

Wuthering Heights as a Romantic Novel (as a Gothic Novel / Gothic Romance)

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In 'Wuthering Heights', Emily Bronte indulges sometimes with gusto, sometimes in horror with gloom, in horror, mystery, passion, love, revenge and violence. The presence of so many primordial human experiences, naturally makes the novel wildly romantic. The hero of the novel Heathcliff is a man of great force of character and improbable wickedness, and ~~he~~ has been drawn true in line of romantic tradition. As ~~Traversy~~ As a critic puts it "The story of the orphan Heathcliff, his love for Catherine Earnshaw, and his revenge upon those who have ill treated him and deprived him of the object of his passion clearly follows an established romantic pattern."

There is no denying that the commonplace romantic inspiration has played a great part in Wuthering Heights but in many ways it may be called a Gothic romance, a particular kind of novel written during the latter phase of eighteenth century. A Gothic novel, typically deploys simplified characters, larger than life, who are sharply discriminated as heros and villains, ~~masters~~ masters and victims. The protagonist in such a novel is often solitary, and isolated from a social context. The story in it is often cast in the form of quest for an ideal, or the pursuit of an enemy. The melodramatic ~~scenes~~ ^{events} in them are aimed to project primal desires, hopes, and terrors in the depth of human mind. Dream, myth, ritual and folklore ~~are~~ naturally provide

elements to such novels. Wuthering Heights fulfil ^{most of} ~~all of~~ these conditions to be called a Gothic novel.

The novel imbibes the element of romance most prominently from the ~~extri-~~cate symbolic relationship between Heathcliff and Catherine. In fact, their relationship as lovers is the ~~the~~ ^{from} ~~core~~ ^{of the novel} ~~around~~ which we find issue forth the elemental forces, playing their destined part. The intensity of passion and the symbolic mysticism which mark the association of Heathcliff make Heathcliff and Catherine extraordinary lovers in the annals of literature. They regard themselves as inseparable parts of each other. A spiritual harmony exists between the two from the very outset. She tells to Nelly in a moment of charged ^{passion} ~~emotion~~ that Heathcliff is "more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same..." She marries Linton not out of love but because of social and financial security. Linton and Catherine as married couple are devoid of spiritual harmony between them. The way she wishes to be united with Heathcliff after death, the supernatural aura added to the theme of spirituality.

Heathcliff, the central figure in the novel, radiates a blazing vitality which dims everybody else. He symbolizes the manifestation of dynamic natural energy under the pressure of his own nature. He is a natural force which has been frustrated of his natural outlet through love, and as

a result of which he becomes destructive. He appears in the novel as a cruel diabolical man, but his cruelty is not innate in his character. He inflicts miseries on others as a consequence of the ill treatment he receives at the hands of the others. Even Catherine, on whom he had poured boundless love, leaves ^{him} isolated. In the final analysis, Heathcliff does not appear evil. All his destructive ~~energy~~ energies drive home the conclusion that the most vibrating impulses within the human soul can be ~~suppressed~~ suppressed only at the cost of endangering the structure of personality. Wuthering Heights has been rightly pointed out to be "... less a novel than a psychological drama in which characters are personified powers..." ~~that stormed and despaired~~ and this lends credence to the novel as a Romantic as well as a Gothic novel.

Emily Bronte evokes the atmosphere of mystery and terror ~~through~~ in the novel by giving supernatural treatment to the theme. The locale of the novel, the rural Yorkshire England, is an ideal setting in which most of the characters of the novel believe in the existence of ghosts and spirits. The supernatural aura also provides basis to the ~~metaphysical~~ metaphysical bond that exists between the leading characters of Heathcliff and Catherine. Both of them not only express their passionate ~~confessions~~ wishes to achieve subjugation of life love after ~~death~~ beyond this world, rather the novelist

also shows them achieving such union in the wild atmosphere of the novel. Thus the treatment of supernatural and the atmosphere provided to the novel contribute ⁱⁿ making of the novel a Gothic romance.

The symbolic ~~interpretations of~~ ^{dimension provided} to the theme of the novel, too, makes the story of Wuthering Heights acquire the features of a Gothic romance. Wuthering Heights, the home of the Earnshaws, is the dark, storm-tossed centre of violent passion where elemental forces hold complete sway. Thrushcross Grange, the home of the Lintons, suggest quiet and calm of the people who possess it. Respectively the two worlds stand for passion and reason, discord and harmony, dynamic energy and stasis. Both the worlds are mutually destructive, yet they seem impelled to seek reconciliation. In the novel, this symbolism has been very powerfully manifested in character portrayal.

~~Thus we see that in the novel~~
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~~The art of characterization~~
 the various elements such as the regional fervour, the dark ^{and} bleak atmosphere, the use of supernaturalism, the larger than life size character of ^{the} protagonist Heathcliff, the symbolism, the element of mystery and terror, the conflict of primal human instincts, and of course also the use of poetic language, make the novel both a classic romance and a typical example of Gothic novel. The novel stands as class to itself and defies limits of interpretation.