine it caught;
One glance revealed how little care
He felt for all the beauty there.

Oh, crime can make the heart grow old
Sooner than years of wearing woe;
Can turn the warmest bosom cold
As winter wind or polar snow.

The poem implies that the author, like the iron man, retains "visions of [her] mother's face." But whether or not the author has specific utopian memories of her mother, infancy and the memory of infancy are conceived of as a moral counter to the vanity of adult human life, and regression is a moral act. This poem recalls the lines: "Why dost thou hold the treasure fast / Of youth's delight, when youth is past / And thou art near thy prime?" (Poems, 232) which refer to Gondal. Both memories of infancy and visions of Gondal are associated with paradisiac contentment, with innocence, with spirituality, and hence with a longing for their permanent realization in death.

One other personal poem (dated April 10, 1845) deals with parental loss, without specifically mentioning the mother. Though an obscure poem, it is nonetheless plain in its statement of a death wish:

Death, that struck when I was most confiding
 In my certain Faith of Joy to be,
 Strike again, Time's withered branch dividing
 From the fresh root of Eternity!

Leaves, upon Time's branch, were growing brightly,
 Full of sap and full of silver dew;
 Birds, beneath its shelter, gathered nightly;
 Daily, round its flowers, the wild bees flew.

Sorrow passed and plucked the golden blossom,
 Guilt stripped off the foliage in its pride;
 But, within its parent's kindly bosom,
 Flowed forever Life's restoring tide.

Little mourned I for the parted Gladness,
 For the vacant nest and silent song;
 Hope was there and laughed me out of sadness,
 Whispering, "Winter will not linger long."

And behold, with tenfold increase blessing
 Spring adorned the beauty-burdened spray;
 Wind and rain and fervent heat caressing
 Lavished glory on its second May.

High it rose; no winged grief could sweep it;
 Sin was scared to distance with its shine:
 Love and its own life had power to keep it
 From all wrong, from every blight but thine!

Heartless Death, the young leaves droop and languish!
 Evening's gentle air may still restore--
 No: the morning sunshine mocks my anguish--
 Time for me must never blossom more!

Strike it down, that other boughs may flourish
 Where that perished sapling used to be;
 Thus, at least, its mouldering corpse will nourish
 That from which it sprung--Eternity.

(Poems, 224-25)

We recognize in "Evening's gentle air" (stanza 7) a reference to the night wind, a symbol of Emily's mystical visions of Gondal. The wind offers a temporary respite from the threat of death which is itself symbolized, in an inversion of classical imagery, by the onset of day, as well as by the more traditional image of winter. The poet is recording a process of which her own impending death is a second-generation event. She is a sapling growing in the place of a bough stripped by the previous winter. The first-generation death--quite probably a hidden reference to her mother's--struck when Emily was "most confiding / In my certain Faith of Joy to be." This poem, then, like the others, seems to allude to a Gondal that is a consolation and compensation, to a hopeful and perfect state of infancy that was rudely broken off by death, and to the conscious-

ness of a lost mother as central to the death wish.

Emily's most famous poem, known to the public as "The Prisoner," records a mystical experience. Actually a Gondal poem, it was one of the few from the B MS. revised by the author and published in 1846. A noble-woman is held, near death, in a dungeon by her former childhood playmate, who belongs to a family at war with hers. These are the justly famous lines:

A messenger of Hope comes every night to me,
And offers, for short life, eternal liberty.

He comes with western winds, with evening's wandering airs,
With that clear dusk of heaven that brings the thickest stars;
Winds take a pensive tone, and stars a tender fire,
And visions rise and change which kill me with desire--

Desire for nothing known in my maturer years
When joy grew mad with awe at counting future tears;
When, if my spirit's sky was full of flashes warm,
I knew not whence they came, from sun or thunderstorm;

But first a hush of peace, a soundless calm descends;
The struggle of distress and fierce impatience ends;
Mute music soothes my breast--unuttered harmony
That I could never dream till earth was lost to me.

Then dawns the Invisible, the Unseen its truth reveals;
My outward sense is gone, my inward essence feels--
Its wings are almost free, its home, its harbour found;
Measuring the gulf it stoops and dares the final bound!

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

Yet I would lose no sting, would wish no torture less;
The more that anguish racks the earlier will it bless;
And robed in fires of hell, or bright with heavenly shine,
If it but herald Death, the vision is divine."

(Poems, 238-39)

Here once again are all the associations of Emily Brontë's mysticism with her death wish and with terms that elsewhere suggest the experience of Gondal: 1) a personified nightly visitor, carrier of mystical visions, who is associated with the wind; 2) regression-- "Desire for nothing known in my maturer years"; 3) a moment of intense exaltation that prefigures a welcomed death. It is important to note that the persona's death wish finds justification in the recent deaths of her parents. She has no reason or desire to live without them:

About her lips there played a smile of almost scorn:
 "My friend," she gently said, "you have not heard me mourn;
 When you my parents' lives--my lost life, can restore,
 Then may I weep and sue--but never, Friend, before!"

"The Prisoner" is dated October 9, 1845. It is useful to compare it with another well known and clearly autobiographical poem dated December 4, 1838. This other poem dramatizes a Law Hill experience. The author has a moment to herself and uses it to fantasize, but she cannot decide where to travel mentally, Haworth or Gondal:

A little while, a little while,
 The noisy crowd are barred away;
 And I can sing and I can smile
 A little while I've holyday!

Where wilt thou go, my harassed heart?
 Full many a land invites thee now;
 And places near and far apart
 Have rest for thee, my weary brow.

There is a spot 'mid barren hills
 Where winter howls and driving rain,
 But if the dreary tempest chills
 There is a light that warms again.

The house is old, the trees are bare
 And moonless bends the misty dome
 But what on earth is half so dear,
 So longed for as the hearth of home?

The mute bird sitting on the stone,
 The dank moss dripping from the wall,
 The garden-walk with weeds o'ergrown,
 I love them--how I love them all!

Shall I go there? or shall I seek
 Another clime, another sky,
 Where tongues familiar music speak
 In accents dear to memory.

Yes, as I mused, the naked room,
 The flickering firelight died away
 And from the midst of cheerless gloom
 I passed to bright, unclouded day--

A little and a lone green lane
 That opened on a common wide;
 A distant, dreamy, dim blue chain
 Of mountains circling every side;

A heaven so clear, an earth so calm,
 So sweet, so soft, so hushed an air
 And, deepening still the dream-like charm,
 Wild moor-sheep feeding everywhere--

That was the scene; I knew it well,
 I knew the path-ways far and near
 That winding o'er each billowy swell
 Marked out the tracks of wandering deer.

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

Even as I stood with raptured eye
 Absorbed in bliss so deep and dear
 My hour of rest had fled by
 And given me back to weary care.

(Poems, 93-95)

Soon after this poem was written, others record a sudden increase in the intensity of Emily's visions and the new presence in them of a Gondal deification.¹³ It may be, as Gérin suggests, that the Law Hill experience itself, with its intense loneliness and homesickness, generated this escalation. The process of transportation recorded in this poem, though milder than the later ones and without a recorded death wish, is still remarkably similar to them. The Gondal vision is associated with music, as is the mystical vision in "The Prisoner." Darkness is replaced by intense light, "bright, unclouded day." The moment of transportation ends; consciousness returns with an image of a dungeon, as in "The Prisoner"--

But truth has banished fancy's power;
I hear my dungeon bars recoil--

Even as I stood with raptured eye
Absorbed in bliss so deep and dear
My hour of rest had fled by
And given me back to weary care.

I shall end this chapter with an examination of two poems that refer directly to Emily Brontë's relationship with her deity. J. Hillis Miller argues that the God of the poems is the traditional Christian God as perceived by Emily's austere, Evangelical and Methodist mentality.¹⁴ It may be that the low church and dissenter strains in her religious upbringing helped to shape her sense of the personality of her Gondal deity, but the poems establish convincingly that hers is not the Christian God. (The woman herself, it is rumored, eliminated as much as possible all references to religion from her own life, generally declining even to attend her father's

services.)¹⁵ The deity of the poems is, rather, the "God of Visions":

O thy bright eyes must answer now,
When Reason, with a scornful brow,
Is mocking at my overthrow;
O thy sweet tongue must plead for me
And tell why I have chosen thee!

Stern Reason is to judgement come
Arrayed in all her forms of gloom:
Wilt thou my advocate be dumb?
No, radiant angel, speak and say
Why I did cast the world away;

Why I have persevered to shun
The common paths that others run;
And on a strange road journeyed on
Heedless alike of Wealth and Power--
Of Glory's wreath and Pleasure's flower.

These once indeed seemed Beings divine,
And they perchance heard vows of mine
And saw my offerings on their shrine--
But, careless gifts are seldom prized,
And mine were worthily despised;

So with a ready heart I swore
To seek their altar-stone no more,
And gave my spirit to adore
Thee, ever present, phantom thing--
My slave, my comrade, and my King!

A slave because I rule thee still;
Incline thee to my changeful will
And make thy influence good or ill--
A comrade, for by day and night
Thou art my intimate delight--

My Darling Pain that wounds and sears
And wrings a blessing out from tears
By deadening me to real cares;
And yet, a king--though prudence well
Have taught thy subject to rebel.

And am I wrong to worship where
 Faith cannot doubt nor Hope despair
 Since my own soul can grant my prayer?
 Speak, God of Visions, plead for me
 And tell why I have chosen thee!

(Poems, 208-09)

The "strange road" of stanza 3 is, of course, a reference to the Gondal experience. As in several other poems, Emily describes her mystical visions as the opposite of normal reality. The slave-comrade-king nature of the poet's relationship to the God of Visions is exactly that of the Gondal poet to Gondal--but certainly not ("comrade"?) to a fundamentalist idea of the Christian God.¹⁶

Another well-known poem, "No coward soul is mine," calls this creature the "God within my breast":

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

O God within my breast
 Almighty ever-present Deity
 Life, that in me hast rest
 As I Undying Life, have power in Thee

Vain are the thousand creeds
 That move men's hearts, unutterably vain,
 Worthless as withered weeds
 Or idlest froth amid the boundless main

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

With wide-embracing love
 Thy spirit animates eternal years

Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates and rears

Though Earth and moon were gone
And suns and universes ceased to be
And thou wert left alone
Every Existence would exist in thee

There is not room for Death
Nor atom that his might could render void
Since thou art Being and Breath
And what thou art may never be destroyed.

(Poems, 243-44)

This is the same God of Visions, the God of Emily's imagination, which displaces any other deity. Once again we find references to the idea that her deity is immortal, the curious idea that the product of her imagination has an independent life through which the author personally can gain immortality. Emily Brontë's is a private religion, a solipsistic one, and within it she can say that all other religions are "vain." We should keep in mind, too, the rejection of the Christian heaven in "I see around me tombstones grey" (discussed above, p. 38), and the frequent yearning toward death that has no suggestion of a Christian heaven as its fulfillment. Emily's is a private heaven. God is an experience available to all men; Gondal, however, is available only to her. In reference to Wuthering Heights and to "No coward soul is mine," Miller, then, is essentially mistaken in his identification of this God:

In several passages in the novel and in a famous poem, the foundation or substance of the self is God alone. Only after death will come fusion with the divine being and entry into a boundless realm of joy. God is more immanent than transcen-

dent, more a ubiquitous presence than an external object. The deity is as intimate and pervasive as inner consciousness is to the self.¹⁷

This passage becomes persuasive, however, if we alter it to mean that the deity is "inner consciousness" itself, the imagination of Gondal, rather than the Christian God.

I have attempted in this chapter to elucidate the real subject of a majority of Emily Brontë's personal poems, which is her relationship with her muse of Gondal. The observation that the personal poems are about Emily's experience of Gondal is, of course, Ratchford's. However, Ratchford sees the number of personal poems on this subject as very small--only eight--and does not discuss Emily's death wish or its relation to her Gondal mysticism. Most critics do not share Ratchford's assumption that these poems are about Gondal but see the poems as addressed to a more general "Imagination" ("To Imagination" is, after all, the title of one of the poems), or to Nature, or to the Christian God. Occasionally critics have come very near the mark, as in this statement of C. Day Lewis:

Her God, like her Gondal, was too narrowly personal--a Being who, rather than reconciling her to humankind, justified her self-exclusion from it. And at times in her poetry we find this God confused, almost identified, with the "visitant of air" which inspired her verse and created Gondal; with her imagination.¹⁸

It is my thesis that this is not a momentary confusion but a conscious and continual identification.

Throughout the period recorded in the A MS. Emily Brontë refers to

her visions. Frequently it is specified that these visions are of a complete and different world. They are often associated with memories of childhood and frequently with death, both death (or some unnamed tragedy) in the past and the author's own glorious death in the future. They are also frequently associated with creativity or writing. There are indications of the privacy of the visions. With only one variation in setting (the Law Hill poem), the visitations occur late at night and are associated with the night wind. Around 1837, at the time of the Law Hill experience, there is a change in this pattern in that the visions intensify and are identified with a deification, with a God of Visions. It is my contention that these later visions are the same as those that occupy Emily before 1836 and indeed virtually all her conscious life. The importance of Gondal to her has been well documented; it was her sole creative outlet, with the exception of these private poems (not, of course, really an exception) and Wuthering Heights, from age fourteen until her death, and even before fourteen in a different form as the Glasstown and Young Men's Plays. Emily never states directly that her mystical visions are of Gondal, but the weight of evidence seems convincing.

Lewis's argument raises another question, which is subtler and more difficult to answer with assurance. Granted that Emily is sometimes invoking her visions of Gondal or her muse of Gondal, is it not possible that in some of the personal poems she is addressing her imagination in general, or a Christian God, or Nature, or some other entity rather than the genius of Gondal--indeed, that only occasionally does the idea of Gondal become con-

fused with this God or entity?

The references to childhood happiness, to visions in childhood, and to visions of a perfect and different world point unequivocally to Gondal's origins. These references are not all found in every personal poem, but their occasional absence does not necessarily indicate that Emily was not thinking of Gondal or invoking its muse. This group of personal poems is unified by the frequent employment of these details and associations as well as the others I have mentioned. It is the unity of the group of poems, the sameness of the mystical experience she continually describes, which suggests that Emily Brontë is writing again and again about the same visions, the same God, the God of Visions of Gondal.

Mysticism often is death oriented, and Emily's mystical poetry is an expression of an intense death wish. The origins of this wish one can only conjecture, but from the early deaths of her mother and her two eldest sisters one can draw a clear inference. These must have had a severely traumatic effect upon a child of Emily's sensitivity. Her frequently expressed longings for a utopian infancy, which becomes associated with mystical visions and with death, support the inference. There are only a few months between the deaths of Maria and Elizabeth and the arrival at the Haworth parsonage of a box of toy soldiers who become the characters of Gondal, and who fill a very large space in the spirit of Emily Brontë from then on.

NOTES

¹ Winifred Gérin, Emily Brontë: A Biography (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), p. 87.

² See Herbert Dingle, "An Investigation of Emily Brontë's Poetry from an Unaccustomed Angle," BST, 14, Part 74 (1964), 5-10; John Hewish, Emily Brontë: A Critical and Biographical Study (London: Macmillan, 1969), p. 54.

³ I use "mysticism" and "vision" in their ordinary sense, as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary, viz., mysticism, ". . . belief in the possibility of union with the Divine nature by means of ecstatic contemplation; reliance on spiritual intuition or exalted feeling as the means of acquiring knowledge of mysteries inaccessible to intellectual apprehension"; vision, "something which is apparently seen otherwise than by ordinary sight; esp. an appearance of a prophetic or mystical character, or having the nature of a revelation, supernaturally presented to the mind either in sleep or in an abnormal state." As many commentators have remarked, however, Emily Brontë's mysticism is non-religious; hence, we must understand that, for her, "union with the Divine" was with a divinity of her own making, her Gondal creation.

The visions occurred every night, a highly unusual mystical phenomenon, as Laski notes, and were self-generated. They were (I argue) the inspiration of her Gondal poetry, thus quite detailed, and doubtless originating in her attempts to vividly imagine the Gondal scene.

Laski and Dobson identify Emily's visions as developing from the contemplation of nature; Laski and Lane note a similarity to St. Teresa's mysticism. For Lane, this establishes a connection to sexual ecstasy; Laski, who categorizes ecstatic visions according to their organization, finds Emily's and St. Teresa's to be a relatively rare type characterized by withdrawal followed by intensity.

See Mildred Dobson, "Was Emily Brontë a Mystic?" BST, 11, Part 58 (1948), 166-75; Margaret Lane, "The Drug-Like Brontë Dream," BST, 12, Part 62 (1952), 79-87; Marghanita Laski, Ecstasy: A Study of Some Secular and Religious Experiences (London: Cresset Press, 1961), esp. pp. 47-54.

⁴ Denis Donoghue, "Emily Brontë: On the Latitude of Interpretation," Harvard English Studies, 1 (1970), 117.

⁵ J. Hillis Miller, The Disappearance of God (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1963), p. 160.

⁶ C. Day Lewis, "The Poetry of Emily Brontë," BST, 13, Part 67 (1957), 93.

⁷ Gérin, Emily Brontë, p. 9. In her earlier biography of Charlotte, Gérin takes a position closer to my own. Glasstown (the children's earliest imaginary world), she says, was "raised from the graves of Maria and Elizabeth." Charlotte Brontë: The Evolution of Genius (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967), p. 208.

⁸ This point is touched upon in a valuable psychoanalytic essay which, though written before the world of the Brontë juvenilia was revealed by Ratchford, is quite compatible with it: Lucile Dooley, "Psychoanalysis of the Character and Genius of Emily Brontë," American J. Psychology (1928), rpt. in The Literary Imagination: Psychoanalysis and the Genius of the Writer, ed. Hendrik Ruitenbeek (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965), pp. 43-79. Another essay of interest is Ronald E. Fine, "Lockwood's Dreams and the Key to Wuthering Heights," NCF, 24 (June 1969), 16-30. Fine claims that the novel deals with moral-sexual dilemmas deriving from impulses toward incest and killing of kin.

⁹ Irving H. Buchen, "Emily Brontë and the Metaphysics of Childhood and Love," NCF, 22 (1967), rpt. in Twentieth Century Interpretations of Wuthering Heights, ed. Thomas A. Vogler (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), p. 113.

¹⁰ Miller, pp. 170 ff.

¹¹ Donoghue, pp. 110-12.

¹² The key stanza is, of course, the sixth. Charlotte excised this stanza (and thus all reference to Gondal) when she published the poem in the 1850 edition of Wuthering Heights and Agnes Grey. Emily had not selected it for the 1846 Poems of Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell.

Emily is undecided whether to fantasize Haworth or Gondal, but the subsequent vision is in some ways a combination of the two:

A little and a lone green lane
That opened on a common wide;
A distant, dreamy, dim blue chain
Of mountains circling every side

The first two lines appear to describe the walk from the main street of Haworth toward the parsonage; the next two lines, a romantic mountain backdrop, describe not Haworth but Gondal. Gondal, as critics have noted, has at close range a terrain not unlike the West Riding's; but in the misty distance it is the typical Romantic idealization of alpine or

Cumberland geography. The juxtaposition of these images here records concisely the happy confusion in Emily's mind of Haworth and Gondal, the importance of one to a realization of the other.

¹³ See Gérin, Emily Brontë, pp. 85-89.

¹⁴ Miller, pp. 179-83.

¹⁵ "It is a measure of the freedom Mr. Brontë allowed his children that he never obliged Emily to teach in the Sunday-school--general as the practice then was for the daughters of the clergy. She did not do so even in the absence of her sisters when help would have been needed. He showed even greater tolerance in putting no pressure on her to attend church regularly. These were facts well known to the villagers of the time, and handed down by them to their descendants." Gérin, Emily Brontë, p. 148. Gerin is evidently relying on the folk legends that circulate in Haworth.

¹⁶ The term "comrade" is used again in a poem of May 16, 1841. Nature, the persona of the poem, addresses the poet, who has deserted Her for a different comrade--evidently Gondal.

Then let my winds caress thee;
Thy comrade let me be--
Since nought beside can bless thee,
Return and dwell with me.

(Poems, 164)

¹⁷ Miller, p. 172.

¹⁸ Lewis, pp. 97-98.

Chapter 5:

THE IDENTITY OF HEATHCLIFF

At the heart of Wuthering Heights is the character of Heathcliff, a mysterious, perhaps only partly human creature whose meaning, much like Moby Dick's, passes the limits of ordinary experience and understanding. It is appropriate, then, that one's interpretation of this character should govern one's interpretation of the novel. It is my own conviction that Heathcliff is for Emily Brontë a personal symbol of Gondal. However, before elaborating on this thesis it will be useful to review briefly the range of interpretation that Heathcliff has stimulated. It seems to fall into three general categories, with some natural overlapping: that which emphasizes biographical sources, that which stresses literary antecedents, and that which sees Heathcliff as purely imaginative and symbolic.

Very little is actually known about the Brontës, and much of the extensive biographical criticism has been excessively conjectural. Harriet Martineau, in her obituary for Charlotte in 1855, saw Heathcliff as modeled on unspecified fierce masculine influences in Emily's life;¹ later critics, such as T. Wemyss Reid and Mary Robinson, would identify the source specifically as Emily's brother, Branwell.² Others hypothesized Emily's infatuation with her brother, or with her father, or with her father's curate, or with some other male. This wave of thought, which ultimately developed some now-laughable theories,³ lost most of its force with the publication in

1941 of Ratchford's Brontës' Web of Childhood. Ratchford clarified much about the social relationships of the four children, making Emily's passionate love or envy (as per Romer Wilson)⁴ of her brother seem less likely, while limiting the conjecture about other men as well. This work shifted the general emphasis from the biographical to the specific literary antecedent of the juvenilia.

Ratchford sought Gondal sources for Heathcliff. Other critics in her train, notably Hinkley, Visick, and Paden, have developed or disagreed with various of her readings and have attempted to establish the specific connections between the Gondal materials and the novel. Before Ratchford, however, much energy was expended on the attempts to trace the influence of other authors on Emily Brontë, and this activity is still with us. Swinburne in 1883 identified Emily as Shakespearean and pointed to the similarities between Wuthering Heights and King Lear.⁵ Mrs. Humphrey Ward, two decades later, found literary parentage for Emily in the German romantics, especially those who wrote about ghouls, werewolves, and other monsters--implying that Heathcliff is of their blood.⁶ Closer to our own time, Florence Dry's The Sources of Wuthering Heights (1937) emphasized Scott's Black Dwarf. Several essays have been published in Brontë Society Transactions and elsewhere establishing a connection between Emily and Byron, and to a lesser extent, Cowper, Wordsworth, and various others.⁷ In his massive and thorough study of Emily Brontë (1955), Jacques Blondel points specifically to Scott, the gothic novel, Byron, Hoffman, Blackwood's, and

Shakespeare as principal influences (in that order) on Wuthering Heights and Heathcliff.⁸

The most recent important essay in this area is Q. D. Leavis's (1969), which has the purpose not only of establishing literary antecedents but of denying the symbolic quality of Heathcliff. She argues for strong borrowing from Shakespeare (the subplot of Lear) and Scott (Black Dwarf, once again), asserting in addition that there need be nothing mysterious or ambiguous about Heathcliff; if we see him so it is only because we are not reading a well-constructed, finished product: there are, Mrs. Leavis theorizes, discrepancies between an early draft and a later one that account for Heathcliff's seeming symbolic or metaphysical.⁹

Those who would disagree with Mrs. Leavis's denial that Heathcliff is beyond normal human nature form a long and prestigious list, beginning with Charlotte Brontë, one of the earliest critics of Wuthering Heights in her preface to the 1850 edition. She saw Heathcliff as a personification of unredeemed evil, wrought "from no model but the vision of [Emily's] meditations." She also acknowledges the imaginative power of Heathcliff, the strain in his character that has led others to think of him as symbolic: "Whether it is right or advisable to create beings like Heathcliff, I do not know: I scarcely think it is."

Other early critics also thought of him as symbolic, including George Henry Lewes, who opined that Heathcliff is a naturalistic figure of the human instincts which have not been exposed at an early date to the rule of

civilization.¹⁰ John Skelton, reviewing Mrs. Gaskell's Life in 1857, defined Emily as a "poetic novelist" and Heathcliff as the spirit of moorland nature.¹¹ Skelton anticipates a modern strain of criticism best exemplified by Lord David Cecil, for whom the novel describes the conflict between the forces of "calm" and those of "storm," Heathcliff being a child of storm as are the Earnshaws.¹² Richard Chase reflects the influence of Freud in his famous article of 1949, identifying Heathcliff as an embodiment of "sheer dazzling intellectual and sexual energy,"¹³ a view echoed by Thomas Moser, who thinks the real subject of this novel is sex.¹⁴ Dorothy Van Ghent ranks with Cecil as perhaps the most important of the critics who understand the novel as symbolic. Like Chase she sees Heathcliff as an "anthropomorphized primitive energy," though a different energy: "Heathcliff is an archetypal figure, untraceably ancient in mythological thought--an imaged recognition of that part of nature which is 'other' than the human soul (the world of the elements and the animals) and of that part of the soul itself which is 'other' than the conscious part."¹⁵

Two other well-known critics should be mentioned: Mark Schorer, using rigorous New Critical methodology, identifies Heathcliff as a representative of the human self, gigantic, passionate, and willful, pitted against the inevitable forces of nature and finally and necessarily yielding to them, an illustration of the vanity of human wishes.¹⁶ Arnold Kettle suggests that Heathcliff is unconsciously identified by his author with the rebellious working class.¹⁷

It should be clear that there is virtue in each of the three critical approaches I have sketched here--that emphasizing biography, that stressing literary heritage, and that seeing Heathcliff as a symbolic creature of the author's individual imagination. Symbolic readings of Heathcliff have dominated in our time, for a variety of reasons, the most valid being the clear inadequacy of interpretations like Q. D. Leavis's to account for the grandeur of the experience of reading this novel. And even if biographical criticism had not become largely suspect in our time, so little is known about the Brontës, Emily especially, that to theorize that Heathcliff is based on some member of the family or some childhood sweetheart would be clearly unjustified, especially as no identification with other family members or acquaintances can safely be made. Besides, Heathcliff is larger than life (and other than human) in a way one would not expect Emily to perceive her friends. The symbolic readings, such as Cecil's, have sufficient force and logic to explain the fabric of this novel and the meaning of Heathcliff. One suspects, however, especially with such a reading as Lord David's, that despite its coherence it is wildly distant from Emily's intention.

If there is no way of knowing Emily's intention, one can still extrapolate from the known facts that, for example, Gondal is an extremely important factor in Emily Brontë's creative life whereas the principles of storm and calm are not. Now Gondal is an important biographical and literary fact, for its active existence as the principal vehicle for Emily's creativity until her death gives her life a form unique in western literature; as a liter-

ary influence, all other forces pale beside Gondal--antecedents in Shakespeare, Byron, or Scott are much more questionable and indirect.

It has been established that we cannot fully know Gondal with any assurance. However, an interpretation of Heathcliff and the novel that acknowledges the importance of Gondal to Emily Brontë as an individual and an artist, and that acknowledges at least some of the merits and requirements of each of the three approaches discussed above, was hinted at earlier. Regardless of his particular antecedents in Gondal, I would suggest that Heathcliff is a personal symbol of the world of Gondal, a representative of that world interacting with the "real" world. There are at least five reasons for understanding the character in this way:

- 1) He is Gondalan by nature. He shares specific attributes with several characters in Emily Brontë's Gondal poems, especially Julius Brenzaida, Douglas, the Dark Boy, and Fernando. Ratchford and, especially, Visick discuss these similarities in detail. They argue, with some force, that the Gondal characters are his ancestors. Despite my skepticism about the firmness of such conclusions, it is clear that in temper, largeness, and specific action Heathcliff, much more than any other character in the novel, betrays a Gondal origin.

Gondal is an island in the North Pacific, and Heathcliff is "as dark almost as if it came from the devil." What might a century later be called a science fiction story is imbedded in his transposition to West Riding: a creature from another world ("Is he human?" Isabella asks) visits a typical

small town on earth, where he wreaks death and destruction and general havoc, indicating that his and the earth's cultures cannot mix. But he and the heroine fall utterly in love and he finally carries her off, in a converted form, to his own realm. The typical earthly town is relieved to see him gone but is also revitalized by his visit. The novel's plot has a mythic formula, which others, notably Van Ghent, have pointed out.

2) The power and sexual energy in the character of Heathcliff allow us to associate him inevitably with the creative spirit, though perhaps the frustrated creative spirit.

3) In society Heathcliff is a terribly destructive force. Specifically, he is divisive in the core family. His entrance to the world of the novel precipitates new hostilities among family members and is soon followed by the death of Mrs. Earnshaw, then of her husband. Gondal does not appear to have been particularly a source of division among Brontë family members; however, I have argued in Chapter 4 that in a simple chain of associations Gondal was evidently linked by its author with the early losses of her sisters and of her mother. Heathcliff, as a figure of Gondal, is associated with death and deterioration in the family but, by a recognized psychological mechanism, as cause rather than effect.

4) In the novel Heathcliff arrives at Wuthering Heights as a result of a journey taken by Mr. Earnshaw to Liverpool. He arrives in the place of gifts promised the children. Cathy is about six years old (Emily Brontë's age when her sisters Maria and Elizabeth died). Strikingly similar, the

nascent form of Gondal arrives at Haworth as a result of a journey taken by Patrick Brontë to Leeds. The father brings back gifts to the children, Branwell's gift of toy soldiers precipitating the juvenilia experience.

(This similarity between Emily's life and her novel, which to my knowledge has been perceived by no other critic, the author may have intended her sisters to understand.)

5) Heathcliff shares with Cathy a relationship in many ways analogous to the author's relationship with her God of Visions.¹⁸ The nature of this relationship is well described in a famous passage:

I cannot express it; but surely you and every body have a notion that there is, or should be an existence of yours beyond you. What were the use of creation if I were entirely contained here? My great miseries in this world have been Heathcliff's miseries, and I watched and felt each from the beginning; my great thought in living is himself. If all else perished, and he remained, I should continue to be; and, if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn to a mighty stranger. I should not seem a part of it. 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.¹⁹

The passage describes not only Cathy's relationship to Heathcliff but, in most respects, Emily's relationship to Gondal. We note here in addition to the idea of essentially, a manifest parallel to Gondal's meaning for Emily Brontë, that we are to take literally the statement, "I am Heathcliff." That is, Catherine and Heathcliff are one creature in two forms, the condition of Gondal vis-a-vis its creator. Emily Brontë is

Gondal, is the God of Visions. Heathcliff too says, "I cannot live without my life. I cannot live without my soul." As Emily's creation Gondal is, on the one hand, understood as herself. And yet we note in addition the curious idea of immortality implied in the Cathy-Heathcliff relationship: "If all else perished, and he remained, I should continue to be." This point is nearly the same as that made by the poet of the God of Visions within her breast:

Though Earth and moon were gone
 And suns and universes ceased to be
 And thou wert left alone
 Every Existence would exist in thee
 (Poems, 243)

As I remarked earlier, the vision seems to be understood as an autonomous entity, and one through which the author gains immortality: she claims they would both live even were she personally to die. In both the poems and the novel Emily Brontë seems to be describing a relationship that is somewhere between identity and discreteness, between one being and two. In Heathcliff and Cathy is a relationship manifestly of two distinct entities, yet distinction is denied; in the relationship of the poet to her imaginative world, greater independence is asserted than seems warranted by common observation.

The presence of Heathcliff in the Earnshaw family transforms it, and transforms Cathy's life from the ordinary and normal to the extraordinary and abnormal. This metamorphosis is associated with the disintegration of the family, as I have argued. It is also associated with childhood bliss

and a desire to regress to or remain in childhood. There seem to be two Edenic stages in Cathy's life: that before Heathcliff enters, when the family is whole and unified, and that after the death of Cathy's parents, when her relationship to Heathcliff subordinates, and possibly substitutes for, all other relationships. Many critics have noted the strong death wish in both Cathy and Heathcliff; in Emily's personal poems, the death wish is associated with the author's relationship to her world of visions.

Heathcliff is Cathy's slave, comrade, and king, just as is the God of Visions for the author. But as Heathcliff is a dramatic conception of what necessarily takes a different form in the poetry, it is to the differences in genre that many of the differences in character between Heathcliff and the God of Visions must be ascribed. The rejection of the world outside in favor of the world of visions becomes transformed into the central dramatic conflict with the Lintons, representative of worldliness. The impossibility of Cathy rejecting their world in favor of a Heathcliff or a God of Visions is dramatized as ending only with death. The gothic or romance element of the novel represented by the ghost scenes illustrates the strong conviction in the poems that, after childhood, only in death is a full and satisfactory relationship possible. Heathcliff's fierceness is perhaps the greatest difference in character from the God of Visions, though the god too has his dark and frightening side.²⁰ But in the novel Heathcliff's ferocity is a masculine counterpart to Cathy's madness: both are generated by separation of the lovers. Several of Emily's poems deal with the

problem of loss of inspiration, or loss of contact with the God of Visions,²¹ and these poems reflect a profound disappointment.

If Heathcliff is a figure of Gondal, then he is a representative of the world of spirit and also of the world of the dead; and being from the nether world, he may be a devil, an interpretation supported by his association with madness and anti-social activity; and hence, too, he is a figure of the feral in (and for) Cathy. He is associated full-circle with both spiritual and animal. Although these contradictions in his character account for some of the ambiguity in his portrayal and a consequent difficulty of interpretation, they are wholly consistent with a figure who is a personal projection of everything other than civilized life. He is, in Cathy's words, "an unreclaimed creature, without cultivation"--"cultivation" having the full force of "civilization," not merely of "manners." It is the thought of the loss of this creature of Gondal that seems to be at the emotional center of the novel. That issue and several others raised by the identification of Heathcliff with the God of Visions will occupy the next few chapters.

NOTES

- ¹ Harriet Martineau, Obituary notice of Charlotte Brontë, Daily News, April 1855, rpt. in Emily Brontë: Wuthering Heights, ed. Miriam Allott, Macmillan Casebook Series (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1970), pp. 72-73.
- ² T. Wemyss Reid, from Charlotte Brontë: A Monograph (1877), rpt. in Allott, pp. 88-89; Mary Robinson, from Emily Brontë (1883), rpt. in Allott, pp. 89-93.
- ³ See, for example, Virginia Moore's explanation of "Louis Paren-sell" (developing from her misreading of the MS title of one of Emily's poems, "Love's Farewell"), in The Life and Eager Death of Emily Brontë (London: Rich and Cowan, Ltd., 1936), pp. 197-207; and C. W. Hatfield's reaction in TLS, 29 Aug. 1936, p. 697.
- ⁴ Romer Wilson, The Life and Private History of Emily Jane Brontë (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1928), esp. Chap. 8.
- ⁵ A. C. Swinburne, from "Emily Brontë," Miscellanies (1886), rpt. in Allott, pp. 94-99.
- ⁶ Mrs. Humphrey Ward, from "Introduction," Wuthering Heights (1900), rpt. in Allott, pp. 103-17.
- ⁷ For example, Helen Brown, "The Influence of Byron on Emily Brontë," MLR, 34 (1939), 374-81; Wilfred Rowland Childe, "The Literary Background of the Brontës," BST, 10, Part 54 (1944), 204-08; Margiad Evans, "Byron and Emily Brontë," Life and Letters, 57 (June 1948), 193-216.
- ⁸ The whole of Blondel's Emily Brontë: expérience spirituelle et création poétique has not been translated into English. The section referred to here, translated (evidently) by the editor, is available in Allott, pp. 229-41.
- ⁹ Q. D. Leavis, "A Fresh Approach to Wuthering Heights," in F. R. Leavis, Lectures in America (London: Chatto & Windus, 1969), pp. 83-152.
- ¹⁰ G. H. Lewes, from the Leader, 28 December 1850, rpt. in Allott, pp. 68-70.

- ¹¹ John Skelton, from rev. of Mrs. Gaskell's Life, Fraser's Magazine (June 1857), rpt. in Allott, pp. 73-74.
- ¹² David Cecil, "Emily Brontë and Wuthering Heights," Early Victorian Novelists (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1935), pp. 157-203.
- ¹³ Richard Chase, "The Brontës: A Centennial Observance," KR, 9 (1947), 487-506. Widely reprinted as "The Brontës, or Myth Domesticated."
- ¹⁴ Thomas Moser, "What is the Matter with Emily Jane? Conflicting Impulses in Wuthering Heights," NCF, 17 (June 1962), 1-19.
- ¹⁵ Dorothy Van Ghent, "On Wuthering Heights," The English Novel: Form and Function (1953; rpt. New York: Harper & Row, 1967), pp. 187-208.
- ¹⁶ Mark Schorer, "Fiction and the 'Matrix of Analogy,'" KR, 11 (1949), 539-60.
- ¹⁷ Arnold Kettle, "Emily Brontë: Wuthering Heights," An Introduction to the English Novel (London: Hutchinson Univ. Library, 1951), I, 130-45.
- ¹⁸ Critics occasionally have approached an identification of Emily and Gondal with Cathy and Heathcliff; e.g., J. Hillis Miller, The Disappearance of God (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1963), p. 158: "The relation between the poet and her imagination is as much an ambiguous mixture of love and hate, of submission and rebellious defiance, as is the relation between Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff in Wuthering Heights." See also the conclusion to Miriam Allott's stimulating article, "Wuthering Heights: The Rejection of Heathcliff?" Essays in Criticism, 8 (Jan. 1958), 27-47.
- ¹⁹ Wuthering Heights, ed. Frederick T. Flahiff (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1968), p. 90. Hereafter, quotations from the novel will be noted parenthetically in text, e.g., (I, ix, 90). Volume and chapter are provided to facilitate reference to other editions. Many modern editions number the thirty-four chapters consecutively and ignore the author's division into two volumes of fourteen and twenty chapters. See Chap. 2, note 1, above.
- ²⁰ As in "O God of heaven! the dream of horror" (dated August 7, 1837):

And so the day would fade on high,
And darkness quench that lonely beam,
And slumber mould my misery
Into some strange and spectral dream
Whose phantom horrors made me know
The worst extent of human woe.

²¹ For example, "Alone I sat; the summer day" (August, 1837); "The wind, I hear it sighing" (October 29, 1839); "If grief for grief can touch thee" (May 10, 1840); and "Enough of Thought, Philosopher" (February 3, 1845).

Chapter 6:

THE CONCEPT OF CHARACTER IN WUTHERING HEIGHTS

Characters in Wuthering Heights do not develop. Each has a certain quality or force which it exercises until exhausted. Character here interacts, but it does not change. We might perceive Catherine and Hareton in the second generation as exceptions, but Cathy 2 has only the appearance of developing.¹ More accurately, she blossoms; she does not experience threats to her concepts of self and world in such a way as to make her doubt them. Despite all the hardships she experiences from Heathcliff's impositions, she does not alter internally. She is a plant crushed but not killed by a rock: when the rock is removed, she once again springs upward toward the sun. The same metaphor applies to Hareton. It is clear that it is natural for him to be susceptible to the gentling influences of Cathy 2, that his natural course has been perverted by Heathcliff, and that once Heathcliff is removed he will develop into a civilized being. In fact, the metaphor applies to the entire world of the novel: Heathcliff, while he is present in this world, destroys its natural order and optimistic direction, and once he is removed the world reverts to its initial condition.

Attempts have been made to explain his perversity in terms of his social origins.² Whether or not these are valid interpretations, we do not see his environment modifying him. His entrance pollutes what I shall

later define as a prelapsarian condition; he carries with him discord and death. Heathcliff intensifies, but he does not develop.

The most complex character, and the only one for whom development is directly claimed, is the elder Catherine. She says of herself: "I've dreamt in my life dreams that have stayed with me ever after, and changed my ideas; they've gone through and through me, like wine through water, and altered the colour of my mind" (I, ix, 87). We do not see any development resulting from dreams. We are, however, given the distinct impression that had Heathcliff never appeared in her world she would have grown into a normal social being, in due course making a proper and uneventful marriage with the local representative of the gentry, Edgar Linton. For her, then, as for the other characters, Heathcliff changes the shape of life. But unlike every other character, she commits herself until death and after to Heathcliff and to the alteration he provides.

If we can judge from these results, Emily Brontë is not attempting to convey realistic portraits of human beings--as were her sisters in their novels and as were most other major writers of the Victorian period; rather, character is much more precisely conceptual in Wuthering Heights, representative of ideas.

But of what ideas are the characters representative? I have argued in the previous chapter that Heathcliff is a figure of Gondal, and implicit in that argument is that Catherine is a figure of the author's self: in which case, Heathcliff must be seen as in some way an extension of Catherine,

a form of the author's self. Catherine's statement "I am Heathcliff" reinforces the argument. And if at the level of conception Heathcliff and Catherine are the same being in different aspects, it seems possible that the same is true of most of the major characters--that Hindley, Edgar, Isabella, Cathy 2, and perhaps others are aspects of Cathy 1--and hence, that the novel objectifies the internal conflicts of a single personality.

Precisely such an interpretation was put forward in 1943 by Peter D. Lucas, a Jungian analyst. His reading has received virtually no recognition, and because the text appears not to be available in any public library in the United States, I will summarize it in some detail:

Lucas argues that Wuthering Heights can be read not only on the realistic level but also as a dream of one central character, Catherine Earnshaw. All the other characters are projections or fragments of that personality. The basic conflict in the novel is between two aspects of Catherine's animus, represented on the one side by Heathcliff and on the other first by her brother Hindley and later by Edgar Linton. Heathcliff is the positive animus, the creative life of the spirit; Hindley the part which "produces in her the drive toward external conformity to accepted conventions." Catherine, unable to resolve the conflict, represses the positive animus and projects the Hindley aspect onto Edgar Linton, whom she marries. The positive animus, after having been repressed, "returns again from the unconscious, allies himself in an otherwise impossible union with Catherine's shadow, Isabella Linton (Edgar's sister), and drives the Ego of Catherine

into a state of schizophrenia." Wuthering Heights itself is the seat of the unconscious and Thrushcross Grange "symbolizes the developed consciousness which disregards the roots of the soul's life."

Hindley's hatred of Heathcliff in the early part of the novel is the jealousy of the conventional toward the creative. A symbol of repressive paternal authority, Hindley marries an aspect of Catherine's shadow, "a sickly and unintelligent femininity," and produces a child. A child is normally a positive symbol, representing integration of the personality; but in this case, because of its source, it becomes a symbol of dissolution. A similar deviation from normal symbolic structure, according to Lucas, is Heathcliff, who at base represents the most positive aspect of the personality, but who becomes fiendish as a result of Catherine's rejection of him.

After the vision of Thrushcross Grange through its window, Catherine begins to deny the life of the unconscious represented by Heathcliff. She takes more and more pride in her dress and manners, and learns to despise Heathcliff for his indifference to such things. Lucas notes that dress is a symbol of the persona, the face one presents to the outside world. Heathcliff begins to take pride in his rough manners and dress, or to revert to the primitive and barbarous. (Lockwood and Nelly directly represent the persona.)

The household is an image of Catherine's soul, which declines into a state of disintegration and neglect as a result of her inner turmoil. The final solution to the problem consists, as at the end of the novel, in the

union of the two homes or the two aspects of the animus, "the acceptance of the adult consciousness ('civilization'), but without the denial of the instinctive and unconscious life symbolized by the Heights." Catherine's dream of being tossed from heaven illustrates this. The earth is Wuthering Heights and Heathcliff; heaven her neurotic fantasy of the Grange, associated with Edgar, who represents civilization out of touch with its roots in the unconscious. "Heaven is not heaven when it is cut off from earth," Lucas remarks.

Catherine experiences psychotic attacks as a result of her separation from Heathcliff. She is overcome by the uprush of her unconscious, which only her positive animus (Heathcliff) can mediate for her. The final separation from Heathcliff brings on her death. Just before death she accepts Heathcliff and states, "he's in my soul," which Lucas interprets as signifying "what is expounded at length in psychology as the doctrine of the 'soul-image,' the Animus-Anima personification of the Unconscious." This recognition of Heathcliff is her salvation, though an incomplete salvation because an incomplete recognition, and the story continues with Cathy 1 represented by her daughter.

Cathy 2 is not only a resurrection of her mother but also the symbolic hero-child, whose birth indicates the possibility of solution. She is pursued by enemies, principally her own father and Heathcliff, who in their respective overprotection and search for revenge represent the continuing disturbance in the central psyche. However, a new animus figure is found

in Hareton, who because he is Hindley's biological son and Heathcliff's spiritual son represents a reconciliation of the two warring factions of the animus. Their ultimate union, with Cathy 2 bringing the spirit of the Grange and Hareton the spirit of the Heights, disarms what is left of the warring part of the central Catherine personality, and Heathcliff dies. The reconciled Ego and Animus retire to the state of consciousness represented by the Grange, leaving the Heights to be tended by Joseph and a small boy, who are figures of the wise old man and puer aeternus archetypes.³

We may find the Jungian categories cumbersome; however, Lucas's interpretation is valuable in spite of this difficulty and even in spite of interpretive disagreements we may have with it.⁴ Certainly as a critical exercise it must seem to us much less alien than it would have thirty years ago, and not merely because Jungian psychology is less exotic; more significantly, Lucas anticipates many of the important critics of Wuthering Heights during the fifties and sixties, such as Chase, Van Ghent, and Miller, who understand the drama of this novel as largely symbolic and internal. Following these critics (who seem not to have been aware of Lucas), contemporary criticism frequently assumes that the underlying theme of the novel is integration, or the restoration of order, although there are sharp differences about what is at stake in the integration issue.⁵

Northrop Frye has stated,

The romancer does not attempt to create "real people" so much as stylized figures which expand into psychological archetypes. It is in the romance that we find Jung's libido, anima, and shadow reflected in the hero, heroine, and villain respectively. That is why the romance so often radiates a flow of subjective intensity that the novel lacks, and why a suggestion of allegory is constantly creeping in around its fringes.⁶

Wuthering Heights, as Frye notes, is influenced by the romance tradition; it may well be that Lucas's Jungian reading is very close to its subconscious meaning. However, as the author's intention could not possibly have been to make her characters Jungian archetypes, we must look elsewhere for the conscious purpose, and deviate from the Jungian model.

But can we dispense with the Jungian lexicon and still retain Lucas's central points; i.e., are the major characters of Wuthering Heights fragments of a whole personality whose center is Cathy I, does Heathcliff represent the "creative life of the spirit" for that personality, and is the conflict between the creative aspect of the self and the opposing impulse to conform to society? If we accept that Heathcliff is a figure of Gondal, it is not difficult to perceive that he is an objectification of the internal "creative" aspect of the core personality, Catherine, in conflict with the pull of social convention and ordinary reality. In its limited application to Catherine and Heathcliff and their relationship, then, the Jungian reading does not significantly threaten one's sense of the substance and intention of Wuthering Heights.

The problem with the Jungian reading is its emphasis on the internal at the expense of the external. It ignores and discounts the external real-

ism, the low-mimetic quality of the novel--such careful detail, for example, as C. P. Sanger illuminates in his well-known article on the legal and temporal substructure of Wuthering Heights.⁷ To provide another example, it simply will not do to interpret Nelly Dean as solely or primarily an image of Catherine's persona. Nelly is too much a full character in her own right, and too independent of Catherine, to be so diminished.⁸

If the Jungian interpretation is too internal, it nonetheless provides a corrective to readings that have been too external. For the world of Wuthering Heights bears certain affinities to the world of Kafka's fiction: The agony of a central personality is very much the subject of the novel, and the perceived universe has an expressionistic surface--it is not exclusively a reflection of everyday reality. In its combination of realistic detail and internal landscape outwardly objectified, Wuthering Heights is closer than any of its contemporaries or forbears to the twentieth-century expressionistic novel. Emily Brontë's is a curious and idiosyncratic mix, for the discussion of which no proper vocabulary exists.⁹ If the world of this novel is not solely an internal one, as Lucas sees it, it is nevertheless much more internal and much less external than anything near it in time. Edgar Linton, for example, though a discrete character, is simultaneously a projection of Catherine. He very much represents a part of her. If we contrast his influence on her with, say, Casaubon's on Dorothea Brooke, we can perceive the difference between traditional realism and Emily Brontë's expressionism (for want of a better word). Dorothea pro-

jects a Casaubon, imperfectly sees a part of herself in him. She is of course mistaken in her concepts of self and Casaubon. But the internal and the external are completely harmonious in Wuthering Heights: the part of herself that Catherine sees objectified in Edgar Linton corresponds exactly with his complete objective reality. There is nothing independent about Edgar Linton's character, nothing disconnected from Catherine's.

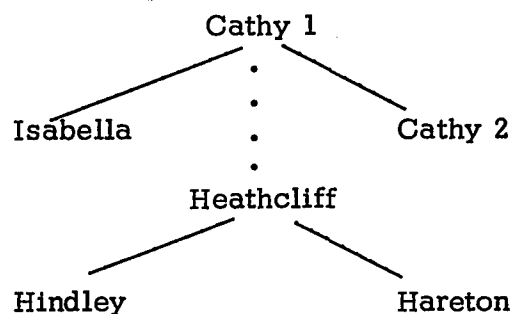
It is to an elucidation of the nature and structure of the internal content of Wuthering Heights that most of the remaining pages will be devoted. This content necessarily violates our sense of ordinary external reality.

The major characters are disposed according to two principles of organization: 1) tripartite groups in which one character separates two others who wish to join; and 2) a series of overlappings of sensibility and nature. The former is an image of a personality divided against itself as well as a model of the system by which the universe of this novel is organized, and I shall have more to say about it in the chapter on threshold imagery. For now, however, a few examples may suffice. Heathcliff, Catherine, and Edgar form such a group with one acting as a barrier between the other two in various combinations.

Edgar prevents Catherine and Heathcliff from exercising their love; Catherine protects Edgar from Heathcliff. She also, while she is alive, protects Hindley from Heathcliff and Isabella from Heathcliff. She says specifically of Hindley, "I stand between him and bodily harm"; similarly, she threatens to remove herself from her protective position between Isa-

bella and Heathcliff. Earlier, Hindley tries to impose himself between Heathcliff and Catherine. In the second generation, Heathcliff is a barrier between Cathy 2 and Hareton. This figure of two bodies separated by a third is mirrored in the novel by the two houses separated by a stretch of moors, by the window image separating inside from outside, self from other,¹⁰ and by additional significant threshold images discussed later.

The tripartite "barrier" system emphasizes oppositions within a unit. The system of overlapping, in contrast, emphasizes similarities. For example, the characterizations of Cathy 1 and Cathy 2 overlap, so that we necessarily think of them as alternate versions of a single personality. The general nature of character overlapping will be clarified, I think, by the following diagram, also in three parts though not observing the system of triangulation discussed in the previous paragraph:



Both the male group and the female group contain personalities that "are" each other at various moments. Hindley acts toward Heathcliff as Heathcliff acts later toward Hareton. He is purposely visiting upon Hareton what was visited upon him by Hindley. Thus, Heathcliff begins as a Hare-

ton and ends as a Hindley. Cathy 2 "is" her mother, a resurrection of her, born at the moment of her death. And the daughter of course follows a path similar to her mother's, though differing in some crucial ways, such as in her relationship to Heathcliff and to a parent figure.¹¹ Cathy 2 represents the civic potentiality of a Catherine personality, what Cathy 1 might have developed into socially had her life not been influenced by Heathcliff; just so, Hareton represents the civic potentiality of some elements of a Heathcliff character. Isabella represents the least attractive facets of Catherine's personality: excessive sensuality, fickleness, a spoiled and nasty temper. She is an animalistic, socially disruptive female. Hindley is the masculine counterpart, representing the baser elements of a Heathcliff: unredeemed cruelty, greed, debauchery. Cathy 2 and Hareton are naturally attracted; so are Cathy 1 and Heathcliff. The requirements of plot prevent Emily Brontë from joining Hindley and Isabella as she does the other pairs, but Hindley marries a woman of virtually the same character as Isabella.

The pattern works between the sexes as well as within them. Catherine and Heathcliff are not only a mixture of the two kinds of personality flanking them; each also contains elements of the other. And the central character, Cathy 1, is clearly joined to both Hindley and Hareton, being the sister (alter ego) of one and represented symbolically by the physical appearance of the other: Heathcliff finds it hard to be cruel to Hareton because he reminds the older man so much of Cathy 1, especially in his

eyes. So that through Cathy 1, each of the characters partakes of something of the others.

Another example of overlapping is the rivalry between Heathcliff and Edgar Linton in the first generation and its solution in the second. The combination of Heathcliff and Edgar Linton becomes translated into Hareton and Linton Heathcliff. In the first generation, the two rivals for Catherine's love are each an ambiguous mixture of positive and negative: Edgar embodies all the amenities of civilization but many of its faults, too--he is snobbish, effete, and physically weak. Edgar's civilized values are described as "shallow" by Heathcliff, who is precivilized, tends toward riot, disorder, and genuine evil, but embodies profound primitive energies and physical fortitude. This balance of pluses and minuses, almost chemical or mathematical in its severe design, is rearranged in the second generation with Hareton receiving all the good and Linton Heathcliff all the bad. Hareton, like Heathcliff, has great intensity of life and health, but he lacks inherent evil. Like Edgar, he is fundamentally decent, but is neither physically weak nor an effete snob. Linton Heathcliff, on the other hand, is both sickly and overcivilized like his uncle (and mother) and genuinely evil like his father. He is a symbolic receptacle of all the evil in this universe, and with his death the universe permanently expels it.¹²

In Shakespearean Tragedy, A. C. Bradley speaks of tragic fate as a moral force convulsing the universe in order that the universe can expel the evil that threatens it:

Evil exhibits itself everywhere as something negative, barren, weakening, destructive, a principle of death. It isolates, disunites, and tends to annihilate not only its opposite but itself. That which keeps the evil man prosperous, makes him succeed, even permits him to exist, is the good in him (I do not mean only the obviously moral good). When the evil in him masters the good and has its way, it destroys other people through him, but it also destroys him. At the close of the struggle he has vanished, and has left behind him nothing that can stand. What remains is a family, a city, a country, exhausted, pale and feeble, but alive through the principle of good which animates it; and, within it, individuals who, if they have not the brilliance or greatness of the tragic character, still have won our respect and confidence.¹³

It is a fatal process similar to the Shakespearean that Wuthering Heights describes. "Evil" is not personified by Heathcliff but inextricably and tragically mixed with his amoral vitality and with Edgar Linton's over-civilized morality.

Linton Heathcliff's death, it is important to note, permanently removes him and all he is a symbol of, whereas the deaths of Cathy 1 and Heathcliff do not remove them. There is something essential of Heathcliff that cannot be translated into Hareton and Linton Heathcliff, and this passes out of the material world of the novel and becomes pure spirit. There is a part of Catherine that does the same. The universe that results is formally divided into spirit and matter, with all evil removed: the ghosts of Catherine and Heathcliff inhabit the moors in permanent and peaceful existence; the material sector is the everyday world of Hareton and Cathy 2, completely without a spiritual element, they and their realm a diminution from the agonized intensity of the first generation, as everyone has noted.

In a way Wuthering Heights is a historical novel, showing a psycho-cosmic process of absorption and adjustment. In political terms the solution of the novel is optimistic and conservative. Order is reestablished. The earthly world makes no progress because none is needed or desirable; rather, it returns to its original condition, one in which social good prevails and human beings are extroverted, without inner agonies. That is, the world returns to its original Eden. If we picture this Eden as the image of a single human soul, it is a creature acknowledging in its form that Heathcliff--the element of pure spirit and imagination, the element of Gondal--is destructive of its core and must be separated from it if it is to survive physically. If Cathy 1 is an image of the author obsessed with Gondal, Cathy 2 is an image of her unresponsive to Gondal. The novel does not constitute a "rejection of Heathcliff," as Allott would have it; rather, it is a strenuous deliberation upon two discrete attitudes toward Gondal, and a recognition that she who holds fast to this creature of the imagination cannot survive and does not belong in the world of ordinary mortals. But it is the final condition of the two ghosts on the moors, rather than of the tame second generation lovers in Thrushcross Grange, that Emily Brontë continually seeks in her personal poetry.

NOTES

- ¹ I use the name "Cathy 2" for the daughter, "Cathy 1" for the mother.
- ² The most influential of such readings is Arnold Kettle's in An Introduction to the English Novel (London: Hutchinson Univ. Library, 1951), I, 130-45.
- ³ Peter D. Lucas, "An Introduction to the Psychology of Wuthering Heights," Guild of Pastoral Psychology (London), Lecture No. 25, delivered December 1943. Readers are referred also to Philip Henderson, "Introduction," Complete Poems of Emily Brontë (London: Folio Society, 1951), p. vi, where Heathcliff is identified as a figure of the Jungian animus; and to Barbara Hannah, Striving Toward Wholeness (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1971), esp. chaps. 9 and 10. Miss Hannah, a practicing Jungian analyst, devotes more than half her book to the Brontës and their works. Her reading of Wuthering Heights is similar in many respects to Lucas's but less detailed and, as literary criticism, less convincing.
- ⁴ One important exception I would take to Lucas's reading regards the significance of the division of the novel into generational halves. At the critical moment of division, Cathy 1's death, I do not attach Lucas's meaning to her statement, "he's in my soul," nor do I find it convincing that Cathy 1 dies because, somehow, her "salvation" at this moment is "incomplete." In my view, the death of Cathy 1 is that character's realization of its potential and its nature, and Cathy 2 has a very different, life-oriented potential. Though undoubtedly variants of the same personality, Cathy 2 and Cathy 1 represent alternative modes of existence contemplated by the author. Cathy 2 is not merely a "resurrection" of her mother or evolutionally more advanced.
- ⁵ Wuthering Heights "has admitted of a greater variety of interpretation than perhaps any other nineteenth-century novel. At the heart of many of these lies the recognition, made explicitly by David Cecil, that the novel is primarily concerned with the problem of the re-establishment of fallen order--in effect, the central problem of the nineteenth-century intellectual." William H. Marshall, The World of the Victorian Novel (South Brunswick and New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1967), p. 225.
- ⁶ Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (New York: Atheneum, 1967), p. 304.
- ⁷ C. P. Sanger, "The Structure of Wuthering Heights," Hogarth Essays, 19 (1926), rpt. in Ian Gregor, ed., The Brontës: A Collection of Critical Essays, Twentieth Century Views (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1970), pp. 7-18.

⁸ See my own interpretation of Nelly's role in Chap. 10.

⁹ Denis Donoghue has struggled with the problem of genre and lexicon in "Emily Brontë: On the Latitude of Interpretation," Harvard English Studies, 1 (1970), 105-33.

¹⁰ I use Van Ghent's terminology here.

¹¹ See Chap. 10.

¹² See Miriam Allott, "Wuthering Heights: The Rejection of Heathcliff?" Essays in Criticism, 8 (Jan. 1958), rpt. in Judith O'Neill, ed., Critics on Charlotte and Emily Brontë (Coral Gables, Fla.: Univ. Miami Press, 1968), pp. 187 ff., for a different interpretation of the evidence presented in this paragraph.

¹³ A. C. Bradley, Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth (1904; rpt. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966), p. 26.

Chapter 7:

DEATH IN WUTHERING HEIGHTS

We know from study of the personal poetry the importance of the idea of death for Emily Brontë. It is, in fact, an aspect of characterization, and so one might argue with some justification that the study of death in Wuth-ering Heights belongs in the previous chapter. It is, however, a concept of sufficient importance to deserve separate treatment.

There are two notable traits of the series of deaths in this novel: one is the mythic overtones at its beginning, and the other is the structure of the process itself, which strongly violates our expectation of verisimilitude. This violation reinforces the sense of character as projection or fragment of a single personality, discussed in the previous chapter.

Heathcliff has a mythic ambience. At his entrance phrasing and scene design delicately suggest a disturbance of Eden. Death is born in the novel with Heathcliff, and so is the suggestion of death. When Mr. Earnshaw brings Heathcliff into his home, he feels half dead with the effort; this is mentioned three times within a few paragraphs (my emphasis in the following):

He threw himself into a chair, laughing and groaning, and bid them all stand off, for he was nearly killed--he would not have such another walk for the three kingdoms.

"And at the end of it to be flighted to death!" he said opening his great coat, which he held bundled up in his arms, "See here, wife; I was never so beaten with anything in my life; but you must e'en take it as a gift of God; though it's as dark almost as if it came from the devil."

.....

The master tried to explain the matter; but, he was really half dead with fatigue.

(I,iv,40-41)

Heathcliff's entrance sets man against wife and sibling against sibling: We are told that Heathcliff "bred bad feeling in the house." The Earnshaw household before Heathcliff is not described at all, but we are to understand by implicit contrast with its condition after Heathcliff's entrance that the family was young, innocent, without problems, at its moment of greatest health and promise.

As Heathcliff suggests death with his crossing of the threshold and provokes immediate quarreling, he also has a pronounced effect upon the physical health of the family. Mysteriously, Mrs. Earnshaw dies, and her husband becomes old, ill, and crochety. Both actions are syntactically linked with Heathcliff:

So, from the very beginning, he bred bad feeling in the house; and at Mrs. Earnshaw's death, which happened in less than two years after, the young master had learnt to regard his father as an oppressor rather than a friend, and Heathcliff as a usurper.

.....
 In the course of time, Mr. Earnshaw began to fail. He had been active and healthy, yet his strength left him suddenly; and when he was confined to the chimney-corner he grew grievously irritable. A nothing vexed him, and suspected slights of his authority nearly threw him into fits.

This was especially to be remarked if any one attempted to impose upon, or domineer over his favourite.

(I,iv,42-43;v,45)

Heathcliff is the catalyst of death, and perhaps even its cause, as death does not exist before or without him. If we are to understand Heath-

cliff as literally the cause of death, then we must acknowledge that some at least of the laws governing this fictional universe are remarkably different from those governing real life: in real life there is no equivalent of Heathcliff and death exists independently.

In another way the series of deaths beginning with Mrs. Earnshaw's deviates strikingly from reality. Virtually every death corresponds with the entrance into the story of a new character. Mrs. Earnshaw's death is linked with Heathcliff's entry into the world of the novel. The next death, Mr. Earnshaw's, also coincides, exactly, with the entrance of a new character:

Mr. Hindley came home to the funeral; and--a thing that amazed us, and set the neighbours gossiping right and left--he brought a wife with him.

(I, vi, 50)

The next example of this curious process of character displacement occurs with the death of the new wife herself, Frances:

On the morning of a fine June day, my first bonny little nursling, and the last of the ancient Earnshaw stock was born.

We were busy with the hay in a far away field, when the girl that usually brought our breakfasts came running, an hour too soon, across the meadow and up the lane, calling me as she ran.

"Oh, such a grand bairn!" she panted out. "The finest lad that ever breathed! But the doctor says missis must go; he says she's been in a consumption these many months."

(I, viii, 70)

If we can think in terms of the world of Wuthering Heights containing a certain quantity of human life, then that quantity to this point has not changed (except for the brief period before Mrs. Earnshaw dies). The

life, however, has changed its shape, taken some different forms. A process of displacement of one character by another via death continues throughout the novel, but deaths are now linked to internal shifts in the nature of character rather than to biological births exclusively. With the next death, that of Edgar's mother, Catherine Earnshaw becomes Catherine Linton--in a sense, Catherine Linton is "born": Edgar's mother catches the fever that so gravely threatens Cathy's life after she stays out in the storm searching for Heathcliff. Mrs. Linton then dies instead of Cathy 1, and Cathy 1 displaces Mrs. Linton as mistress of Thrushcross Grange and herself becomes "Mrs. Linton":

Old Mrs. Linton paid us several visits, to be sure; and set things to rights, and scolded and ordered us all; and when Catherine was convalescent, she insisted on conveying her to Thrushcross Grange; for which deliverance we were very grateful. But, the poor dame had reason to repent of her kindness; she, and her husband, both took the fever, and died within a few days of each other.

Our young lady returned to us, saucier, and more passionate, and haughtier than ever. . . . She esteemed herself a woman, and our mistress; and thought that her recent illness gave her a claim to be treated with consideration.

(I, ix, 97)

Here, then, although a new character is not biologically born to replace the one who dies, the death corresponds to a metamorphosis in character as Cathy matures into dominant womanhood, a change marked formally by the marriage and also by the move from Wuthering Heights to Thrushcross Grange.

Catherine dies giving birth to Cathy 2, the central character displacement.

Next to die is Hindley Earnshaw and, soon after, Isabella Linton Heathcliff. Their deaths mark the end of the first-generation story; the second-generation one, beginning immediately, concerns their children, Hareton Earnshaw and Linton Heathcliff, whose births as full characters correspond to their parents' deaths. Hareton has played a minor part as an infant in the first-generation story, but now he takes on a major role.

The last to die, in close succession, are Edgar Linton, Linton Heathcliff, and finally Heathcliff himself. Heathcliff does not "really" die. He becomes pure spirit, and in a sense his ghost is "born" when his body dies. But Edgar Linton's and Linton Heathcliff's deaths are different from all others in the novel in being permanent: they do not provoke displacement; they do not generate new births. The three final deaths are symbolic of a kind of tragic purgation restoring the universe of Wuthering Heights to an exhausted calm.

In summary, the death-birth juxtapositions in Wuthering Heights are as follows: Heathcliff is born and Mrs. Earnshaw dies; Hindley's wife, Frances, is born when Mr. Earnshaw dies; Hareton is born when his mother dies; Mrs. Linton dies and Catherine Earnshaw metamorphoses into the adult Catherine Linton, displacing her dead mother-in-law as mistress of Thrushcross Grange; Cathy 1 dies and Cathy 2 is born; Hindley dies and the adult Hareton is born; Isabella Linton dies and Linton Heathcliff is born; Edgar Linton and Linton Heathcliff die and are not displaced; Heathcliff upon his death is displaced by his own ghost.

There are some flaws in the pattern as I have presented it: there is an extra death, so to speak--Edgar Linton's father's--for which no displacement is provided; the ghost of Cathy 1 is unaccounted for; Hareton is "born" twice--biologically and as a full adult character. Doubtless explanations could be produced to make the system seem less rough around the edges, but that should not be necessary. The point, with additional refinements or without, is that death in Emily Brontë's fictional universe is significantly nonrealistic. Some of these displacements, of course, are realistic--for example, Hareton's rise to prominence as the target of Heathcliff's sadism after Hindley is removed. Most of the others, however, are not realistic and, in total, indicate a significant distortion in the author's perception of death.

What is the meaning of that distortion? I have suggested that it works well with the concept of characters as projections of a single personality. There is a certain amount of life energy in Wuthering Heights that remains virtually constant throughout the story. Parts of this life force are in conflict with other parts, and death is a means of altering its total structure. Individual death is devalued, for when one character dies, another immediately occupies the freed space. Emily Brontë's novel describes a full presence of life spread among several characters, a presence like a great land mass which has in its geological underpinnings some central flaw. Death, like earthquake, shifts the mass about until it achieves balance and harmony. What results has a different surface appearance, but

the whole is the original substance. Characters, as I argued in Chapter 6, do not develop in this novel. However, a kind of development or mutation of the whole being at the center of the novel is achieved through death and its rearrangements.

A brief comparison with two novels, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe and Lawrence's The Rainbow, may emphasize the idiosyncratic nature of the treatment of death in Wuthering Heights. When Crusoe finds alien footprints in the sand of what he believes to be a totally uninhabited island, the life energy in his universe expands profoundly, as it had shrunk profoundly and nearly collapsed with the foundering of his ship. Defoe's is a verisimilar universe; Emily Brontë's, in which death does not diminish the universe but readjusts it, is not.

The Rainbow describes three generations of English provincials and is concerned to show the flow and mutation of certain characteristics from one generation to the next. The rich sense of personal history that results enhances the later characters, gives them an aura of their ancestors without diminishing their individuality, unlike those in Wuthering Heights. These developments in Lawrence's characters take place with or without the biological deaths of the previous generation. Lawrence's, too, is a verisimilar universe, and quite different from Emily Brontë's. In Wuthering Heights we see some inheritance of traits, as in the readjustment of the love triangles from first to second generation, discussed in the previous chapter. These are different from Lawrence's inheritances in their mathe-

precision and in the resulting flatness of the second-generation characters.

Moreover, deaths in Wuthering Heights are not necessarily (or even usually) the occasion for the transference of traits from one individual to another: Hindley's wife, for example, is in no way a metamorphosed version of her father-in-law, nor is he her ancestor. In this instance, the life space once occupied by the dead character takes a completely different form. And the inheritance of traits that does occur in Wuthering Heights, as in the central triangles of characters, occurs as a refinement within this larger context of a protean life presence replacing the dead with new living beings.

Although strict definitions of it have proved impossible, the novel has been generally understood, since the eighteenth century, to pursue and imitate the external reality of the everyday world. It is a low-mimetic genre, Frye says. In the words of Austin Warren,

The novel is realistic. . . . The novel develops from the lineage of non-fictitious narrative forms--the letter, the journal, the memoir or biography, the chronicle or history; it develops, so to speak, out of documents; stylistically, it stresses representative detail, "mimesis" in its narrow sense.¹

Nearly as often as this characteristic of the novel is discussed, it is acknowledged that in the novel as in no other genre pressures toward imitation of external reality and pressures of aesthetic form are in conflict. Henry James states the general principle: "In proportion as in what Fiction offers us we see life without rearrangement do we feel that we are touching the truth; in proportion as we see it with rearrangement do we feel that

we are being put off with a substitute, a compromise and convention."²

Discussing the early English novel, Ian Watt seems to assert that realism and form are distinctly antagonistic:

What is often felt as the formlessness of the novel, as compared, say, with tragedy or the ode, probably follows from this: the poverty of the novel's formal conventions would seem to be the price it must pay for its realism.³

There are, to be sure, sophisticated and quite justified rejoinders.

Wayne Booth, for example, argues that realism, also following certain aesthetic patterns and invoking its own conventions, hardly presents an unmediated reality.⁴ This seems just; yet it would surely be facile to agree with Austin Warren that, with reference to most novels,

Realism and naturalism . . . are literary or literary-philosophical movements, conventions, styles, like romanticism or surrealism. The distinction is not between reality and illusion, but between differing conceptions of reality, between different modes of illusion.⁵

Warren implies that the novel's verisimilitude is almost an arbitrary convention and that the novel is not significantly different from other genres in its power to evoke basic reality. The wide appeal that the novel has enjoyed, its oft-noted seductiveness, suggests otherwise.

In conflict with verisimilitude in Wuthering Heights are, among other things, the overlapping structure of character and the mutative quality of death: these are formal designs drawing attention as such, and they contradict our sense of perceived external reality. And yet, despite our disagreement with Warren, it seems to be precisely a "differing conception of

reality" to which these aesthetic patterns direct us. They reinforce our sense that Wuthering Heights projects the conflicts of a single creature, and that one reality objectified in the novel is the internal reality of that creature.

In Emily Brontë's personal poetry death is wished for. It is anticipated as the means by which a permanent realization of the Gondal condition will be experienced. Although occasionally death is conceived of as total obliteration, for the most part it is as a passage to a very personal heaven and a means of correcting a drastically imperfect relationship of the author to her environment. Analogously, in Wuthering Heights death is the most significant process by which the plot is forwarded, by which a permanent identity of Catherine with Heathcliff is achieved in the spiritual realm and an original Eden is restored in the material realm.

NOTES

¹ Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature, 3rd ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1962), p. 216.

² Quoted in Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press, 1961), p. 22.

³ Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. California Press, 1965), p. 13.

⁴ Op. cit.

⁵ Wellek and Warren, p. 213.

Chapter 8:

THE IMAGERY OF DOMESTIC BOUNDARIES IN WUTHERING HEIGHTS

Walls, thresholds, windows, gates, and other domestic boundaries are an extraordinarily copious but little noticed image group in Wuthering Heights. Some of this imagery reinforces the novel's expressionistic properties: partitions function delicately to anthropomorphize a house, which seems to have a closed or an open nature depending upon the temper of its master; or to dramatize claustrophobia; or to formalize changes (with the crossing of thresholds) in the relationships among characters. The house is at times a concrete image of that life force, described in Chap. 7, into and out of which characters move. Crossing a threshold, like death (Emily Brontë's ultimate threshold), expresses a degree of metamorphosis. But apart from whatever aesthetic function it may have, some of this imagery seems to allude directly to the author's Gondal experiences. And its abundance and intensity suggest that it communicates Emily Brontë's fundamental ambivalence about her relationship to Gondal.

Although there have been readings of portions of the partition imagery,¹ its ubiquitousness has only recently been recognized with Elisabeth Van de Laar's useful image-counting study in 1969.² Van de Laar divides the novel's imagery into ten categories: air; water; earth; fire; the weather; dreams; visions, forebodings, premonitions, and omens; windows, doors, keys, walls, gates, mirrors, and portraits; animal and vegetable life;

books, including the Bible; and light and darkness. Of most of these types she lists 70 to 100 instances; the two significant exceptions are the seventh and eighth categories. There are, by her count, 327 images of plants and animals, and 312 of windows, etc. One acknowledges easily the significance of plant and animal imagery, for it is an integral part of the story: dogs are in the kitchen and hanging from fences, ponies carry people through the heath, trees split. And there is the memorable figurative language of the characters, Heathcliff described by Catherine as a "fierce, pitiless, wolfish man"; or the same woman wounding her husband with these words:

"Heathcliff would as soon lift a finger at you as the king would march his army against a colony of mice. Cheer up, you sha'n't be hurt! Your type is not a lamb, it's a sucking leveret."
(I,xi,126)

Animal and vegetable imagery is both highly visible and easily understood, for it establishes the novel's conflicts at an elemental level.³

The imagery of domestic partitions is a different case entirely, generally less visible and less easily understood. Although several notable examples of it come readily to mind, such as Lockwood pulling the ghost's wrists across the jagged edges of the broken window in his dream, and Catherine's schizoid hallucinations before the mirror in her room at Thrushcross Grange, these alone cannot account for the extraordinary frequency Van de Laar documents.

In fact, it is a relatively small number of individual threshold or septum images that are clearly and demonstrably significant. Many others

seem casual if not arbitrary, and one senses, of any of these, that it could be omitted. But frequent references to domestic boundaries are part of a pattern of sensitivity, and create a kind of magnetism around them, which finds more serious expression in symbolic usages of the most crucial significance.

Before turning to the latter, I note a few instances of threshold or barrier imagery that has little individual importance--

Nelly describes the scene at the Heights after Frances Earnshaw has given birth to Hareton:

When we got to Wuthering Heights, there he stood at the front door; and, as I passed in, I asked, how was the baby?
(I, viii, 71)

Hindley could just as easily have been in the kitchen, in the parlor, in the yard, in the garden. There is no apparent meaning to his position in the doorway, and yet he is there.

Lockwood attempts, with great frustration, to escape the inhospitable boundaries of Wuthering Heights on a stormy evening:

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.
(I, ii, 20)

The household of the Heights reacts to Cathy and Heathcliff's running on the moors:

We searched the house, above and below, and the yard, and stables, they were invisible; and, at last, Hindley in a passion told us to bolt the doors, and swore nobody should

let them in that night. The household went to bed; and I, too anxious to lie down, opened my lattice and put my head out to hearken, though it rained, determined to admit them in spite of the prohibition, should they return.

In a while, I distinguished steps coming up the road, and the light of a lantern glimmering through the gate.

(I, vi, 52)

And, concerning that same night, Heathcliff narrates the children's discovery of Thrushcross Grange:

"We ran from the top of the Heights to the park, without stopping--Catherine completely beaten in the race, because she was barefoot. You'll have to seek for her shoes in the bog tomorrow. We crept through a broken hedge, groped our way up the path, and planted ourselves on a flower-plot under the drawing room window."

(I, vi, 53)

One would not deny that some, at least, of this imagery is meaningful and useful. In the third example, it increases realism and hence drama by pinning the action to specific locations. In the final example, it delicately suggests the natural obstacles on an ultimately tragic path. What is in question is not meaning as such, but the degree of it. Apart from whatever relatively minor significance such individual details may carry, it is their accumulation that is most important, for it engenders a sense of a world full of thresholds and barriers. Like the nearly animate concretia that crowd upon Dickens' characters and typify his thickly set universe, these images are the idiosyncratic furnishings of an author's world, and obviously more purposeful detail such as the vision through glass Heathcliff and Catherine are about to experience in the last example should be seen against them as background.

Among the most meaningful of domestic partition images are certain striking uses of windows in key episodes.⁵ At four moments in the fiction, crucial to our understanding of its development and design, an image of a window (sometimes in conjunction with other domestic partitions) is drawn into sharp focus:

1. Lockwood's dream of Catherine's ghost at her old bedroom window.
2. Catherine's and Heathcliff's vision of earthly paradise, as they look through the window at the Grange drawing room.
3. Catherine's insane hallucinations in her bedroom at Thrushcross Grange, a scene utilizing multiple partition images, the window, the mirror, the bedroom door, her panelled bed at Wuthering Heights.
4. Heathcliff's vision of Catherine's ghost just before his death, and his open-eyed corpse beneath her open bedroom window, an expression of rapt vision contorting it.

Van Ghent interprets the window as a symbol of metamorphosis, and of "a separation between the daemonic depth of the soul and the limited and limiting lucidities of consciousness, a separation between the soul's 'otherness' and its humanness."⁶

But about these four scenes some additional observations need to be made. They all contain visions of a new and different, confusing world, a world longed for intensely (in all but one case), and in which existence is

diametrically opposed to the seer's own. Two are visions of a spirit, one a vision of the past, one a vision of the future. And all are concerned with the relationship of Catherine and Heathcliff, not with the minor or second-generation characters.

Emily Brontë's choice of the window image to express elemental metamorphosis may have a certain natural appropriateness, but we may hypothesize that it is also privately significant to the poet who experienced her mystical transportation and visions of Gondal while sitting at her bedroom window late at night. Heathcliff, in his open-eyed death at the window, has become an icon of the poet in perfect union with her Gondal. The four crucial epiphanies rehearse and approximate the reiterated vision at the heart of Emily Brontë's creative life.

Because of their prominence and the consequent prominence of the images' aesthetic function, these four scenes comprise a special subgroup within the threshold images. There are many window scenes, by way of contrast, which are symbolic but which lack the epiphanic quality or the precise meaning Van Ghent ascribes to these. For example, Cathy is habitually described as sitting in the window seat at both Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights. She finds both houses confining, and her generous, expansive, healthy self gazes longingly out at the wider world.⁷

Thomas Moser is the only critic, to my knowledge, who has attempted to provide a coherent reading of the symbolic partition imagery as a whole, whose meaning he perceives as sexual. Disagreeing with Van Ghent, he

conjectures, "windows and doors seem also to admit of another more specific meaning."⁸ I would agree that many of the domestic apertures have a yonic ambience but disagree that the dominant repeated pattern is of "Heathcliff . . . breaking through a barrier, identified with Cathy, which an ineffectual male either attempts to break and cannot or attempts to defend."⁹ This is but one of many patterns in the threshold imagery, whose overall effect is less sexual than expressionistic, implying an identification of the external and the internal worlds, or a muddling of the difference between them. These images express, in a general and not merely a sexual way, the emotional or psychic condition of the self.

Houses dominated by selfish, misanthropic characters are locked up, difficult to penetrate, expressing the condition of their souls. An important ethical principle for Emily Brontë is generosity or openness, a quality absent in Heathcliff and in the first-generation Earnshaws--for example, in their initial rejection of the waif Heathcliff. Lockwood, Joseph, and Zillah also lack generosity. (Nelly, however, is generous, and so are Cathy 2--Nelly's surrogate daughter--and Hareton.)

Lockwood perceives this similarity between himself and Heathcliff, and at first expects to get on rather well with him. But Wuthering Heights is Heathcliff's estate and it, like its master, is closed off to hospitality even with another misanthrope, as is demonstrated in Lockwood's second visit to the Heights. As it also illustrates several other functions of the imagery, I shall summarize the visit:

Finding the outer gate chained and no one there to let him in, Lockwood jumps the gate. Then the house door is discovered to be locked, and again no one will let him in, although Joseph is nearby. Finally he is led a complex, roundabout route by Hareton into the main room. He thinks it "a huge, warm, cheerful apartment," but he soon realizes it is not very cheerful after all. Treated brutally and witnessing all the tenants snarl at each other, he is eager to leave. He is insulted and refused a guide, which he will need because of a developing blizzard. He attempts to cross the threshold to the outside and go it alone, and pushing past Joseph at the front door, he heads for the gate. But as he opens the gate, he is attacked by the Heights' dogs. Dizzy and sick, he is finally brought inside by Zillah and told he may sleep there rather than brave the storm.

He is taken to an inner bedroom, but this withdrawal does not produce the expected repose. He is in Cathy's old room, where he experiences the concentrated horror of his double dream. The second dream, which is the visitation of Cathy's ghost, like the first dream and the action before it, utilizes domestic partitions. In the first dream Joseph, who began as a friend and guide home, turns against Lockwood and beats him with a staff that was supposed to have been used for entering Lockwood's own house.

The condition of Wuthering Heights' thresholds changes dramatically at the end of the novel. When Lockwood returns to the Heights after a few months absence, he is amazed to find all the house's apertures easily penetrable: "I had neither to climb the gate, nor to knock--it yielded to my

hand. That is an improvement! I thought. . . . Both doors and lattices were open" (II,xviii,330). This change has little to do with sexuality, as per Moser's reading; the house is no longer Heathcliff's but Hareton's and Catherine's, and it expresses their generous souls.

Placed very early in the novel, Lockwood's second visit to the Heights is an important indicator of several functions of the imagery of domestic partitions, in addition to the closed house-closed soul syndrome. First, the episode culminates in the crucially important epiphanic ghost vision. Examination of the three additional epiphanic moments at windows shows that they, too, are preceded by frustration or conflict at other domestic thresholds: Heathcliff and Cathy run on the moors and discover Thrushcross Grange as a result of having the sitting room door at the Heights closed to them. Catherine retreats to her room and experiences her hallucinations after a fight between Heathcliff and Edgar caused by her locking the two and herself in a room together and throwing the key into the fire. Heathcliff's extended vision of the ghost of Cathy 1 is preceded by a conflict with Cathy 2 and Hareton in which Heathcliff unsuccessfully attempts to force Cathy 2 out of the parlor and into the kitchen. These four important visions at windows would seem, then, to be in some sense a result of hostility and frustration which are given a symbolic setting at domestic partitions.

Second, the house in this episode with Lockwood seems to dramatize a claustrophobic fantasy. It is difficult to enter and seems to repel over-

tures of friendliness, but once entered it is even more difficult to escape. His attempts to escape it draw Lockwood even deeper within its confines. It is almost animate--Lockwood is helpless as it convulsively ingests him. Critics have spoken of the houses in Wuthering Heights as like chinese boxes;¹⁰ this is a chinese box with emotional values at its various boundaries. Lockwood is exposed to greater and greater hostility and trauma as he makes his way across its thresholds toward its center, Cathy's old bedroom. Here he experiences the most intense trauma but also a kind of release into a different universe, with the vision of the ghost.

Third, the house Wuthering Heights is the story's complete setting at this moment in the plot. The entire universe of characters, actions, and attitudes is contained within its four walls. If, as I have attempted to establish in the previous two chapters, the characters in this novel should in some sense be understood as particles of a whole being, then the house stands as an image of that being with its several components contained in uneasy juxtaposition. The closed thresholds are symbolic of its internal strife and fragmentation. The house is not merely a projection of Heathcliff; although he sets the dominant tone of tortured faction, it seems to have a life of its own, of which he is but one component.

Hillis Miller also notes the sensitivity to thresholds in this episode:

This domestic interior is, by subtle linguistic touches, identified with the interior of a human body, and therefore with another human spirit. . . . Just as the "narrow windows" of Wuthering Heights are "deeply set in the wall," so Heathcliff's "black eyes withdraw . . . suspiciously under their

brows," and Lockwood's entrance into the house is his inspection of its "anatomy."¹¹

Such subtle anthropomorphizing of the house occurs at other times and in other ways throughout the novel. Often, these involve Heathcliff, as in the pointed analogy between his open eyes and the open window beneath which he dies: "I hasped the window; I combed his black long hair from his forehead; I tried to close his eyes--to extinguish, if possible, that frightful, life-like gaze of exultation, before any one else beheld it. They would not shut" (II,xx,361). A few pages earlier, Nelly describes Heathcliff the day before his death: "He was leaning against the lodge of an open lattice, but not looking out; his face was turned to the interior gloom" (354). "Interior gloom" generates the double meaning of the inside of the house and the inside of Heathcliff's soul. Heathcliff himself uses domestic imagery to define the condition of his soul to Cathy I: "Having levelled my palace, don't erect a hovel and complacently admire your own charity in giving me that for a home" (I,xi,123).

Catherine, in a famous passage, defines her mortality as enclosure:

The thing that irks me most is this shattered prison, after all. I'm tired, tired of being enclosed here. I'm wearying to escape into that glorious world, and to be always there; not seeing it dimly through tears, and yearning for it through the walls of an aching heart; but really with it, and in it.

(II,i,176)

This example, expressing an emotion so very like the Gondal-related death wish ("that glorious world") of the personal poetry, demonstrates, in addition, that the basis for Emily Brontë's anthropomorphized house image is

the archetype of the body as the house of the soul.

Except in this one instance, the analogy is always implicit and sub-merged, never directly stated. Usually it is generated by the syntactic proximity of the two analogous terms, as in open eyes / open window. The same technique is used when Nelly, visiting Wuthering Heights from Thrushcross Grange, asks savage little Hareton,

"And the curate does not teach you to read and write then?"
I pursued.

"No, I was told the curate should have his _____
teeth dashed down his _____ throat, if he stepped over
the threshold--Heathcliff had promised that!"

(I, xi, 120)

Syntactic proximity forces us to perceive the similarity between the front door of the house and the mouth of the curate. The front door is the house's "mouth" (as the windows are its "eyes"); should the curate violate it, his mouth would be violated in return.

Syntactic proximity is again the device for generating the analogy when Isabella Linton, newly married, wryly concludes of Wuthering Heights,

"You've a nice house, Joseph," I could not refrain from observing, "and pleasant inmates; and I think the concentrated essence of all the madness in the world took up its abode in my brain the day I linked my fate with theirs."

(I, xiii, 156)

The external is the internal--the madness outside is the madness inside.

"Madness" is the condition of strife and confusion contained within the house-body-self. Nelly uses a variant of the house-body analogy to describe Hindley's mental condition:

Hindley with apparently the stronger head, has shown himself sadly the worse and the weaker man. When his ship struck, the captain abandoned his post; and the crew, instead of trying to save her, rushed into riot, and confusion, leaving no hope for their luckless vessel.

(II,iii,201)

Though captain and crew in this analogy are given no specific equivalents (such as reason and the emotions), they clearly suggest the riotous inmates of Wuthering Heights. And the references to madness as the condition of both the house and Hindley extend the submerged analogy further in the direction of the mad woman at the center of the novel, the dying Catherine Earnshaw Linton.

My final example of the body-house analogy goes back to Lockwood at the beginning of the novel. His first dream, by a familiar conversion device, changes the pilgrim's staff from an instrument to attack his house into an instrument to attack his body. As with the examples of syntactic proximity, the analogy is again submerged. It makes no sense to Lockwood in his dream that he should need a staff to get into his own house, and he soon passes--as does the reader--from that detail to the more coherent image of Jabes Branderham's sermon; but the connection between the two sections of the dream, in which first he is going home and then he is in the chapel, is precisely the pilgrim's staff.

It is additionally important that this dream culminates in a general row in the chapel:

In the confluence of the multitude, several clubs crossed; blows, aimed at me, fell on other sconces. Presently the whole chapel

resounded with rappings and counter-rappings. Every man's hand was against his neighbour.

(I,iii,28)

The chapel teeming with universal antagonism, every man's hand against his neighbor, is an image closely analogous to the house *Wuthering Heights* and its warring inhabitants--an image probably generated in the dream by Lockwood's experiences earlier in the evening, but rippling outward toward the larger meaning of the house-body analogy.

Lockwood's first dream, like the experience that stimulated it, is intensely claustrophobic: he is trapped in the hostile chapel and beaten. There are several other instances of claustrophobic hysteria and, as one might expect, the threshold imagery is important there too. Nelly, like Cathy 2 and Isabella, is entrapped by Heathcliff and locked up in a room.

I thumped on the panels, and rattled the latch angrily; and Catherine asked why I was still shut up? He answered, I must try to endure it another hour, and they went away. . . .

And there I remained enclosed, the whole day, and the whole of the next night; and another, and another. Five nights and four days I remained, altogether, seeing nobody but Hareton, once every morning, and he was a model of a jailer--surly, and dumb, and deaf to every attempt at moving his sense of justice or compassion.

(II,xiii,297-98)

Frequent imprisonment is one important respect in which Gondal and Wuthering Heights resemble each other; in the Gondal poetry, imprisonment is often the occasion for a character to affirm that it is his body and not his soul that is imprisoned. That meaning, as I have indicated, is implicit in the novel too, as the enclosures of the house are figurative of

the enclosures of the body. Furthermore, Emily Brontë's frequent employment of claustrophobic enclosure, apart from what the exigencies of plot might dictate, suggests that the idea of imprisonment was emotionally difficult for her, as the death wish of the personal poems expresses the sense that her own mortality was an imprisonment.

One other instance of claustrophobia is revealing--Isabella's. The scene begins with Catherine and Isabella in the library, "on hostile terms, but silent," after the latter has revealed that she is in love with Heathcliff and Catherine has told her she is a fool. Then Heathcliff enters the Grange, and Catherine decides to humiliate her: "Isabella, absorbed in her meditations, or a book, remained till the door was opened, and it was too late to attempt an escape, which she would gladly have done had it been practicable" (I,x,114). The trapped Isabella is physically held while Catherine reveals the awful secret and Heathcliff sneers.

The poor thing couldn't bear that; she grew white and red in rapid succession, and, while tears beaded her lashes, bent the strength of her small fingers to loosen the firm clutch of Catherine, and perceiving that, as fast as she raised one finger off her arm, another closed down, and she could not remove the whole together, she began to make use of her nails.

(I,x,115-16)

Finally Catherine frees Isabella, and she rushes from the room, slamming the door behind her.

Just as Lockwood's second entrance to the Heights exemplified more than one quality of the partition imagery, this scene is notable not

only for its claustrophobic element but also for a stylized choreography typical of many scenes by which the plot progresses: 1) there are two or more characters together, silent, in a room; 2) a third character enters; 3) his or her entrance precipitates an emotional scene, with a verbal exchange that builds to a climax; 4) one of the characters rushes violently from the room. Another example is the scene in which Heathcliff leaves the Heights, not to return for two years. He and Nelly are sitting quietly in the kitchen; Catherine enters, and as Heathcliff is in a dark corner, she does not see him; she becomes emotional discussing Edgar's proposal of marriage with Nelly; Heathcliff rushes from the room after hearing Catherine say she could never marry him.

A complicated variant of this basic pattern occurs earlier, on the evening Catherine and Edgar "forsake the disguise of friendship, and confess themselves lovers" (I, viii, 79). The scene begins with Nelly and Catherine together in the parlor of Wuthering Heights; Heathcliff enters from outside; Heathcliff complains to Catherine of being abandoned for the Lintons and becomes agitated when he learns that Edgar Linton is expected in a few moments. So far, the scene has followed the first three steps of the basic pattern. The next step requires either Heathcliff or Catherine to leave the room in an emotional state. Heathcliff does this, stimulated further by Edgar Linton's simultaneous entrance to the Heights. Now Nelly, Catherine, and Edgar are together in the room; we have returned to step 2 of the pattern. Catherine, in an ill humor, begins to quarrel with

Nelly, and finally, out of an excess of rage, slaps Edgar smartly when he attempts to intervene; Nelly crosses the threshold to the kitchen, but leaves the door open; Edgar, his feelings genuinely hurt, also crosses a threshold--he leaves the house. However, he cannot keep his resolve, and after gazing longingly back through the window, "he turned abruptly, hastened into the house again, shut the door behind him" (I, viii, 79). There the two remain, discovering their love, until Hindley is heard returning to the house, at which Catherine leaves the parlor for her chamber and Edgar hurries out the door.

To reiterate, the basic pattern is a rearrangement of characters in a room, precipitated by the entrance of one at the beginning of the scene and confirmed by the exit of one at the end of the scene. In between there is a building up of verbal and emotional heat. Much more attention is paid here to the actual naming and crossing of the thresholds than is necessary to the fiction, and the crossings become figurative of changes in the relationships of the characters and hence with advancements in the plot. In each of the three examples, major events in the plot are prepared for or accomplished: Heathcliff's marriage to Isabella; Heathcliff's temporary withdrawal from the triangle and hence the marriage of Edgar and Catherine; the realization of love between Edgar and Catherine.

These stylized threshold scenes function, then, somewhat in the way death has been described to function (Chap. 7). With reference to death, I observed that there seems to be a relatively constant amount of

life energy represented in Wuthering Heights, for when one character dies, another is born. Death shifts the configuration of characters, gradually changing the disharmonious to the harmonious, absorbing the good and eliminating the evil injected into this life force with the initial traumatic entrance of an alien element, Heathcliff. As Van Ghent observes, death is frequently accompanied by passage through a window, this passage symbolizing a "change of mode of being."¹² The threshold scenes described here also denote a change in mode of being, although not of so fundamentally metamorphic a kind. The number of characters in a room usually remains constant, but their relationship changes. Death for Emily Brontë and the characters of Wuthering Heights, as we have seen, is the ultimate threshold; these lesser threshold scenes show the domestic partitions to be functioning as analogues of death.

Domestic partitions in Wuthering Heights, then, gain symbolic prominence as points of conflict and frustration. The house Wuthering Heights is subtly anthropomorphized; it has either a closed or an open nature depending upon the character who dominates it; the epiphanic scenes at windows discussed by Van Ghent seem to require a prelude of frustration at lesser thresholds; claustrophobia is frequently dramatized; the relationships among characters change with their movement into and out of rooms. Many other examples of each of these uses of threshold imagery could be cited. Such emphasis on thresholds reinforces the expressionistic quality of Wuthering Heights, diminishing the objectivity of the

external world, making it seem a projection or image of the internal world of the author or her characters.

Yet when all these functions are understood and the rich use of the partition symbol is acknowledged, there remains the question of a possibly larger significance of this image of separation. It may well have a private associational power for the author, in view of the extraordinary frequency of its non-symbolic occurrences.

The same possibility is raised by a few scenes in which the domestic partition is evidently symbolic but the language is extraordinarily powerful, out of proportion to the meaning of the symbol or the importance of the event. One such is Cathy 2's temptation by Heathcliff at the gate on the moors (II, viii). The event is relatively minor, one of a long series of temptations, but this one, perhaps because of its setting, is given grave Miltonic overtones. Another scene where the language is out of proportion to the event is Heathcliff's return to Wuthering Heights on the morning after Catherine's burial. He finds the door locked and Hindley and Isabella conspiring to keep him out. Hindley reveals a weapon, and Isabella then warns him, though refusing to let him in to be murdered. I shall examine the language from that point:

. . . the casement behind me, banged on to the floor by a blow from the latter individual [Heathcliff]; and his black countenance looked blighting through. The stanchions stood too close to suffer his shoulders to follow; and I smiled, exulting in my fancied security. His hair and clothes were whitened with snow, and his sharp cannibal teeth, revealed by cold and wrath, gleamed through the

dark. [Hindley, with his weapon, rushes to grapple with Heathcliff.] The charge exploded, and the knife, in springing back, closed into its owner's wrist. Heathcliff pulled it away by main force, slitting up the flesh as it passed on, and thrust it dripping into his pocket. He then took a stone, struck down the division between two windows and sprung in.
(II,iii,194)

In a strong defense of Heathcliff, W. A. Craik argues that the terror generated here is alloyed by the reader's knowledge that Heathcliff is in a frenzy of anguish over Catherine's death and has just spent the night with her corpse.¹³ In fact, this knowledge crystallizes much later, when Heathcliff describes the event to Nelly (II,xv), and no later knowledge can lessen the impact of the phrasing. Dramatized is a universal nightmare vision, an archetypal fantasy of a wolf demon breaking in. Van Ghent considers this episode a passage through a window corresponding with a death--Catherine's; however, the scene lacks the narrative centrality of the other epiphanic visions she discusses. In his Freudian reading, Thomas Moser refers to the incident's sexual content. This explanation, like Van Ghent's, has some merit, but it does not fully account for the stunning power of Heathcliff breaking down the window's partition and springing through.

Perhaps the meaning of the scene cannot be fully articulated. It may be a case of automatic writing, the author having allowed the full, private, associational power of the threshold symbol and the Heathcliff symbol to express themselves together. But the novel as a whole is analogous to the scene in that its threshold imagery sheds an aura of meaning

beyond any perceptible aesthetic function.

We may be able to extrapolate a partial definition of this meaning from Taylor Stoehr's comparison of gothic and pornographic novels. Much of what he says about their structures is applicable to Wuthering Heights (which he mentions as an example of gothic fiction):

The gothic novel has an episodic structure, and as in pornography, the episodes are repetitive. The combination of episode and repetition produces (or represents), in the gothic, an ambivalence toward history: events repeat themselves in succeeding generations, thus undercutting ideas of duration, sequence, temporal cause and effect. The typical formula is the family curse, which is worked out over long periods of time as if in a single moment. Theoretically the novel could continue forever repeating this moment; in fact, the family usually dies out, or is rescued from the curse by the author allowing a symbolic dying-out to occur.¹⁴

Wuthering Heights has repetition on the level of generation but also of symbol or image--specifically, threshold imagery. Heathcliff embodies a family curse, and is ultimately himself allowed to die out, thus freeing the family to return to something like its original state.

Stoehr's subject is, primarily, un-self-conscious art, and he explains the repetition as satisfying a need in the author's unconscious:

What is "gained" by this repetition? In some instances it is cathartic, but in the usual case it is merely expressive, a repeated acting-out which does not come to a thinking-out. Typically there is a kind of problem posed, but this is a screen for the real intention, namely, to bring repressed matter to the consciousness. The problem is: what would happen next (say, at the threshold of the room)? The answer is usually a given: it is what has already happened, to set the curse going.¹⁵

In other words, there is a continual reimagining and reliving of an elemental tableau. This scene represents an idea of extreme ambiguity for the

hero/author: it is at the same time both the family curse and his own deepest wish.

In Wuthering Heights the repeated elemental tableau is the partitioning off of one character or object from another, the separation of two characters, conditions, places, by a third. I have attempted to establish the ubiquitousness of the threshold image with reference primarily to doors, windows, and gates, but this figure extends elsewhere: the two manor houses with the gated wall on the moor between them; the partition of flesh between Cathy and Heathcliff; the division in Cathy's mind between Heathcliff and Edgar Linton; the structure of the novel in two parts, two volumes, two generations. In Stoehr's terms, Emily Brontë is continually creating a septum by verbalizing it. Psychic energy collects at thresholds precisely in order to be expressed, to concretize the threshold, which represents an ambiguously dreaded and desired condition. The author is equally ambivalent about an easy communication of the two parts and the opposite state of separation.

It seems probable that Wuthering Heights expresses Emily Brontë's ambivalence about her relationship with Gondal, the desire on the one hand for complete identification with it in death, disembodiment, childhood, and on the other for the mature life of social integration, a life implicitly without Gondal. Gondal, in its image Heathcliff, is perceived as a profoundly dynamic but disruptive force, the enemy of domestic harmony, of maturity, of life on earth itself. Wuthering Heights is an at-

tempt to reconcile the conflict the author feels, to imaginatively construct a viable universe that has absorbed Gondal. This need is finally met by the establishment of two discrete realms, the earthly inhabited by Hareton and Cathy 2, and the spiritual inhabited by Heathcliff and Cathy 1--and hence the division of Cathy, the author's projection, into two discrete parts. It is to a fuller understanding of those two images of the author that the next two chapters are devoted.

NOTES

¹ Dorothy Van Ghent, "On Wuthering Heights," The English Novel: Form and Function (1953; rpt. New York: Harper & Row, 1967), pp. 187-208; Thomas Moser, "What Is the Matter with Emily Jane? Conflicting Impulses in Wuthering Heights," NCF, 17 (June 1962), rpt. in Ian Watt, ed., The Victorian Novel: Modern Essays in Criticism (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), pp. 181-99; J. Hillis Miller, "Emily Brontë," The Disappearance of God (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1963), pp. 157-211, passim.

² Elisabeth Van de Laar, The Inner Structure of Wuthering Heights: A Study of an Imaginative Field (The Hague: Mouton, 1969).

³ For a reading of the novel that depends heavily on the animal and vegetable imagery, see Mark Schorer, "Fiction and the 'Matrix of Analogy,'" KR, 11 (1949), 539-60.

⁴ My emphasis here and elsewhere, in this chapter, unless otherwise noted.

⁵ The window imagery is the area of Van Ghent's interest, op. cit. Her reading is seminal, and I gratefully acknowledge its influence on my own.

⁶ Van Ghent, p. 199.

⁷ The image of the heroine in the window seat occurs with extraordinary frequency in the novels of Charlotte and Anne Brontë as well.

⁸ Moser, p. 187.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ For example, Miller, p. 166.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Van Ghent, p. 202.

¹³ W. A. Craik, The Brontë Novels (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1968), pp. 28-29.

¹⁴Taylor Stoehr, "Pornography, Masturbation, and the Novel," Salmagundi (Fall 1967), rpt. in Leslie Fiedler, ed., The Art of the Essay, 2nd ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1969), p. 274.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 275.

Chapter 9:

CATHERINE EARNSHAW LINTON AND GONDAL

In several of the previous chapters the idea has been put forth that Wuthering Heights on a private level of meaning is about Emily Brontë's relationship with her imaginary world of Gondal. Cathy is, according to this theory, a figure of the author, and Heathcliff is a figure of Gondal. In the present chapter I intend to develop this thesis by pointing out certain similarities between Wuthering Heights and the concept of Gondal that emerges in Emily's personal poetry, as well as by a detailed analysis of a crucial series of scenes leading up to Cathy's death. Emily Brontë's concept of death, the death wish, domestic partition imagery, and various other matters that have been shown in previous chapters to be both idiosyncratic and important to the author will here be brought to bear as contributing to a fuller understanding of the heroine.

The most important evidence for the thesis is the manifest similarity between Cathy's relationship with Heathcliff, as expressed in the central "I am Heathcliff!" speech, and the author's relationship with her Gondal God of Visions, as pieced together from the private poetry and other sources. In that crucial speech, Cathy speaks of Heathcliff:

I cannot express it; but surely you and everybody have a notion that there is, or should be an existence of yours beyond you. What were the use of my creation if I were entirely contained here? . . . My great thought in living is himself. If all else perished, and he remained, I should still continue to be; and, if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the Universe

would turn to a mighty stranger.
(I,ix,90)

Emily Brontë understands Gondal as precisely an existence of hers beyond herself, as something having a separate existence but not a separate identity.

Several other reasons for perceiving Heathcliff as a symbol of Gondal have been given in Chap. 5: his Gondalan personality, similar to several specific Gondal characters; his power and sexual energy, which lead us to associate him with the creative spirit; the similar circumstances of his arrival at Wuthering Heights and the arrival at Haworth parsonage of the toy soldiers that became figures of the characters of Gondal and the other Brontë juvenilia (this box of soldiers arrived soon after the death of Emily's sisters and hence may have been associated with their deaths); his destructiveness in society and in the Earnshaw family, which may indicate that he is linked in the author's imagination with the threat of her own family's deterioration upon the deaths of her mother and sisters. In addition, the author's phrasing sometimes hints at Heathcliff's symbolic meaning. At one point he is described as "the spirit which served" Cathy. This spirit "was growing intractable: she could neither lay nor control it" (I,xi,123). And on another occasion he is called Hindley's "evil genius" (II,iii,196). After the death of Cathy I, however, Heathcliff himself becomes more nearly an image of the author in supplication to the spirit of Gondal, represented by her ghost.

In the personal poetry, the evening wind is a symbol and herald of the God of Visions. In the novel, too, the wind has a special place among the imagery, as indicated by the title of the novel: "wuthering" means blowing with a dull roaring sound. Wuthering Heights is a place of the wind, which in Emily Brontë's private symbology perhaps signifies a place of visions, expressed not only with "wuthering" but also with "heights." Lockwood's vision of the ghost at the window, a scene (as I have indicated in the previous chapter) reminiscent of Emily's visions at her bedroom window, is preceded by the wind rattling the fir branch against the pane. Also, the wind is associated with significant movements of Heathcliff. There is a violent wind the evening he leaves Wuthering Heights (I,ix,93), and upon his return three years later, the stir of the night wind is again mentioned (I,x,101).¹

Cathy, in her delirious state at Thrushcross Grange, thirsts for the wind, just as she thirsts for the Gondal-like experience of Heathcliff, and will not be consoled except by leaning her head out into the blast:

"Oh, if I were but in my own bed in the old house!" she went on bitterly, wringing her hands. "And that wind sounding in the firs by the lattice. Do let me feel it--it comes straight down the moor--do let me have one breath!"

(I,xii,135)

.....
 "I wish I were a girl again, half savage and hardy, and free . . . Why am I so changed? why does my blood rush into a hell of tumult at a few words. I'm sure I should be myself were I once among the heather on those hills . . . Open the window again wide, fasten it open!"

(137)

(It is of course important that Nelly fears Cathy will catch a deadly cold from this; leaning into the wind is a suicidal act.)²

Cathy, like her author, experiences an intense death wish. And toward the end of her life she is continually in a mystical revery suggestive of a Gondal vision:

The flash of her eyes had been succeeded by a dreamy and melancholy softness: they no longer gave the impression of looking at the objects around her; they appeared always to gaze beyond, and far beyond--you would have said out of this world--

(II,i,172)

Heathcliff also, with his death wish and his visions of Cathy's ghost just before he dies, is an icon on the author in her Gondal experiences:

Now, I perceived he was not looking at the wall, for when I regarded him alone, it seemed, exactly, that he gazed at something within two yards distance. And, whatever it was, it communicated, apparently, both pleasure and pain, in exquisite extremes, at least, the anguished, yet raptured, expression of his countenance suggested that idea.

(II,xx,356)

Interestingly, even Edgar Linton absorbs some of this visionary quality before his death. He too sees Cathy's ghost:

All was composed, however; Catherine's [Cathy 2's] despair was as silent as her father's joy. She supported him calmly, in appearance; and he fixed on her features his raised eyes that seemed dilated with ecstasy.

. . . Kissing her cheek, he murmured,

"I am going to her, and you darling child shall come to us;" and never stirred or spoke again, but continued that rapt, radiant gaze, till his pulse imperceptibly stopped, and his soul departed.

(II,xiv,305)

Another similarity between Wuthering Heights and Emily Brontë's idea of Gondal is the rejection of the Christian heaven in favor a a private one. For Emily Brontë, Gondal itself is apparently that heaven. The diction in the last-quoted passage contains ironic allusion to Christ's words to his disciples after the Last Supper: "In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you" (King James edition, John 14:2) and to the repentant thief on the cross: "Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Cathy speaks of a dream in which she is tossed out of heaven and sobs with joy when she falls to the moor, a symbol of Heathcliff. And Heathcliff declares before his death: "No minister need come; nor need anything be said over me-- I tell you, I have nearly attained my heaven; and that of others is altogether unvalued, and uncoveted by me" (II,xx,359).

Let us now turn from this catalogue of similarities to a detailed analysis of the scene of Cathy's madness, in which her character is illuminated and many of the themes and techniques of the novel are epitomized. That madness is preceded by a violent quarrel between Edgar and Heathcliff. Cathy is driven into a state of masochistic hysteria because of her conflicting allegiance:

"I'm nearly distracted, Nelly!" she exclaimed, throwing herself on the sofa. "A thousand smiths' hammers are beating in my head! . . . Say to Edgar, if you see him again to-night, that I'm in danger of being seriously ill--I wish it may prove true. . . . Really, when he opened on me in that unreasonable tone of displeasure, after I had scolded Heathcliff till I was hoarse for him; I did not care, hardly, what they did to each

other, especially as I felt that, however the scene closed, we should all be driven asunder for nobody knows how long! Well, if I cannot keep Heathcliff for my friend--if Edgar will be mean and jealous, I'll try to break their hearts by breaking my own. That will be a prompt way of finishing all, when I am pushed to extremity!"

(I, xi, 127)

If we understand that this scene is for the author a dramatization of anxiety over the loss of Gondal as the result of its conflict with the world of normal society, it is clear that Edgar as well as Heathcliff is a facet of Cathy, and to punish them is necessarily to punish herself. And conversely, both men's existence depends on hers; if her heart breaks, theirs will break. The external warring is an expression of internal warring. Cathy immediately falls into a state of madness, her psychological condition mirroring the social situation. She half drives herself, is half driven, into mental fragmentation, just as it is clear that the members of the central triangle will "all be driven asunder." Heathcliff, like Gondal to Emily Brontë, is felt as absolutely essential to Cathy, and without him all will be finished.

Cathy's internal fragmentation is mirrored, too, by the condition of the house, the image of the whole being. Heathcliff has been driven from its walls, and the other fragments of the central personality react by isolating themselves. Isabella isolates herself outside the house, in the territory of Heathcliff, whom she believes herself in love with. Edgar and Cathy shut themselves up in individual rooms. Nelly describes this situation and draws our attention to the house-body analogy by the typ-

ical means of syntactic proximity:

While Miss Linton moped about the park and garden . . . and her brother shut himself up among books that he never opened . . . and she fasted pertinaciously . . . I went about my household duties, convinced that the Grange had but one sensible soul in its walls, and that lodged in my body.

(I,xii,131)

Threshold imagery is also highly significant in the author's treatment of Cathy's madness. As Cathy relates it, "as soon as ever I had barred the door, utter blackness overwhelmed me" (I,xii,136). This closing of a domestic door correlates with the crucial transformation in Cathy's mental state. The other domestic partitions that are important in the scene of madness are the mirror of Cathy's room in Thrushcross Grange, which she hallucinates as the door of a black press at Wuthering Heights; the window of her bedroom at Thrushcross Grange, confused with her window at Wuthering Heights; and the panels of her enclosed bed at Wuthering Heights, which is remembered by way of contrast with her marriage bed at Thrushcross Grange.

The anguish that produces her hallucinations is derived from the association in her mind of her present separation from Heathcliff and an earlier one. The last seven years of her life, she says, were completely erased from her memory:

I did not recall that they had been at all. I was a child; my father was just buried, and my misery arose from the separation that Hindley had ordered between me, and Heathcliff--I was laid alone, for the first time, and rousing from a dismal doze after a night of weeping--I lifted my hand to push the panels [of her bed] aside, it struck the table-top! I swept it along

the carpet, and then, memory burst in--my late anguish was swallowed in a paroxysm of despair--I cannot say why I felt so wildly wretched--it must have been temporary derangement for there is scarcely cause--But, supposing at twelve years old, I had been wrenched from the Heights, and every early association, and my all in all, as Heathcliff was at that time, and been converted, at a stroke into Mrs. Linton, the lady of Thrushcross Grange, and the wife of a stranger; an exile, and outcast, thenceforth, from what had been my world--You may fancy a glimpse of the abyss where I grovelled!

(136-37)

Here again, the threshold imagery is used to mark mental transitions. The attempts to push aside the panels of her bed cause memory to burst in--an internal threshold correlates to an external one, and the protective partition that Cathy had been able to construct in her mind no longer holds. Memory's violation of that mental threshold causes her to realize her loss of the paradisiac state of total identity and contiguity with Heathcliff. She falls from paradise into a hellish abyss, where she grovels. That abyss is precisely the condition of socialized adulthood--being the lady of Thrushcross Grange.

It is extremely important that the earlier separation from Heathcliff, the prototypal separation, is associated with the death of Cathy's father. I have argued earlier that the death of Emily's mother was important to the formation of Gondal. This is I think evident from biographical data and from the personal poetry, and there are indications of it in Wuthering Heights. In the novel, though Mrs. Earnshaw is the first to die, and her death is associated with Heathcliff's arrival, the emotional weight of that death is transferred to the death of her husband. Mr. Earnshaw's death is

the traumatic loss of a parent from which results the disintegration of the family and the order it symbolizes. Thus, separation from the parent through death is linked with separation from the Gondal figure.

The biographical sources of this fictional situation are not difficult to discover. Emily Brontë felt two strong allegiances, to her private world of Gondal and to the domestic world at Haworth. One of three unmarried adult sisters who had no visible means of support except their aged father (Patrick Brontë was 69 in 1846, when Wuthering Heights was written), and with a derelict brother whom they could expect only to be a burden, Emily like her sisters worked as a governess, which she (as they) found terrible and demeaning, and fantasized about forming a private school at Haworth parsonage. But Emily engaged in this activity considerably less, and less intensely, than her sisters, because it was almost impossible for her to leave Haworth. One of the few occasions on which she did so, she nearly died, and Charlotte attributes her illness to her separation from the place of her Gondal visions.³ The dilemma in Emily's mind, almost certainly, is the fear of the disintegration of her Haworth world upon the death of her father, perhaps imminent, and her subsequent banishment into the non-Haworth world of normal society; and hence, because of that separation from Haworth, the loss of her Gondal visions:

"Supposing . . . I had been wrenched from the Heights, and every early association, and my all in all, as Heathcliff was at that time, and been converted, at a stroke, into Mrs. Linton, the lady of Thrushcross Grange, and the wife of a stranger, an exile, an outcast, thenceforth, from what had been my world."

In the scene of Cathy's madness, several motifs develop by association with the bed Cathy is in. In a "feverish bewilderment of madness" she attempts to rip the pillow to pieces. This is her marriage bed, and the act of destruction is clearly symbolic. But in tearing the pillow she discovers its feathers, and they recall her childhood with Heathcliff on the moors. Once more, Heathcliff's meaning as a usurper of the natural order, represented by parenthood, is alluded to with her memories of the birds from which the feathers came: "This feather was picked up from the heath, the bird was not shot--we saw its nest in the winter, full of little skeletons. Heathcliff set a trap over it, and the old ones dare not come" (134).

Cathy desires to be out of this bed, which she shares conjugally with Edgar, and in the bed she shared with Heathcliff. But that earlier bed becomes associated with her grave. She imagines she sees the lights of Wuthering Heights from her window:

"Look!" she cried eagerly, "that's my room with the candle in it, and the trees swaying before it . . . and the other candle is in Joseph's garret . . . Joseph sits up late, doesn't he? He's waiting till I come home that he may lock the gate . . . Well, he'll wait a while yet. It's a rough journey, and a sad heart to travel it; and we must pass by Gimmerton Kirk, to go that journey! We've braved its ghosts often together, and dared each other to stand among the graves and ask them to come. . . . But Heathcliff, if I dare you now, will you venture? If you do, I'll keep you. I'll not lie there by myself; they may bury me twelve feet deep, and throw the church down over me; but I won't rest till you are with me . . . I never will!"

(138)

"Going home" to Wuthering Heights becomes going home to death, the

idealized bed translated into the grave to be shared with Heathcliff.⁴

Joseph, in further instance of partition imagery, is imagined as the keeper of death's gate.

As in the poetry, nostalgia backwards in time to a moment of paradisiac bliss is associated with yearning toward a paradisiac death. In the poetry, mother is the object in time past, Gondal the object in time future. In the novel, Heathcliff occupies both positions.

In addition to those discussed, the other major partition image in the scene of madness is Cathy's mirror. She imagines it is a closet door in her room at Wuthering Heights and is frightened to see a face in it. That she thinks it is a door is, of course, significant, as it is symbolic of her own internal division. She does not recognize the face as her own, which emphasizes the degree of confusion and fragmentation she is experiencing. Just as she realizes it is herself, the clock strikes noon:

"Myself," she gasped, "and the clock is striking twelve! It's true then; that's dreadful!"

(135)

The chiming of the clock, besides having clear Faustian overtones, functions as a variant of the mirror: it divides time.

Time is a process of dividing. The clock moves in only one direction, toward further division. Likewise the moment of Cathy's life is only toward greater and greater fragmentation. Although she has tried in her madness, she cannot return even in memory before her father's death

or before she was separated from Heathcliff. She had withdrawn into the Grange bedroom and hallucinated being in the old oak-encased bed at the Heights. These were efforts to contract the self to its smallest and earliest form. But that form can be reached only in the future, not in the past--only in death, not in memory. The movement of time forces her to pass, metaphorically, out the bedroom window and into the world of spirits, not back through the oaken doors of the closet bed into the larger, communal room. The regressive movement she attempts generates only horrific memories of her own maturation.

But it would not be accurate to say that Cathy's death, like anyone's, is due to the inexorable movement of time. Separation from Heathcliff inevitably brings illness, and her illnesses grow progressively worse with each separation, beginning with that on the evening of the vision of Thrushcross Grange. Because Cathy has been bitten by a dog, she is taken inside and confined for five weeks until she is well. But Heathcliff is driven from the door. Cathy's illness here is mild, hardly worth noticing, except that it is part of a series.

The second moment of illness occurs after the crucial "I am Heathcliff!" speech. Heathcliff has overheard Cathy say she cannot marry him but will marry Linton, and he leaves. Cathy masochistically goes out into the storm in search of him. She catches a fever and experiences delirium.

The third illness results from the fight between Heathcliff and Edgar

Linton in the kitchen of Thrushcross Grange--the scene of madness discussed earlier in this chapter.

Her final separation from Heathcliff intensifies her bodily weakness and plunges her from illness into death. She clings desperately to Heathcliff as they hear Edgar approach: "Oh, don't, don't go. It is the last time! . . . Heathcliff, I shall die! I shall die!" (II,i,178). As I have previously indicated, death seems to be a function of Heathcliff: the procession of deaths in the novel occurs as a result of Heathcliff's presence. But Cathy is a perverse element in this universe, for whom some of its laws are reversed: her death results from Heathcliff's absence. As when Cathy declares that she and Heathcliff are one, so here, she must be taken literally. She will die if he leaves her side. Emily Brontë uses the traditional hyperbolic rhetoric of the romantic love story, but insists on its literalness. Cathy and Heathcliff are one, and they must be together as one or else she will grow sick, then grow mad, and then die.

In one sense, Cathy's first prolonged separation from Heathcliff seems an inevitable end to the process that begins with Heathcliff's first entrance to Wuthering Heights. It is a circumstance of the vision of Thrushcross Grange's drawing room, which itself is a result of their having been banished from Wuthering Heights by Hindley, in turn a result of his ascendancy, a result of his father's death, which is the result of family quarreling, caused by Heathcliff's presence. Such terms of tragic fa-

tality are significant here, and the chain can be followed past the vision of Thrushcross Grange to the very end of the novel: Heathcliff's original entrance ultimately induces the final condition of exhausted peace.

In another sense, however, it is a function of Cathy's age, or of time. Cathy is 12, Heathcliff about 13. Their intense love to this point may have been presexual; until recently they have slept in the same bed. Cathy is at the point of puberty, and the totally unexpected vision of an opulent, scarlet Grange room, a vision of civilized worldliness, is latently sexual. As a result of her stay at the Lintons, Cathy is awakened to the possibilities of a larger world than the Heights and to her own femininity. She returns home at the end of five weeks transformed from a tomboy to a young lady:

There lighted from a handsome black pony a very dignified person with brown ringlets falling from the cover of a feathered beaver, and a long cloth habit which she was obliged to hold up with both hands that she might sail in.

(I, vii, 58)

The separation at this point from Heathcliff has a kind of biological and temporal inevitability. Had the introduction to Thrushcross Grange occurred a year earlier, it would not have been a turning point in Cathy's life. But if not that, then another chance occurrence might well have disengaged Cathy from Heathcliff in favor of another love object precisely at this moment.

To take notice of the fact that the first spiritual rift between Cathy and Heathcliff is associated with puberty is to reaffirm that the Cathy-

Heathcliff relationship is metamorphic of some childhood intensity incompatible with adult consciousness. In a series of scenes richly suggestive of the Eden myth, the fall from grace--separation from Heathcliff--is an inevitable result of growing up. And sickness and death are the inevitable results of separation from Heathcliff. Ultimately then, as in our lives, death is the result of maturation, but for Emily Brontë there is a third term interposed, Heathcliff, or Gondal. Expressed is a morbid fear of growing up, and just as it is inevitable that we all grow up and die, so it is inevitable that Catherine shall be separated from Heathcliff, the Gondal figure, as a result of growing out of childhood.

NOTES

¹ The wind is also mentioned in connection with the death of Cathy's father. That evening, "a high wind blustered around the house" (I,v,47). This is not merely an atmospheric touch, though neither can it be claimed that the association is with Heathcliff or a Gondal-like experience. It is perhaps significant, though, that wind is associated with parental death, which in the biographical situation, I suggest, gave Gondal its meaning and intensity.

² Van Ghent claims that Cathy does literally "catch her death" from leaning out the window. Her reading, as I have previously indicated, is concerned with the window image as the medium of death, and not with the image of the wind. "Emily Brontë," The English Novel: Form and Function (1953; rpt. New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 198.

³ See Fannie E. Ratchford, The Brontës' Web of Childhood (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1941), pp. 105 ff.

⁴ Another association of the bed is the Fairy cave of Peniston Crag. It is a symbol of the moors and their spiritual mystery, as well as of the moment of bliss with Heathcliff. Cathy imagines that her bed is the Fairy cave and that Nelly is a witch there. In the second generation, the Fairy cave has specifically sexual overtones. Cathy 1's pubertic vision of Thrushcross Grange is mirrored in the second generation by her daughter's introduction to Wuthering Heights and, later, her initiation to the cave by Hareton:

He opened the mysteries of the Fairy cave, and twenty other queer places; but being in disgrace, I [Nelly] was not favoured with a description of the interesting objects she saw.

(II,iv,216)

Until then, Cathy 2 has seen the phallic Crag from a distance as a symbol of adulthood:

"Ellen, how long will it be before I can walk to the top of those hills? I wonder what lies on the other side--is it the sea? . . .

The abrupt descent of Penistone Craggs particularly attracted her notice . . .

"Oh, you have been on them!" she cried, gleefully. Then I can go, too, when I am a woman. Has papa been, Ellen?"

"Papa would tell you, Miss," I answered hastily, "that they are not worth the trouble of visiting."
(II,iv,207)

Chapter 10:

CATHERINE EARNSHAW LINTON AND MATERNITY

The emphasis in the interpretation of Wuthering Heights thus far has been on details tending to support the view that the novel is about essentially private concerns of the author. However, despite the fact that the story takes place in a nearly acultural framework, with no references to history such as one finds in Middlemarch or Shirley, there can be no question that Emily Brontë also had broad cultural issues in mind when she wrote Wuthering Heights.¹ This is not the place for a full consideration of the author's cultural concerns, and in this chapter I attempt only to show how cultural ideas intersect personal ones on one important issue, the influence of motherhood.

Cathy 1 and Cathy 2 are consciously contrasted. The multiplicity of ways in which their two stories parallel each other and differ at significant moments is, I think, manifest and will not be indicated here exhaustively. But two important differences in the circumstances of the heroines are their relationships to Heathcliff and to mothers. It has been a cornerstone of my thesis that Emily Brontë felt so intensely about Gondal in part because it occupied an emotional vacuum created by the death of her mother. If this was the case, then in the mind of the author attachment to a theoretical mother and attachment to Gondal would be alternative modes of development. We see those alternative modes dramatized

in the stories of the two heroines, Heathcliff being a figure of Gondal and Nelly Dean being a figure of the theoretical mother. Cathy 1 has her closest and most formative relationship with Heathcliff, Cathy 2 with Nelly. (Obviously, Nelly is a mother figure only for Cathy 2; Cathy 1's real mother existed in her life and consciousness, and died when Heathcliff arrived at Wuthering Heights.)

The influence of these figures of Gondal and maternity is expressed in both cultural and personal modes of the two Cathys: Cathy 1 is narcissistic and nostalgic; she strains after the absolute, is mad, hedonistic, antisocial, illness and death oriented, abnormal. Cathy 2 is un-self-conscious, content, planted firmly in the here and now, a figure of social stability and health, normative. Cathy 1 is a "little savage" after Heathcliff's arrival, but if we were to imagine her social development without a Heathcliff (and with a mother) it would be in all essential respects that of Cathy 2. As an adult, Cathy 1 is regressive, yearning for the paradisiac state of infancy before her mother's death, of which the Heathcliff relationship is a reminder, but Cathy 2, for whom there has been continuity in Nelly's maternal love from the earliest infancy into conscious adulthood, is emotionally healthy as well as culturally functional.

Let us examine Nelly's maternal function. As soon as Cathy 2's biological mother is in her grave, Nelly converts an empty parlor to a nursery and sits crooning to the child (II,iii,186). The next twelve years are described by her as "the happiest of my life" (II,iv,206). She be-

comes the constant companion and moral guardian of Cathy 2, her position given even more prominence by the relative withdrawal of the girl's father. She intercepts notes and chastises, she makes the mistake of over-indulging Cathy too much--she mothers. The effect of her maternity is benevolent:

[Cathy 2's] spirit was high, though not rough, and qualified by a heart, sensitive and lively to excess in its affections. That capacity for intense attachments reminded me of her mother; still she did not resemble her; for she could be soft and mild as a dove, and she had a gentle voice, and pensive expression: her anger was never furious; her love never fierce; it was deep and tender.

(206)

Cathy 2's lovely character disintegrates in Nelly's absence and re-integrates when Nelly is present again. The reader's first perception of Cathy 2 is of her depraved condition, hostile and distrustful:

The canisters were almost out of reach; I made a motion to aid her; she turned upon me as a miser might turn, if any one attempted to assist him in counting his gold.

"I don't want your help," she snapped, "I can get them for myself."

(I, ii, 13)

She is this way because it is the only way to survive in an environment totally without sympathy. Wuthering Heights is just such an environment after Nelly has been separated from her and forced to remain at Thrushcross Grange.

Although Zillah, the servant at Wuthering Heights, has a minor narrative function in the novel, her principal function is as a foil to Nelly. Zillah typifies the ethic of the Heights: she is a "narrow-minded selfish

woman" (II,xvi,314). When Cathy 2, helpless in this nightmare environment, attempts to enlist her aid, Zillah rejects her. Then Zillah actively avoids a comforter's role:

Once or twice, after we had gone to bed, I've happened to open my door again, and seen her sitting crying, on the stairs' top; and then I've shut myself in, quick, for fear of being moved to interfere. I did pity her then, I'm sure; still I didn't wish to lose my place, you know!

(315)

Later, Zillah aborts Hareton's attempts to ease relations with his hostile cousin. First, Zillah laughs at his desire to make up to Cathy, and indicates her own will to "bring her pride a peg lower" (318). Then she purposefully embarrasses Hareton:

"Will you ask her to read to us, Zillah? I'm stalled of doing naught--and I do like--I could like to hear her! I duno't say I wanted it, but ask of yourseln."

"Mr. Hareton wishes you would read to us, Ma'am," I said immediately. "He'd take it very kind--he'd be much obliged."

(319)

Cathy then takes umbrage, which fits Zillah's scheme; the scene ends, after an argument, with Hareton bursting out of doors and Cathy retreating in anger to her room.² Zillah's function, then, is actively to promote separation, to discourage community.

A nearly identical scene occurs later with Nelly rather than Zillah as mediator, after Heathcliff has her return to Wuthering Heights from the Grange. When Nelly first sees her surrogate daughter after the long separation, she is shocked at her moral deterioration. Cathy 2 baits Hareton

because of his apparent stupidity and brutality:

"He's just like a dog, is he not Ellen?" she once observed, "or a cart-horse? . . . What a blank, dreary mind he must have!"

(II, xviii, 334)

But in contrast to Zillah, who has encouraged antisocial behavior, Nelly chides Cathy until she corrects herself:

"I know why Hareton never speaks, when I am in the kitchen," she exclaimed . . . "He is afraid I shall laugh at him. Ellen, what do you think? He began to teach himself to read once; and, because I laughed, he burned his books, and dropped it [sic]--was he not a fool?"

"Were you not naughty?" I said; "answer me that."

"Perhaps I was," she went on, "but I did not expect him to be so silly. Hareton, if I gave you a book, would you take it now? I'll try!"

(334)

Similarly, when Hareton from hurt pride at first rejects Cathy 2's new advances, Nelly intercedes on behalf of civility:

"You should be friends with your cousin, Mr. Hareton," I interrupted, "since she repents of her sauciness! it would do you a great deal of good--it would make you another man, to have her for a companion."

(337)

Nelly is functioning as a mother, and it is clear from this example that, for Emily Brontë, to mother is to civilize. The peace that Nelly promotes is both internal and external, emotional and societal. As a result of her efforts, Hareton is indeed made "another man"--he is civilized, taught how to read, given manners.

The nature of society is improved in another way. It has not been merely Heathcliff's presence which has necessitated a general state of

chaos and hostility at the Heights, for Nelly is able to nurture the new love between Hareton and Cathy even in his presence. Nelly's previous absence has contributed to the chaos. Now Heathcliff cannot live in proximity to the new harmony; his death is correlated with his perception of that relationship:

They lifted their eyes together, to encounter Mr. Heathcliff--perhaps, you have never remarked that their eyes are precisely similar, and they are those of Catherine Earnshaw . . .

I suppose this resemblance disarmed Mr. Heathcliff: he walked to the hearth in evident agitation.

(II, xix, 347)

The two youths remind Heathcliff of himself and Cathy 1 in their childhood. His need to destroy them dissolves; his desire for death increases.

This is the process of causation: Nelly, as mother, brings harmony and civilization to the youngsters at the Heights, and these changes drive out Heathcliff, figure of Gondal. A figure of Gondal has no raison d'etre when a figure of motherhood is present. Domestic order is social order and corresponds to order and balance within the heroine's self. The cultivator of civility and civilization is the maternal ethic.

NOTES

¹ One minor indication of Emily Brontë's cultural concerns is the date of Cathy 2's sixteenth birthday, and the attendant events. It is March 20, 1800, the first day of spring of a new century, when Cathy 2 first meets Heathcliff and the action of the second-generation story is engaged. After C. P. Sanger's startling article, "The Structure of Wuthering Heights" (1926), it has not been possible to think that this novel is crafted with anything less than extreme care, at least in its temporal and legal aspects. We can be sure of the author's consciousness of the significance of this date, symbol of a new beginning in the culture. Cathy has "reached her full height," she is a woman henceforth, and herself symbol of the new age, of the hope of the future, as her mother/alter-ego is perhaps evidence of the inadequacies of the past. Though 1800 is not historically accurate as the divider between the two ages, Cathy 1 is a Romantic heroine, her daughter the Victorian counterpart.

² The crossing of thresholds here is consistent with the scene pattern described in Chap. 8.

CONCLUSION

Wuthering Heights is the triumph and culmination of a long writing career; accordingly, it would seem axiomatic by all but the most severe New Critical standards that the previous writing career be comprehended. Most unfortunately, neither that earlier writing nor any good record of it is extant. It was from the beginning a relatively private endeavor, shared with family members but no one else, and upon Emily's death her surviving sister, Charlotte, evidently destroyed volumes of it. Only fragments remain, and these did not attract serious scholarly attention until more than three-quarters of a century after Emily's death when Fannie Ratchford began to piece them together--not to solve the puzzle, ironically, but to complicate it.

Ratchford asserted in her study of the Brontë juvenilia, The Brontës' Web of Childhood (1941), that the four children of Haworth parsonage for upwards of a decade had shared fantasies about a fictitious race of lilliputian men, and that these fantasies had generated constant, almost daily writing--history, fiction, poetry, drama. Ratchford exposed as much of the material as she could find, reconstructed the fantasies as best she could, and speculated on their influence upon the mature novels.

For students of Charlotte Brontë, Ratchford's work is more than helpful--it is indispensable. For students of Emily Brontë, it is indisputably essential but considerably less helpful. Ratchford was concerned primarily

with Charlotte, as much of her juvenilia is intact. So little of Emily's remains that no reconstruction, including Ratchford's, of her private world of Gondal is trustworthy. My argument begins with a rejection of all such reconstructions, and hence of an approach to the novel through them.

No writer, with the possible exception of Mrs. Gaskell, has had the fertilizing effect upon Brontë studies of Ratchford--she is a giant. But precisely because of her genius and her influence, Ratchford's occasional errors are like motes in the eye of truth--their distorting effect is magnified. One such error, almost certainly, is the muddling of the distinction between two important manuscripts. The editor of the standard edition of Emily's poems, C. W. Hatfield, calls them the "A" and "B" manuscripts. They are simulated books, containing the neatly recorded final versions of Emily's poems, in her own handwriting. Begun simultaneously in February, 1844, one (the B MS.) is entitled "Gondal Poems," whereas the other has no title, just the date and the author's initials. The inescapable conclusion is that Emily divided her work into two groups, that which was of Gondal and that which was not. Ratchford argues, mistakenly I believe, that the division into two manuscripts is not meaningful, that all Emily's poetry is Gondalan.

Ratchford's interpretation has had the effect of obscuring the poems in the A MS.--their quality, their biographical significance, and their subject matter. They are Emily's best poetry, generally far superior to that written behind a Gondal persona. They are a record of Emily's mys-

sticism, a component of which is an intense death wish. They--and not Gondal poems--were, I contend, what Charlotte was shocked to discover in the autumn of 1845. Because of their death wish, the discovery caused Emily great mortification.

Although the A MS. verse is not Gondal poetry, it does reveal the importance of Gondal to its author. Though the A MS. poems are not of Gondal, they are about the relationship of the author to her creation. I argue that Emily's mysticism and her preoccupation with Gondal are not two separate phenomena in her life but one and the same. Her mystical visions were of Gondal events.

In this identity, I believe, is a partial answer to the problem of the relationship of juvenilia to mature work. Emily's inspiration occurred always in the same setting: late at night, in her room, as she gazed out of her window. Sometime in her adolescence, the Gondal visions that came to her in this setting began to coalesce into a single character, a representative being from the Gondal world, who was thereafter her medium to the details of that world. ("Gondal" became simultaneously the utopia and its personification, the world and a single creature--analogous to the image, discussed in Chap. 8, of the house as self containing a society of creatures all of which are aspects of that self.)

The God of Visions evidently develops from the genii the Brontë children imagined themselves to be with reference to their fantasized worlds. The genii were in control of the world of creatures represented by toy sol-

diers and were frequently referred to in the histories of this world. Inevitably the children also imagined themselves as the lesser creatures controlled by these geni, and thus were able to perceive their original selves as grand and godly. But which, then, is the real self?

Emily believed intensely in the real existence of her God of Visions, at the same time acknowledging that he was a product of her own imagination. This relationship of author to muse becomes translated, I argue, into the relationship of Cathy to Heathcliff in Wuthering Heights. The central statement of the novel is Cathy's: "I am Heathcliff." It is precisely the dilemma of two creatures who are at a more essential level one being that Wuthering Heights attempts to resolve.

If Emily Brontë's novel at a personal level is about the division within the author's self, then Wuthering Heights, perhaps more than most novels, outwardly objectifies an internal landscape. It is to the potentialities of this hypothesis that much of the last half of my essay is devoted. Regarding characterization, I argue that the most fruitful way of understanding not merely Heathcliff but virtually all the major characters is as fragments of a whole personality, centrally represented by Cathy. An elaborate system of functional relationships among the characters generates a sense of overlapping identities. At the center of this system is Catherine Earnshaw, an image of the author.

It is a minor but nonetheless a telling detail that our first, confused contact with Catherine Earnshaw is through her writing. She exists first

as an author, telling her own story, and it is by contact with her writing that Lockwood wishes to learn more of the history of *Wuthering Heights*. Like any of the Brontë sisters, Catherine uses her writing as a means to while away the time and to escape: "I reached this book, and a pot of ink from a shelf, and pushed the house-door ajar to give me light, and I have got the time on with writing for twenty minutes" (I,iii,25).

As an externalization of an internal crisis, *Wuthering Heights* often is nonrealistic. Death has a distinctly nonrealistic function, as with virtually every first entrance of a character to the novel a death occurs. In the Gondal saga and the other Brontë juvenilia, there seems to have been always roughly the same number of characters, and when a character was killed off, he would soon reemerge in another identity. In *Wuthering Heights* the transmigration of souls is more sophisticated, for there is often no similarity between the personalities born and deceased--e.g., Hindley's wife, Frances, and her father-in-law, one of whom enters with the other's exit. But the overall effect of the close correspondence of births and deaths, as in the juvenilia, is to create a sense of a certain quantity of life, a whole presence of life, which through births and deaths alters its own shape. By that gradual process of alteration, the whole life presence--the central personality--eventually reorders itself from the profound disorder generated in it by the injection of Heathcliff. In a sense it processes Heathcliff, and in the end expels the evil he had carried, along with the evil of the world he had entered, with the sacrificial death

of Linton Heathcliff, a figure of all that is unsatisfactory. But the composite life force at the center of the novel does not expel Heathcliff's positive quality, his spiritualizing energy.

If Wuthering Heights is about the conflicts of a single personality, about the antipathy among its various fragments, the walls of the house symbolize the perimeters of the self uneasily containing those particles. It is a not uncommon symbol in literature--the house as body, and hence the house as self. Emily Brontë employs it with great delicacy. Dorothy Van Ghent has written of the importance of the windows in this novel, symbols of metamorphosis and of the separation between self and other. I examine all the imagery of the other domestic boundaries as well. Many of these images are highly functional. They often have an anthropomorphic suggestiveness. In other cases, they are used to dramatize claustrophobia. In still others, entrances to and exits from rooms are carefully controlled indicators of changes in relationships among characters--and hence among the parts of the larger self. Most crucial scenes occur at thresholds, and they end with the passage of one character outward or inward.

Emily Brontë seems obsessed with thresholds, gates, windows, doors, etc. For every image that is functional in one of the ways I have mentioned, there are probably two with only minor narrative usefulness. Indeed, thresholds, etc., are the second largest image group in the novel. Thomas Moser interprets them as yonic, expressive of the author's sexual

neurosis. While acknowledging their sexual component, I argue that the compulsive attention to imagery of septa expresses Emily Brontë's ambivalence about her relationship to the world of Gondal--the central rift in her own heart that the novel attempts to join.

Emily Brontë apparently never felt a revulsion from Gondal. But ambivalence she did feel, and it probably increased as she aged. Her own commitment to the world of juvenilia was much greater than that of any of her siblings. She had not stopped writing about Gondal when she died at age 30, and had thus been involved with Gondal for nearly two decades. Indeed, this world virtually became her life. There was very little else in her life--the significant exception being her family--but no friends, no sexual interests, no real concern with the world outside Haworth parsonage, as nearly as researchers can determine. Essentially, then, Emily Brontë's life consisted of Gondal, the internal world, and her family, the external world. The ambivalence she expresses in Wuthering Heights is in terms of a conflict between Gondal, as represented by Heathcliff, and the family.

Soon after Heathcliff has first passed over the threshold of the Earnshaw domicile, the mother dies, and the family falls into chaos. There is probably no event in Wuthering Heights more important to its internal logic than the death of Mrs. Earnshaw, and yet it is handled with an extremely light touch. In the Gondal works and in the personal poetry, a leitmotif is the lament for a dead mother. Emily's own mother died just

when the daughter was at an age to remember the death. The juvenilia experience that was to culminate in Gondal entered the lives of the Brontë children, dramatically, only a few months after the death of an older sister, who had acted as a mother surrogate. It is almost inevitable, then, that the world of Gondal be associated in Emily's mind with these deaths and with the threat of family disintegration. It is probably because Gondal carried such associations that it had so powerful an influence upon its author.

The chaos that Heathcliff is responsible for in the Earnshaw family is not long contained at Wuthering Heights. It spreads outward to the society at large. Family harmony and social order are rooted in the same Christian virtues of generosity and charity, and in the repudiation of self-indulgence. The family and the society find their parallel expression in the civilizing influence of motherhood. That influence is seen in the novel in Nelly's mothering and hence civilizing of Cathy 2.

The ultimate antithesis, then, in Wuthering Heights is not between Heathcliff and Edgar Linton but Heathcliff and Nelly Dean, for the latter are pure forms of the requirements of the imagination versus the requirements of civilization. Emily Brontë is unable to forge the antithesis into a synthesis. The universe is, instead, harmoniously divided at the end of the novel between the world of spirit or Gondal--the ghosts of Cathy 1 and Heathcliff in ecstasy on the moors, and the world of civilization or family--Cathy 2 and Hareton settled happily at Thrushcross Grange.

Heathcliff is a figure of Gondal for the author's principal projection, Catherine Earnshaw. The relationship of the author projection and the Gondal projection is the same from either perspective, so that when Cathy is allowed to die, she becomes pure spirit and the Gondal object, in the second half of the novel, while Heathcliff takes on the role of the earthly creature striving for union with a spirit lover. Heathcliff, then, in the second half of the novel most directly represents the situation in which Emily Brontë imagines herself with her God of Visions. "Cathy" has divided into Cathy 1 and Cathy 2. In the form of the first, the author is able to imagine herself as pure spirit, as biologically dead, as the object of the supplication of the biologically living--i.e., as her own Gondal spirit creature. Cathy 2 is the author's image of herself without art--without Gondal--and hence as the center of a renewed civilization. Cathy 1 thereafter lives with Heathcliff in the world of ghosts, just as Emily Brontë imagines herself living as a spirit in Gondal. The final resolution is not a rejection of Heathcliff but an affirmation of dual existence, with the spiritual world validated even by so earthly a creature as Nelly. Only Lockwood, the obtuse indicator of all that is wrong or expendable in human nature, doubts "how any one could ever imagine unquiet slumbers"--i.e., continued existence as ghosts--"for the sleepers in that quiet earth."

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