

Feminist Criticism within the Subverted Narrative in *Wuthering Heights* (1847)

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Abstract

This thesis examines the novel *Wuthering Heights* (1847) with a focus on its subverted narrative structure, the characters, what they represent and their relationships with each other. Special attention is directed on the female protagonists, Catherine Earnshaw, and Catherine Linton, and their stories and experiences of oppression, fragmentation, and the duality of their personalities. The representations assigned to them, the fragmentation of their selves, and consequently, the subversion of the archetypes which their characters represent are central subjects of scrutiny. The analysis of the female protagonists is situated within a theoretical framework of archetypal studies. Furthermore, the function of the narratives of the two generations in the novel, and the significance behind the similarities and differences between them are also discussed. The symbolism and representations assigned to the environment and the two houses central to the narrative – the Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange – are examined and analysed in this thesis. In addition to these details, key concepts, terminology in relation to archetypal studies, and the narrative structure and technique employed in the novel are explained.

The fictitious content of the novel is then situated within a cultural and historical context of the nineteenth century. Although most of the events in the novel are set in the eighteenth century, the focus in this study is, nonetheless, on the nineteenth century as the novel was written and published then, and the novel can be considered to reflect the conditions where it was produced. The real-life conditions in the nineteenth century concerning the marriage institution and women's position in the society are presented and discussed here, both from the theoretical perspective of legislation and the more practical perspective of attitudes, ideals, and values. The novel is not considered a report of the conditions of that era, but rather a reflection of them.

In addition to analysing the primary source in detail, this thesis also analyses earlier research on the subject, with a special focus on the research done by Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar. Some of the key concepts and main ideas in this thesis are largely inspired by their research, although many of their conclusions are also criticised here for their biased, over-deterministic, and somewhat self-contradictory and unsubstantiated nature. Although *Wuthering Heights* is a widely researched piece of literature, some of the studies conducted on it employ outdated and ungrounded concepts, such as the concept of authorial intention. Therefore, the research concerning the novel needs revision and an application of a fresh and an up-do-date perspective.

It is concluded in this thesis that *Wuthering Heights* reflects the injustices and patriarchal structures operating behind the nineteenth-century marriage institution and women's position in the Victorian era society. The novel portrays the practicalities of a Victorian era marriage, such as property issues, custody of children, and even brutality. Women's experiences of these practicalities are demonstrated through the stories of Catherine Earnshaw and Catherine Linton. Furthermore, these issues are then covertly criticised with the means of the subverted narrative structure which allows the meanings of symbols such as heaven and hell, or the meanings of the archetypal female characters, 'monster' and 'angel', to be altered. Lastly, it is suggested in this thesis that the male characters and their representations still call for further research.

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1. Introduction

This study seeks to demonstrate that Emily Brontë's novel *Wuthering Heights* (1847) employs a subverted narrative structure that is used to criticise patriarchal structures that prevailed during the nineteenth century. Two coexisting narratives allow controversial issues to be discussed, as it is left for the reader to decide which narrative level they will agree with and focus on, while the author remains neutral. One of the narratives is a plain reflection of the lives of two generations living on Yorkshire moors, and the other narrative discusses with reproach the nineteenth-century traditions concerning marriage and domesticity.

Wuthering Heights is often described as a romance novel. For instance, Miriam Allott argues that the novel resembles a romance with its "passionate love story, its larger-than-life characters and emotions [...]" (11). However, this thesis argues that the romantic plotline is merely one of the two narratives and the whole novel is not constructed of that only. Melvin R. Watson argues "if this is a love story and nothing more, the importance of Hindley, Hareton, Cathy, and Linton is misplaced, the entire last half is ill-proportioned, and the ending is off key" (87). If the novel were to be a mere tragic love story, it would have made sense to only include the story of the first generation with Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff as the focal point. However, the story continues even after Catherine Earnshaw's death, implicating that the novel carries further significance. This notion of two coexisting narratives has long been overlooked due to the novel's seemingly contradictory "confused, disjointed, and improbable" [...] nature (unknown writer qtd. in *Emily Brontë*, 1). If the reader is unable to notice the existence of two different narrative levels, the interpretation is bound to deem the novel confused.

Despite its seeming contradictions, the novel overtly describes and portrays the Victorian era marriage institution. Along with a Gothic atmosphere, the novel portrays marital brutality, oppression, and imprisonment within the domestic sphere, and in contrast, 'decadence' and rebellion against the status quo of a patriarchal society. If read in the light of this interpretation where the focus is on marriage and women's position in the society, as opposed to a mere tragic life story of one or two persons, consequently, the novel seems more coherent, and including stories of two different generations makes sense.

The purpose of this study is, thus, to establish that the novel criticises the prevailing ideals of a Victorian era society, especially those concerning women's position and their respective spheres in the society and in marriage. This is accomplished in the novel by employing a subverted narrative

structure that enables subversion of symbols, opposes to being categorised, and discusses difficult and provocative issues in a covert manner. Although to claim a work of fiction as criticism to the society's ideals is bordering on assumptions of authorial intention, which as a concept is somewhat ungrounded, however, it is a fact that "the imagination will find its subject and its modes of expression in the reality surrounding it, and may open the way for a supersession of what seems to be fixed forever" (Raymond Chapman, 3). A piece of literature, or any form of art for that sake, can be considered a reflection of the social and cultural environment where it was produced.

1.1. Emily Brontë and the Reception of *Wuthering Heights*

Modern critics often perceive Emily Brontë as a proto-feminist figure and one of the literary mothers who paved the way to the New Woman movement that prevailed during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, and not wrongly so. Elaine Showalter claims that

born between 1800 and 1820, included all the women who are identified with the Golden Age of the Victorian authoress: the Brontës, Mrs. Gaskell, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Harriet Martineau, and George Eliot. The members of this group [...] were what sociologists call "female innovators"; they were breaking new ground and creating new possibilities. (*A Literature of Their Own*, 19)

These female authors affected to the broadening of the spheres where women of that time were confined in both symbolically, and in some cases, physically. Being a published female author set an example to other women to pursue other occupations outside the domestic sphere. Chapman also argues that "[w]hen their [the Brontës'] secret was known, it gave some impetus to the acceptance of the female novelist; they too had their part to play in the history of female emancipation, together with their more militant contemporaries and successors" (163). Along with her sisters and other female authors of her time, Emily Brontë arguably had an effect on the establishment of the New Woman movement. Not only that, but writing in itself affected people's attitudes as well, even before the formation of the societal movement.

Emily was born in 1818 to a Yorkshire family of five children at the time and died in 1848, already at the age of thirty, one year after publishing *Wuthering Heights* (Allott, 12). Emily's career as an authoress is not entirely surprising, as she was raised by "a bookish and scholarly man" (Gerard

Cheshire, vi). In addition to her intellectually inclined father, Emily's sisters, Anne and Charlotte, were published authors, as well.

Wuthering Heights remains the only published work by Emily Brontë. Initially Emily published under a pseudonym, as did her sisters. At that time criticism targeted on her novel was not as severe, as critics believed they were commenting the work of a male author but when commentators found out they were confronting a female author, instead, "critical attitudes tended to change from camaraderie to condescension" (Kavanagh, 2). As the author's gender was a decisive matter on the direction that the critique was to take, it is indicative of the attitudes intellectual or scholarly women faced during the Victorian era.

Poor reception due to the novel being written by a female author was followed by general unappreciation. For instance, David Cecil claims that although Emily Brontë's work exhibits some glimpses of originality and imagination, her writing is considered "remote from the central interests of human life, often clumsy and exaggerated, and incapable of expressing her inspiration in a coherent form" (117). The 'clumsiness' and incoherency can be interpreted to refer to how the novel is commonly deemed contradictory due to its subverted narrative structure.

Once the criticism of female authorship was not the key focus, many critics often underpin the novel as a mere romance novel with no further significance or deeper meaning. For instance, Cheshire argues in a contemporary review from the twenty first century that the novel is "a complex Gothic tragedy" where the author situates herself within the tragic story, as "[s]he must have longed for some adventure and excitement in her life, and therefore acted it out in the theatre of her imagination" (v; viii). Cheshire does not heed any attention to the two coexisting narratives or depictions of patriarchal structures and the critique aimed at them. Furthermore, he makes a very questionable claim that the novel is merely a daydream-like fantasy where the authoress imagines herself as the protagonist, which can hardly be accredited for, as the author has made no such claim herself. Some critics, however, do notice some glimpses of deeper meaning but disregard them as insignificant. For example, an interpretation from the 1970s by Arnold Kettle is straightforward and simplistic. He claims that

Wuthering Heights is about England in 1847. The people it reveals live not in a never-never land but in Yorkshire. [...] The story of *Wuthering Heights* is concerned not with love in the abstract but with the passions of living people, with property-ownership, the attraction of social comforts, the arrangement of marriages, the importance of education, the validity of religion, the relations of rich and poor. There

is nothing vague about this novel [...] there is nothing sloppy or uncontrolled. On the contrary the realization is intensely concrete [...]. (200–201)

Kettle's interpretation denies that the 'mystic' elements in the novel carry any further significance from depicting the social constructs of a nineteenth-century family and society. This particular kind of interpretation falls into the category of "‘common-sense’ criticism", which stifles the complex text, and where "[t]he immanence of a particular social world in the novel is duly noted, and then its significance is firmly denied [...]" (Kavanagh, 4). In other words, the true subject in the novel is noted and acknowledged, but nothing further is made of it, since it is deemed too difficult to interpret due to its alleged and seeming contradictions.

In this thesis, these 'mystic' and seemingly contradictory elements are taken into account and analysed. As opposed to deeming these elements insignificant, it is claimed in this study that they, in fact, constitute the essence of the novel. Most attention will be given to the subverted narrative structure, the societal criticism incorporated within it, as well as the representations assigned to the protagonists and the symbolism tied to the environment.

2. Women and Marriage in the Nineteenth Century

This chapter discusses the conditions of a nineteenth-century marriage. Both the theoretical level of legislation and the more practical level are taken into consideration in order to present the issue comprehensively. The public discussion, both for and against the prevailing ideals on marriage, is also examined in order to portray what different attitudes were present in the society. This chapter is relevant as it provides a cultural and historical context when analysing *Wuthering Heights*, as one of the claims in this thesis is that the novel criticises the Victorian era marriage. Even though most of the events of the novel are situated in the eighteenth century, it can be argued that the novel reflects the values of the nineteenth century as it was written during that time.

2.1. Nineteenth-Century Marriage and the Common Law

In the Victorian era, especially during the early nineteenth century, legislation regarding marriage dictated that the husband was the authority and the woman was to be subjugated in relation to him or any other man of her relations for that matter, for instance her father. Laws concerning the married woman and the unmarried woman differed. The married woman's rights were notably restricted in comparison to the husband's or the unmarried woman's rights. Françoise Basch describes how "the girl who contracted a marriage – which the entire weight of nineteenth-century ideology put forward as being the culminating point of a woman's life – lost at one stroke all her rights as a 'feme sole', that is to say a free and independent individual" (16). From a legislative point of view, marriage was a poor bargain to a woman. However, the woman had little choice in whether to marry or to remain a 'feme sole', as prevailing attitudes pressured women to marry, doubtless making life for an unmarried woman equally challenging.

The unmarried woman, although pressured to marry, had legal rights to property while the married woman was striven of those rights. John Stuart Mill objected to the nineteenth-century marriage regulations and ideals stating that marriage "confers upon one of the parties to the contract, legal power & control over the person, property, and freedom of action of the other party, independent of her own wishes and will [...]" (qtd. in *Feminism, Marriage and the Law in Victorian England*, 3). Mill overtly states that the husband has authority over the wife who is striven of her independence and even the opportunity to function according to her own will. In addition to Mill, other Victorian

era feminists “pointed out that marriage law was based on the premise that a wife owed obedience to her husband, and where she did not voluntarily follow his will the law would leave her no other option” (Mary L. Shanley, 8). Thus, the law subjugated the woman under her husband’s authority and the wife could not rely on legislation in an attempt to gain more independence or in case she, for instance, experienced violence in the marriage.

Joan Perkin encapsulates some of the legal restrictions concerning a married woman, stating,

if a married woman committed any crime in her husband’s presence, except murder or high treason, the law presumed that she performed the deed under his coercion and was therefore guiltless. He was also responsible for her debts [...]. He was obliged by law to support her as long as she shared bed and board [...]. He could not ill-use her beyond reasonable chastisement (which stretched in those days of corporal punishment to the actual beating of wives as well as children, servants and petty offenders, provided it fell short of life and limb), and he could not imprison her with impunity. Although he was entitled to all her property and earnings except what her relatives and friends could hold in trust for her, he could not *will* away her personal jewellery or clothes, though he could dispose of them during her life with her presumed consent. [...] any child she had during marriage was her husband’s, however improbable the circumstances, unless he sued another man for ‘criminal conversation’ and could prove her adultery with him. (2)

The Common Law thus implied that a woman was an unwitting person unable to make valid judgements of her own actions and their repercussions but, instead, in cases of criminal actions, was believed to function under the coercion of her husband. Consequently, the woman was juxtaposed to a minor that is considered unable to comprehend the whole scope of the consequences of misdemeanours. It is also notable, that the authoritative position that the husband occupied in a marriage was largely economic in nature and much of the aspects that functioned in subjugating the married woman were related to property issues. In addition to this, as household duties were the woman’s occupation, it was more difficult for women to pursue a more independent lifestyle, and they were marginalised and left out of the increasingly industrialised society and the structures of work life. Marriages’ property issues are also portrayed in *Wuthering Heights* in the instance where Heathcliff forces Catherine II and Linton to marry, so that as Linton’s father and Catherine II’s father-in-law, he could gain possession of the property that Catherine II would inherit.

The legislation concerning marriage came into effect even before the couple was officially married. Once the woman agreed to marry a man, it was considered a contract of betrothal and “she could

not thereafter dispose of or give away her property without the consent of her betrothed” (Perkin, 13). Thus, the subjugation of the woman began once the agreement to marry was contracted. Moreover, property that the woman had attained before the marriage and money that she herself earned during marriage was legally her husband’s property, and he could use the money or dispose of it as he wished, even if the couple did not live together (Perkin 13–14). To put it otherwise, as women were under enormous pressure to marry, they had little to no chances of accumulating money or any property of their own. If attained before marriage, they were the husband’s once married, and if attained during marriage, they, too, were the husband’s absolutely. However, if the husband was generous enough, “by permission of her husband, a wife could make a will of her personal property; but he could revoke his leave at any time before probate [...]” (Perkin, 14). The wife could, in theory, decide where her property and earnings ended up once she was deceased. However, the husband still had authority over that will, so the right to will her own property was merely ostensible.

In addition to having no rights to her own monetary property, the wife did not have any rights to her children as, in case the father was of a sound mind, he could take the children away from the mother and, in addition, the custody of the children was automatically assigned to the father if the parents were separated (Perkin 14–15). These practicalities are also portrayed in *Wuthering Heights* as Heathcliff forcefully claims back his son, Linton, although Isabella, the mother, had wished for him to have no contact with Heathcliff.

Although a married woman lost nearly all rights to her own property, the wife seemingly had a more advantageous position to her husband in court, as minor criminal charges could not be laid on her, but instead the husband represented her in court. Nevertheless, this reflects the patronising ideals that functioned behind this practice; therefore, this could hardly be considered an advantage. Sir William Blackstone argued that

the husband and wife are one person in law; that is, the very being, or legal existence of a woman is suspended during marriage, or at least incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband, under whose wing, protection and cover she performs everything. (qtd. in *Women and Marriage in the Nineteenth-Century England*, 1–2)

The wife’s legal independence diminished to non-existent as the husband acted a representative figure of their marriage. Therein the husband’s authoritative position and the wife’s subjugated position in the marriage were further prompted as the husband was considered an overseer to the wife.

Additionally, violence was not altogether prohibited on the part of the husband in marriage. To be convicted of the acts of brutality, or for it to be acceptable for the wife to divorce her husband, Sir William Scott argued that the acts of brutality

must be grave and weighty, and such as shew an absolute impossibility that the duties of married life can be discharged. [...] Mere austerity of temper, petulance of manners, rudeness of language, a want of civil attention and accommodation, even occasional sallies of passion, if they do not threaten bodily harm, do not amount to legal cruelty; they are high moral offences in the marriage state undoubtedly, not innocent surely in any state of life, but still they are not that cruelty against which the law can relieve. (qtd. in *Victorian Studies*, 273)

Although violence in a marriage was not necessarily considered mannerly, it was accepted on a legislative level to some extent. If the wife was not in direct and severe personal danger in the marriage, she was neither excused to divorce her husband nor was the husband convicted of his acts of violence, if they were not considered 'grave and weighty' enough by the court. This is indicative of the wife's inferior position in the marriage, as physical violence on the husband's part was sanctioned by law.

As opposed to the married woman, the unmarried woman had a more advantageous position according to legislation. The so-called 'feme sole'

could acquire possession and dispose of them freely [...]. As owner of her goods and chattels, the feme sole was recognized as being fit to be bound by a contract, to incur responsibilities for her debts, to sue and be sued. In short her legal position was from every point of view identical to that of a man. It was not the same for public and political rights. For these purposes all women, married or not, were at the time treated as minors. They could not be members of liberal professions, nor were they admitted to universities to take degrees. (Basch, 104)

Although the 'feme sole' had nearly the same rights in legislation as the man did, she was nevertheless unable to participate in politics or attain similar education as men. This indicates that women were not only considered inferior to their husband in marriage, but women were generally considered incompetent to pursue similar occupations as men. Instead, nineteenth-century ideals and attitudes pressured women to marry and it was deemed their ultimate goal in life.

2.2. Nineteenth-Century Ideals and Values on Marriage

Although the nineteenth-century legislation concerning marriage illustrates the restricted rights of married women, the law in itself does not sufficiently portray the conditions. Patricia Branca argues “law is at best a vague description of society [...]” (9). The law does not directly depict the state of the society and its prevailing values, but it can be argued that values affected legislation and vice versa, although it should be acknowledged that laws are by nature rather rigid and react to the society’s climate and changes rather slowly. Nonetheless, laws do not comprehensively describe the nineteenth-century marriage institution, thus, the practical level ought to be discussed, as well.

Perkin also states that

the law and theory of marriage were rarely the same as the actual practice, which in everyday life was based on the personalities of the spouses and how much hostility or affection they felt for each other. Not all wives were dominated by their husbands [...]. (4)

Whatever the law dictated, the husband and wife in a marriage were still individuals with their own opinions that may not have concurred with the ideals that the Common Law reflected. Furthermore, an important point to take into consideration are the differences between social classes of that era. Perkin states that “experience of marriage varied enormously according to social status [...]” (4). Marriages’ practicalities differed depending on the wife and husband’s social status and class. Unlike middle-class women, lower-class women were obliged to participate in work life and in bringing food to the table as were their husbands, for instance, by working in a factory. According to Perkin “it was middle-class wives who were most affected by the laws of marriage, and who most reacted both for and against them” (7). As middle-class families were wealthier and had a higher economical standing as opposed to working-class families, they were, consequently, more involved with society’s legislative and political structures. Thus, when examining the nineteenth-century marital affairs, it should be noted that the conditions were not the same in every social class or even in every family of that particular class.

The ideals and values that arguably prevailed in most middle-class families concerning women and their position in the family and society dictated that the wife and husband ought to occupy different spheres. It was argued that

each sex was to have its distinct sphere of influence: woman's superior morality was to match man's superior reasoning and business ability. Woman's mission was not to be confused with man's. A woman could not count on the rewards afforded a man: woman's work was the work of the spirit; her reward was spiritual, not financial.

(Burstyn, 31)

The separate spheres in families and in society were validated by arguing that women and men had different natural inclinations, and those of women were more suited to be applied in the home rather than in business life. It was described that

man was the 'architect'; woman 'the soul of the house'. The offensive and even aggressive role of the man, of '... the doer, the creator, the discoverer ...' is justified by his intellectual capacity for creation, invention and synthesis, of which the woman, who can only exercise her judgement on details and insignificant things, is deprived.

(Basch, 5)

It was believed that woman and man were granted different intellectual capacities and abilities, and man's capacity for reasoning, inventing, and creating was superior, whereas the woman excelled in morality and 'insignificant' details around the home. Restricting the woman in this particular sphere of action was one of the key determinants in the structures of oppression and subjugation. Deviating from that model would have been considered decadent and unfeminine. In practice, this could have meant the woman pursuing more intellectual occupations, such as an author or a scholar.

Furthermore, the woman was characterised as "weak and passive, because she has less bodily strengths than man; and [...] she was formed to please and to be subject to him; and that it is her duty to render herself *agreeable* to her master – this being the grand end of her existence" (Wollstonecraft, 78). Being a proto-feminist figure herself, Wollstonecraft's statement functions more as criticism than an objective report of the conditions. Nevertheless, her statement can be considered to reflect the cultural environment. Conforming to these ideals was more or less a necessity for the woman, in order to secure her economic stability. Although a 'feme sole' had rights to her own property, it was more difficult for a woman to provide for herself than it was for a man, due to attitudes that prevailed in the working world. It was believed that physical qualities conformed with mental and intellectual capabilities and capacities. Consequently, it was argued that women's reproductive processes amounted them with less energy than men, therefore,

women could not and should not pursue higher education or the work of the professions. Exercise of the vote would be even worse. (Henry Maudsley qtd. in *Feminism, Marriage, and the Law in Victorian England*, 6)

This argument on the different qualities of the biology of the sexes was used to validate the subjugation of the so called 'weaker sex'. Instead of allowing women similar education and professions as men, the duties appointed to women were childcare, directing or performing household duties such as cooking and cleaning, while "men earned the money to purchase the goods needed by their households and debated and decided matters of public concern" (Shanley, 5). Thus, women's duties were restricted within the confines of the home, while men could perform duties outside the home, indicating that women's capabilities were considered different from and inferior to those of men.

As women were considered unsuitable to occupy similar spheres as men, education offered to women differed from that of men, as well, or they were offered no education whatsoever. It was believed that men and women should be given an education or training that complemented their duties. Consequently, it was argued that

learning interfered with the functioning of intuition because it trained women to reason. A learned woman, therefore, lost the very essence of her femininity. As marriage was a woman's vocation, a girl's training had to enhance not diminish her femininity. (Burstyn, 37)

Thus, women were trained to fulfil their proper roles and directed towards their respective spheres from a very young age, rendering it increasingly difficult for them to pursue a more independent life.

As the society became increasingly industrialised and families accumulated more wealth,

a new family structure gradually emerged for the middle classes wherein wives became onlookers and sympathisers. A new ideal of womanhood began to gain hold. Once women were divorced from work by their physical confinement and by their lack of training, it was but a step to believe they were both weaker and purer than men. Men were prepared to be chivalrous to women when they had no rights of their own and no remedies against men's mistreatment. (Burstyn, 31)

Industrialisation bolstered the subjugation of women, as middle-class families' economical standing improved and women could remain home instead of working. This created a new role for women,

‘the angel in the house’, a woman concerned only of the well-being of her family, a figure of selflessness and purity. This concept and ideal of femininity got foothold, and women’s respective sphere and role as ‘the weaker sex’ began to take shape and crystallise.

Although the practicalities of a nineteenth-century marriage often differed from how the Common Law represented marriage, legislation still had imminent effects on how marriage functioned in the Victorian era. One of the notable effects was how brutality and violence in marriage was considered acceptable to some extent and women could not in every case resort to the law to attain protection from their husband. Perkin presents a case concerning marital brutality, in order to demonstrate how women were unprotected from violence by the law. The case is that of

Caroline Norton [...] who married into the aristocracy in 1827. She had no fortune of her own. Her husband, the Hon. George Norton [...] was jealous, vindictive, and liable to beat her [...]. After nine years of unhappy marriage, separations, and reunifications Mr Norton took away their three small sons and thereafter refused to allow his wife to see them or know their whereabouts. [...] He also took possession of all her personal effects, which were legally his property [...]. She refused to return to her husband again, and found herself with none of the protection that marriage was supposed to afford her, yet with all the disabilities that the law imposed on separated married women. (26)

Caroline Norton’s case portrays how married women, in case of marital brutality, did not have good chances of escaping. They could either separate from their husband and face whatever restrictions and disadvantages the law imposed upon them, such as those concerning her property, or remain married to their husband, live in the same house and, in the worst case, risk their lives and health. It was argued that “if [...] a woman was cursed with an unworthy husband, then it was simply her duty [...] to “suffer and be still”” (James A. Hammerton, 280). As marriage was a woman’s vocation, it also became her duty to remain with her husband, however unfair the marriage was.

Another case concerning marital brutality describes how

in 1840, a certain Cochran, summoned before the courts for imprisoning his wife, was upheld by the judge, who cited Bacon: ‘He may beat her, but not in a violent or cruel manner ... and may, if he think fit, confine her, but he must not ... imprison her’. (Basch, 17)

Excessive violence may not have been considered acceptable, but the quotation referred to by the judge only vaguely describes what exactly was considered excessive. Hammerton describes how “more mundane cruelty charges, which were more common and required more detailed judicial scrutiny, reveal problems arising from the exercise of authority in marriage [...]” (276). Violence and ‘minor’ mistreatments in Victorian marital life were so common that they were considered mundane. This illustrates how patriarchal structures – more accurately, the will to preserve the nation and uphold established notions of femininity and masculinity –functioned to subjugate women both on a legislative level and in practice. Marital brutality is also depicted in *Wuthering Heights* in Isabella and Heathcliff’s marriage. Isabella is held captive in the house of Wuthering Heights but manages to make an escape prompted by an act of violence.

Although the individuals had different opinions on what kind of behaviour was to be considered acceptable in a marriage,

public opinion and actual behaviour accepted it for what it was, an institution of immense social convenience which the overwhelming majority found indispensable but which in some cases, because of the inequities of the law and the one-sidedness of the bargain, exploited and brutalised the wife and condoned the tyranny of the husband. [...] In general, most people thought there was not much wrong with the marriage bargain if both parties stuck to their agreements, which might include some very permissive behaviour. (Perkin, 30–31)

Questionable and deplorable practices and legislative clauses accepting those acts were overlooked. This was arguably a result of the prevailing attitudes, but also due to the fact that individuals still interpreted and applied the laws in a way that benefitted them most and the laws were not always applied as such.

While marriage posed a threat of mistreatment for women, remaining unmarried was an undesirable position, as well. As marriage was considered the vocation of women and the home was considered their proper sphere, remaining unmarried implied that the woman had failed in attaining her proper vocation. Unmarried women were deemed by the public “as social failures, and treated with alternating pity and contempt” (Perkin, 226). Not only were unmarried women met with unfavourable attitudes but securing their livelihood as single women was a challenge, as well, as

[t]he plight of the woman who did not marry, who in the parlance of the age was “left on the shelf,” could be economically as well as socially disastrous. [...] Legal rules, social practices, and economic structures all worked together to induce a woman to

marry, and then insured that once married she would be dependent upon and obedient to her husband. (Shanley, 9–10)

Although legislation favoured the single woman, economic independence was still difficult to attain, and she was faced with pressures to marry. Basch argued similarly that the Victorian woman “can only justify her presence on earth by dedicating herself to others; through deliberate self-effacement, duty and sacrifice she will discover the identity and *raison d'être* of which, by herself, she is deprived” (5). In other words, without marriage or family life for that matter, the nineteenth-century woman was considered purposeless. *Wuthering Heights* discusses this issue of woman’s purpose in society and emancipation from that sole purpose of attaining and maintaining marriage and family life. In *Wuthering Heights*, the female characters are forced or coerced into unfulfilling marriages and, consequently, rebel against these conditions in one way or another.

2.3. Criticism on the Nineteenth-Century Marriage

Although legislation and ideals assumed women were inferior to men and that subjugating them would be for their own good, criticism toward these values was nevertheless present in the public discussion and increased near the end of the nineteenth century. One active opponent of the prevailing marriage conventions was John Stuart Mill, who openly criticised the subjugation of women in marriage. He argued that

the principle which regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes – the legal subordination of one sex to the other – is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and [...] it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting no power or privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other. (3)

Firstly, Mill overtly stated that the inequality that prevailed in marriage was unjustified, and secondly, that women’s inferior position in the society and family hindered the society from developing. Mill also made a strong statement on the affair where he juxtaposed the married woman to a slave arguing that “there remain no legal slaves, except the mistress of every house” (80). While slavery was no longer legally sanctioned, the married woman – if all the laws concerning marriage were to be applied in practice – suffered from nearly similar legal conditions as a slave.

Mill concluded that the male authority in marriage and in society is irrationally justified and is upheld in how children are brought up, describing,

[t]hink what it is to a boy, to grow up to manhood in the belief that without any merit or any exertion of his own, though he may be the most frivolous and empty or the most ignorant and stolid of mankind, by the mere fact of being born a male he is by right the superior of all and everyone of an entire half of the human race [...]. (80)

According to Mill, boys grew up with the idea that a right to authority was inherent to them, whether they exerted any active efforts to attain authority. This evidently was not the case with every Victorian era man, as Mill himself questioned this tradition. While boys were brought up to believe they were inherently superior to women, girls were trained into submission. Mill stated that “all women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men; not self-will, and government by self-control, but submission, and yielding to the control of others” (16). Thus, women were trained into the role of a subjugated wife and grew up with the idea that they were naturally inferior to men and that they ought to obey their wishes.

Alongside Mill, other Victorian era feminists attempted to “expose the falsity of the idealization of marriage and to show how repressive marriage and family life could be for women” (Shanley, 4). As in today’s society, not all people are thoroughly acquainted with legislative clauses or fully aware of oppressive attitudes that prevail, similarly, the Victorians may not have acknowledged the extent of the inequities that women faced. Cases, such as the Nortons’ trials,

provided dramatic lessons in the laws governing marriage to the English reader public. They also gave impetus to the first organized feminist effort to challenge the laws governing marriage. (Shanley, 23)

The Nortons’ case brought into public knowledge the unjustness of the laws concerning marriage and the unfairness with which some women were treated in marriage. In addition to political influencing and public discussion, the Victorian marriage was also criticised on a more fictitious level, as “cynicism and dislike of domesticity were flourishing in the 1830s, bolstered by the novels of the day” (Perkin, 55). These novels assuredly included works from the Gothic genre, and its subgenre, the Female Gothic, both of which dealt with hidden and controversial issues. One example of a novel included in the Female Gothic genre is *Wuthering Heights*. While novels can reflect the prevailing ideals, it can also affect them.

Woman's inferior position in marriage and in society was actively challenged near the end of the nineteenth century and "the long and torturous road to the recognition of women's rights threaded through hazards of legal disability and social habit" (Margaretta Grey qtd. in *Victorian Culture and Society*, 190). Although laws are not in every case applied in practice, values and attitudes functioned with them to ensure women's subjugation. Victorian era feminists set in motion the social movements concerning women's rights and it is argued that "no movement had more profound social implications than the gradual emancipation of the weaker sex" (Eugene C. Black, 190). Not only were practicalities of women's life affected – from education to work life and participating in politics – but society was also affected on a more abstract level and attitudes and values started to change, although extremely slowly. These injustices and inequalities in legislation and in attitudes are portrayed in *Wuthering Heights* both covertly through the subverted narrative structure, and by overtly describing events concurring with the realities of a nineteenth-century society.

3. The Monster, the Angel and the Madwoman

Traditional female archetypes from male dictated literary tradition are employed in *Wuthering Heights* in an ironical or subverted manner. The two most common female archetypes are at opposing polar ends – the female monster and the angel in the house. It can be claimed that as these to archetypes clash or overlap in one female character, they are often presented as ‘madwomen’, whose selves have become fragmented as they are torn between fulfilling their roles as these two polar opposites. The characteristics that define these archetypes are described in this chapter.

3.1. The Female Monster

Before describing the archetypes, it is essential to define what an archetype is and whether the three literary figures described in this chapter qualify as archetypes. According to Jane Garry and Hasan El-Shamy “an archetype is a pattern of primary significance with deep psychic resonance that also occurs in various literary genres” (xv). It should be noted that the ‘patterns of primary significance’ are strongly linked to a cultural and historical context, which is why the discussion of the archetypes should be relatively strictly limited to nineteenth-century England where the *Wuthering Heights* was produced. Furthermore, it is stated that “the idea of the archetype is linked with Jung’s concept of the collective unconscious, in which dwell “archaic or [...] primordial types, that is with universal images that have existed since the remotest times”” (Garry & El-Shamy, xvi). It is dubious to claim that certain literary images are universal and have existed from the remotest times as those images are always closely related to the cultural environment where they were created and employed, and different cultures and their attitudes and ideals may vary drastically. Nonetheless, the archetypes reflect different psychological structures which are universal to all cultures, but these structures manifest themselves in different guises. Thus, like a culture and its images and symbols, the archetypes’ outward aspect is dynamic and shifts along time.

The archetypal female monster is not a novel phenomenon and stems already from the description of monstrous Greek goddesses such as Medusa, Scylla, or Charybdis. However, it should be noted that these figures may not have necessarily been intended as monstrous, but were, nevertheless, interpreted in such manner later. For instance, these figures of Greek mythology have been

employed in John Milton's poetry in the seventeenth century. In *Paradise Lost* Milton gives an account of the archetype in question:

Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
The one seemed a woman to the waist, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
Voluminous and vast – a serpent armed
With mortal sting; about her middle round
A cry of hell hounds never ceasing barked
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still barked and howled
Within unseen.
Far less abhorred than these
Vexed Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore;
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, called
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon
Eclipses their charms [...]. (190)

The essential characteristics that make the archetype monstrous are connotations to the devil, making her seem satanic or diabolical. For instance, one female monster in this fragment of the poem is described to resemble a snake, as the lower half of her body is described as scaly. In Christian tradition a snake symbolises the devil – this symbolism stems from the Bible and the narrative of how the devil disguised itself as a snake. Furthermore, the 'hell hounds' that surround one of the female monsters, and descriptions of witchcraft connect the archetype with religious imagery of diabolical qualities.

Another infamous female monster documented and repeated in Judeo-Christian literary tradition is Lilith:

Created not from Adam's rib but, like him, from the dust, Lilith was Adam's first wife, according to apocryphal Jewish lore. Because she considered herself his equal, she objected to lying beneath him, so that when he tried to force her submission, she became enraged and, speaking the Ineffable Name, flew away to the edge of the Red Sea to reside with demons. Threatened by God's angelic emissaries, told that she must return or daily lose a hundred of her demon children to death, Lilith preferred punishment to patriarchal marriage, and she took her revenge against both God and Adam by injuring babies – especially male babies, who were traditionally thought to be more vulnerable to her attacks. (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 35)

As in Milton's poetry, monstrous qualities in Lilith are strongly linked to the devil. As she opposes to being submitted beneath Adam, both physically and symbolically, she is banished from the paradise similarly to the fallen angel, otherwise known as the devil. In addition to these female monsters, there exist the mythic and rebellious daughters of Danaus who "killed their husbands on their wedding night" (Mary R. Lefkowitz, 186). The monstrosity they exhibit stems from their violence, which can also be detected in Lilith, who is described to injure male babies. Accordingly, some of the monstrous or decadent qualities portrayed in Catherine Earnshaw and Catherine Linton in *Wuthering Heights* are diabolical or devilish in nature, such as descriptions of witchcraft.

Not only were religious tones associated with female monsters, but assertiveness or autonomy were considered monstrous qualities in women, as well. For instance, a character in Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel, *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), describes how a woman's

place is at man's side. Her office, that of the sympathizer; the unreserved, unquestioning believer [...] All the separate action of woman is, and ever has been, and always shall be, false, foolish, vain, destructive of her own best and holiest qualities, void of every good effect, and productive of intolerable mischiefs! Man is a wretch without woman; but woman is a monster – and, thank Heaven, an almost impossible and hitherto imaginary monster – without man as her acknowledged principal! (179)

The focus in this description is how a woman without a man – an autonomous woman – is a hideous monster. Only by attaching herself to a man and by always working for his benefit does a woman fulfil her proper role and rid herself of qualities of monstrosity. All other pursuits apart from marriage and family life a woman may have are described useless and 'vain'.

Religious tradition, that was reflected in literature concerning female monsters, did not stop at merely portraying female monsters but it imagined destroying and killing them, as in Rider Haggard's, *She* (1883), where "three male explorers come upon a matriarchal society ruled by the apparently omnipotent She-who-must-be-obeyed, a society whose subjugated men periodically rise up in righteous revolution and kill the monstrous regiment of women who rule them [...]" (*No Man's Land*, 23). This reflects the violence and aggression with which female authority and assertiveness was met with and how detestable it was considered. This, interestingly, illustrates the hypocrisy and irony of the Victorian society, as at that time England was ruled by a matriarch.

3.2. The Angel in the House

On the other end of the spectrum, opposite the female monster, is the pure and amiable angel. Images of angelic women have undoubtedly existed nearly as long as images of female monsters. However, the more solid and established term or concept of 'the angel in the house' is considered to stem from Milton's poetry, as well. In the poem 'Methought I saw my late espoused saint', the angelic archetype is described:

Methought I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from Death by force, though pale and faint.
Mine, as whom washed from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the old Law did save,
And such as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind.
Her face was veiled; yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined
So clear as in no face with more delight.
But O as to embrace me she inclined,
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night. (108)

The characteristics which came to resemble the angel in the house are physical weakness, frailness, and even sickliness, which are drawn from the narrator describing his late wife as a ‘pale and faint’ ghost. Other connotations linked to the archetype are purity, both in a literal and physical manner and in a mental or spiritual manner. The narrator’s wife is described as clad in white garments and from her veiled face glows ‘sweetness’ and ‘goodness’.

This fragment of seventeenth-century poetry lived on in the language of patriarchal literature as, according to Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, “from the eighteenth century on, conduct books for ladies proliferated, enjoining young girls to submissiveness, modesty, selflessness; reminding all women that they should be angelic” (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 23). While literature is a reflection of the context where it is produced, it can also affect ideals and values. The effects are evident as, for instance, “John Ruskin affirmed in 1865 that the woman’s “power is not for rule, not for battle, and her intellect is not invention or creation, but for sweet orderings” of domesticity” (qtd. in *The Madwoman in the Attic*, 24). Women were considered unfit for duties beyond the domestic sphere, where she comfortably existed in relation to others, not as an entity of her own. This archetype, or the ideal image of a Victorian woman, was stretched as far as trying to validate it scientifically, when ideas of Darwinism first emerged. Some Darwinists thus proclaimed women as inferior, arguing that

the brain responded to the operation of the reproductive organs [...]. By nature, then, woman was constituted to be “the helpmate and companion of a man”; her innate qualities of mind were formed to make her man’s complement rather than his equal. Among these qualities [...] were the cheerfulness, vivacity, and powers of endurance that made woman capable “not only of bearing her own share of ills, but helping to bear those of others”. (*The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830-1980*, 122–123)

According to this pseudo-scientific description, a woman’s reproductive organs were responsible for naturally inclining women into self-sacrificial duties, such as complementing and helping her male companion.

These oppressive stereotypes have inspired critics and commentators to discuss the characteristics of the essentially problematic and oppressive image of a female character as ‘the angel’. Authors have attempted to encapsulate the essence of this archetype. For instance, Richard Sewall writes a description of the angel in the house and how she

leads a life of almost pure contemplation ... in considerable isolation on a country estate ... a life without external events – a life whose story cannot be told as there is no story. Her existence is not useless. On the contrary ... she shines like a beacon in a dark world, like a motionless lighthouse by which others, the travellers whose lives do have a story, can set their course. When those involved in feeling and action turn to her in their need, they are never dismissed without advice and consolation. She is an ideal, a model of selflessness and of purity of heart. (qtd. in *The Madwoman in the Attic*, 22)

Sewall mostly draws attention to how the angel in the house lacks function and significance in literary tradition, and how she exists not for herself, but for the pleasure and convenience of others. The female character in literature would, thus, exist only in relation to others – as a daughter, wife, or a mother. In addition to Sewall, Virginia Woolf describes the archetype in a similar manner, stating,

[s]he was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed herself daily. If there was chicken, she took the leg; if there was a draught she sat in it – in short she was so constituted that she never had a mind or a wish of her own, but preferred to sympathize always with the minds and wishes of others. Above all – I need not say it – she was pure. Her purity was supposed to be her chief beauty – her blushes, her great grace. (“Professions for Women.” *Collected Essays*, 285)

As did Sewall, Woolf notes the features of selflessness and sacrifice that characterise the archetype. Furthermore, she focuses on the elements of purity and beauty. As the archetype of the female monster, the idealistic image of a Victorian era woman also has a religious undertone, but as opposed to associations with the devil, it is associated with an angel. Minimising the elements and qualities of sexuality and emphasising purity is characteristic to the Victorian culture, where sexuality was a discreet matter that should rarely, if ever, be mentioned and discussed overtly.

Emily Brontë, along with many other female authors of her time, has taken this image of a frail and passive woman and subverted its meaning. Where male authors considered ‘the angel’ to be amiable and the ideal that women ought to pursue, Brontë portrays her as oppressed and lacking a will of her own. Brontë has been described as Milton’s “rebellious child, radically revising (and even reversing) the terms of his mythic narrative” (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 252). Thus, it can

be argued that Milton's poetry affected Emily Brontë's writing and the formation of the archetypal, but subverted, female characters in *Wuthering Heights*. This act of subversion is significant as

before we women can write [...] we must "kill" the "angel in the house." [...] And similarly, all women writers must kill the angel's necessary opposite and double, the "monster" in the house, whose Medusa-face also kills female creativity. (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 17)

Killing the two literary images in question means associating new meanings and interpretations to them. Instead of seeing autonomous female characters as monstrous, they can be portrayed as brave and rebellious heroines, and instead of considering the functionless, self-sacrificial and passive angel as the embodiment of femininity, she can also be portrayed as oppressed and stifled.

Religious tones are the most prevalent qualities in the descriptions of both the female monster and the angel. The elements or qualities that define them the most are either sanctity or profaneness, divinity or wickedness. The angel is an unselfish and self-sacrificing pure creature, wholly dependent on other people in order to justify her existence. Opposingly, the female monster is an assertive, ugly, and autonomous being, doomed to live in constant punishment. As these religious tones can be perceived to prevail in English literature before and during the Victorian era, so are they included in Emily Brontë's novel *Wuthering Heights*.

3.3. The Madwoman

It can be claimed that when these two archetypes exist in the same female character – most often a 'female monster' in the guise of 'the angel' – the female character becomes fragmented and spirals into a condition that can be called 'madness', in the lack of a better and more specific term. This pattern repeats itself in Victorian era female literature,

a distinctively female literary tradition, a tradition that had been approached and appreciated by many woman readers and writers but which no one had yet defined in its entirety. Images of enclosure and escape, fantasies in which maddened doubles functioned as asocial surrogates for docile selves, metaphors of physical discomfort manifested in frozen landscapes and fiery interiors – such patterns recurred throughout this tradition [...]. (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, xi)

When an assertive or creative female character is stifled and forced into the position of a self-sacrificing angel with no story of her own, the female character's self fragments and through the medium of a mad double she revolts against the unfit role imposed on her. Nonetheless, this archetype is not quite as gender specific as Gilbert and Gubar assume, but rather the archetype resembles aspects of personality common to all. However, this discussion is, first and foremost, linked to the female characters of *Wuthering Heights* which is why the focus is aimed specifically on 'madwomen'.

Accordingly, Phyllis Chesler claims "in her important study *Women and Madness* (1972), [...] that the women confined to American mental institutions are failed but heroic rebels against the constraints of narrow femininity [...]" (qtd. in *The Female Malady*, 4). This is an explanation given to the upsurge of seeming mental illness in women during the nineteenth century and the increased number of female inmates in mental institutions. The narrow constraints of femininity would, here, refer to the concept of the angel in the house, that especially Victorian era women were assumed to represent. However, Elaine Showalter argues that "such claims [...] come dangerously close to romanticizing and endorsing madness as a desirable form of rebellion rather than seeing it as the desperate communication of the powerless" (*The Female Malady*, 5). Instead of considering madness heroic or rebellious in itself, the madwoman can be perceived as a rebellious heroine, who lacks any other form of agency or medium of revolt.

Rosemary Jackson argues that this type of fragmentation of the character's self, or 'dualism', is characteristic to nineteenth-century Gothic literature, which signifies a longing for 'otherness' or "to be re-united with a lost centre of personality" (108). Consequently, the madwoman can be argued to be an archetype distinctive to nineteenth-century literature, although fragmentation of self is not limited to female character only. Nonetheless, the concept of dualism evidently appealed to authors of the Female Gothic genre, and "it makes sense that doubleness – a trope figuring binaries not as opposed but as coexisting would appeal to feminists seeking to describe women's potentially subversive writing practice" (Robyn R. Warhol, 858). Including a character with a 'split-personality' in the story would complement and support the subverted narrative structure that was typical to nineteenth-century female authors' novels. Another work of the Female Gothic, congruent with this tradition, is, for instance, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847); it can be argued that in *Jane Eyre* the female protagonist, Jane, has a maddened double, Bertha Mason who is confined and trapped in the attic of the estate where Jane herself works as a governess. In addition to Romantic and post-Romantic literature, dualism or fragmentation of self and "numerous versions of this complicated archetypal figure are found in dreams, mythologies, rituals of primitive peoples,

ancient and medieval alchemists' narratives, folklore, and literature [...]” (Peternel, 453). This would further establish the woman with a maddened double as an archetypal figure.

In narratives of dualism or maddened doubles, “[f]requently, the mirror is employed as a motif or device to introduce a double, or *Döppelgänger* effect: the reflection in the glass is the subject’s other [...]” (Jackson, 45). Similarly, in *Wuthering Heights* as Catherine Earnshaw’s fragmentation initialises itself properly and ultimately, she does not recognise her own reflection and deems it to be someone else. Distinctive to this archetype is that “[m]ost versions of the double, for example, terminate with the madness, suicide, or death of the divided subject: ‘self’ cannot be united with ‘other’ without ceasing to be” (Jackson, 91). Similarly, Catherine dies riddled with presumed depression and fragmentation of self, and she is both literally and symbolically sent back to the moors where she longed to be once more, where her fragmented self is once again united.

These three archetypes commonly assigned to female characters in male dictated literature are employed in criticism of the literary tradition. *Wuthering Heights* can be claimed to criticise this tradition by using these three archetypes in a subverted manner, assigning new meanings and representations to them.

4. The Subverted Narrative Structure

The narrative structure in *Wuthering Heights* is constructed of two coexisting narrative levels and the element of subversion is largely created with symbolism of opposing forces and narrative voices with opposing attitudes. Brontë employs the archetypal female figures ‘the angel in the house’, ‘the female monster’, and ‘the madwoman’ and the familiar concepts or symbols of heaven and hell but subverts their original meanings. Where ‘the angel in the house’ is traditionally viewed as an amiable and idealistic female character, here she can be seen as the example of an oppressed woman lacking a will of her own. Similarly, ‘the monster’ can be interpreted to represent activeness, energy, and intellect, where traditionally the female monster was a hideous and undesirable character. Lastly, as opposed perceiving madness in the female character as mental pathology, it can be seen as a last resort to rebellion. Moreover, representations and symbolism are assigned to the two houses central to the novel’s narrative; *Wuthering Heights* can be claimed to represent rebellion, mobility, and energy, while *Thrushcross Grange* represents domesticity, oppression, and immobility.

Merja Makinen argues that each genre “is broad enough church to harbour a number of contending sub-genres, some of which are subversive and self-critical” (6). A subversive narrative structure not only criticises a traditional and rigid literary genre, but also the societal structures that were and are often represented in literary imagination. This chapter discusses in detail how the two coexisting narratives present themselves in the novel and what is their function.

4.1. Defining the Narrative Technique

Before defining the narrative technique and discussing it, it is important to clearly state the different terms used to refer to the narrative technique and structure. *Wuthering Heights* has a subverted narrative structure that is based on a *heretic* narrative technique and “the word, heretic, comes from the Greek *hairesitikos* meaning “able to choose” [...]” (Patricia E. Johnson, 618). This means that the reader can choose which of the two narrative levels they will follow and agree with if they are able to recognise the existence of both. The two coexisting narratives function as a basis for the subverted narrative structure; one symbol can have two different interpretations depending on the

narrative level or, in other words, be subverted. The emphasis is on the element of subversion, and the heretic narrative technique is the medium through which subversion can be implemented.

During the early nineteenth century there occurred an upsurge of a subgenre of Gothic literature, called the 'Female Gothic' that is claimed to have attacked society's patriarchal structures. Carol M. Davison argues that the Gothic was often used to reveal hidden socio-political realities that manifested themselves as fragmentation of self or unnatural 'perversions', and as a result, "[t]he predominant image that emerged from these texts is of women imprisoned, circumscribed sexually, intellectually and legally, a status that actually reflected women's contemporary socio-political reality" (128–129). The Female Gothic concentrated on the injustices that Victorian era women faced in their lives, especially in matters of courtship and marriage. The literary works of this genre subverted symbols' and archetypes' traditional representations. Andrew Smith and William Hughes argue "what might be monstrous to the male literary imagination, may represent a figure of emancipation for women writers" (13). For instance, the archetype of the female monster was, plainly, a monstrous woman for the male dictated literary tradition while some female authors perceived her virtuous. In addition to Emily Brontë, other female authors that have been categorised to represent this subgenre are, for instance, Mary Shelley, whose writings initiated the

alternative 'tradition, of 'female Gothic' [...]. Charlotte [...] Brontë, Elizabeth Gaskell, Christina Rossetti, Isak Dinesen, Carson McCullers, Sylvia Plath, Angela Carter, all of whom have all employed the fantastic to subvert *patriarchal* society – the symbolic order of modern culture. (Jackson, 103–104)

Since so many authors are included in this genre, it can be claimed to have had societal significance and that it forms a genre of its own. What characterises this particular genre is how "within the main, realistic text, there exists another non-realistic one, camouflaged and concealed, but constantly present (Jackson, 124). Like other works that are included in this genre, the *Wuthering Heights* also contains two different narratives, the other more grounded in the real world or 'bourgeois', and the other symbolic and fantastic in nature, discussing abstract issues rather than merely recapitulating life's events. This kind of narrative technique can be characterised as *heretic* which emphasises the ability to choose between two narratives. The choice between two narrative levels is significant in that there existed in literary culture a so-called 'double bind' which "means that the woman writer is "forced either to stress her separation from male literary tradition or to pursue her resemblance to it"" (Johnson, 622). With the means of a heretic narrative, the female author refuses to do either. Therefore, the act of writing two coexisting narratives can be in itself criticism toward the male-dictated literary tradition, as it rejects the traditional genre's

representations and renews it, by altering the narrative structure. Writing two coexisting narratives or including descriptions of duality can be considered a refusal to be categorised into pre-existing genres or structures or to settle into either end of a binary spectrum, but rather remaining between them (Johnson, 622; Warhol, 857). Instead of writing something similar to what has been written before or something distinctly feminist or feminine, the Victorian female author rebels against these narrow structures and refuses to be categorised into either option. Not only does the heretic narrative technique refuse categorisation, but it also criticises the binary oppositions that prevailed in the society, such as ‘femininity’ and ‘masculinity’. Jackson argues that subversive narratives “try to set up possibilities for radical cultural transformation [...]” (91). It can be argued that *Wuthering Heights* attempts this, also, with the subverted structure and heretic technique that the novel employs. Critics widely agree that the subverted narrative structure is not merely for literary aesthetics’ sake, but to affect society’s structures or shed light on the inequities that prevail.

Gilbert and Gubar also have a name for this particular method, and call it

an evidentiary narrative technique, a romantic story-telling method that emphasizes the ironic disjunctions between different perspectives on the same events as well as the ironic tensions that inhere in the relationship between surface drama and concealed authorial intention. (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 249)

By including multiple narrative voices which fall into either of the two narratives provided, the author can covertly discuss issues that were not acceptable to openly criticise during the nineteenth century. Therefore, a method that is commonly found in the literary genre of the so-called ‘Female Gothic’ was irony and parody. This way the novel’s structure could resemble that of a traditional Romantic novel, while deviating from that tradition, although covertly. In creating these two coexisting narratives, the female author “[...] may have attempted to transcend their anxiety of authorship by revising male genres, using them to record their own dreams and their own stories in disguise” (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 73). The anxiety to which the authors are referring to is that of having mostly ‘fathers of literature’ and not enough ‘mothers’. However, as Gilbert and Gubar claim that the Victorian female authors were riddled with anxiety when attempting to create uniquely female literature, it negates the notion of them employing such narrative structures and literary methods wilfully, but rather it seems they were forced to do so. The cultural environment where the Victorian era female authors were brought up inevitably affected their writing, as Showalter argues that “the training of Victorian girls in repression, concealment, and self-censorship was deeply inhibiting, especially for those who wanted to write” (*A Literature of their Own*, 25). Thus, the effects of the repressive cultural environment would also indicate that in some

cases the female authors were, in fact, driven to write novels of the aforementioned kind in order to deviate from traditional male dictated genres.

Another problematic quality that repeats itself in Gilbert and Gubar's argumentation is the fixation on authorial intention. Although *Wuthering Heights* evidently portrays proto-feminist qualities characteristic to the era where it was written, it is nevertheless ungrounded to claim that the author consciously intended those qualities to be presented, as, according to Inga-Stina Ewbank, Emily Brontë made no statement on feminist issues, which is why her writings should stand "self-contained and self-explained [...]" (89). In other words, critique on the literary work should stem from content inside the work itself.

The notion of subversion in literature divides the opinions of different commentators. Some commentators have attempted to encapsulate the method, for instance, Leo Strauss claims that "the writer initiates the subversive act, concealing "obtrusively enigmatic features" [...] in plain sight so as to pass along potentially radical ideas to a select group of readers who can see "between the lines" [...]" (Womack & Decker, xi). Similarly to Gilbert and Gubar, Strauss claims that a writer consciously conceals the unacceptable content. Some critics, however, disagree with the notion of authorial intention. Instead, Thomas Moser discusses the concept of a novel's 'true subject' and describes how

A novel's true subject is the one that, regardless of the novelist's conscious intention, actually informs the work, the one that elicits the most highly energized writing. To put it another way, a novelist has found the true subject of his book when he dramatizes the truth he cannot escape rather than the illusion he longs to make true [...]. (183)

Therefore, the question according to Moser is not whether the author intended the novel to portray the issues it does but rather what elements are the most prevalent or 'energised' in writing, whatever the author's intentions. In addition to Moser, "Roland Barthes and Tony Bennett [...] minimize the role of the writer and highlight the subversive nature of the text itself, particularly when engaged by an active reader" (Womack & Decker, xii). The significance and meaning of a literary work can stem from an active reader, who exerts effort in analysing the text.

Many critics stumble in their arguments as they valorize either one of the two narratives in a subverted narrative form. Patricia E. Johnson states that

the relationship between the two sides in Brontë's narratives and the critical tendency to privilege one side over the other are perennial interpretive problems in Brontë criticism. [...] The temptation, in other words, is to praise one side of the narrative as truth and to discard the other as cover story or, less favourably, undiscarded hindrance to truth. (618)

Many critics see one or the other narrative level as more important and significant, when in reality, claiming that the author has intended it so employs the notion of authorial intention, which is inherently problematic as we cannot speculate on the author's thoughts if they have not themselves commented on their work. Moreover, the piece of literature exists not only as how the author intended it but also as how the reader interprets it.

Instead of seeing only one or the other narrative level as criticism and more significant, the simple act of writing two coexisting narratives can be perceived as criticism, as using a subverted narrative structure can be perceived as a Victorian female author's refusal to be categorised. According to Johnson, the authoress does not emphasise her resemblance to or separation from the canon, but rather "[s]he is left oscillating between the two sides of her narrative in that gap which, however small, provides her freedom" (629). Writing a hidden narrative with controversial content is not necessarily the intended means of criticism, but rather refusing to choose from existing categories of literary tradition. However, it should be noted that having to choose whether to write unique literature or literature that resembles the canon is arguably an issue all authors must face at some point of their career. Nonetheless, it can be argued that this issue is emphasised when it comes to an oppressed and silenced group of people attempting to make their voice heard.

4.2. Subverted Narrative in *Wuthering Heights*

Gilbert and Gubar argue that Emily Brontë willingly "[...] produced literary works that are in some sense palimpsestic, works whose surface designs conceal or obscure deeper, less accessible (and less socially acceptable) levels of meaning" (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 73). It certainly can be agreed on that the novel is palimpsestic in the sense that there are two different narratives overlapping each other. However, as established before, to discuss authorial intention or consider it a central determinant is misguided. One of the main elements that creates the subversion in *Wuthering Heights* are the different narrative voices in the novel that recapitulate the same events but review them from different perspectives. It is argued that

built into Emily Brontë's narrative technique, then, is a particularly keen awareness that, in Joseph Conrad's words, 'there is a quality in events which is apprehended differently by different minds or even by the same mind at different times'. Perhaps the most important aspect of this awareness is that throughout the progress of the story it enables her to hold in suspension opposite moral attitudes. (Ewbank, 121)

The citation by Joseph Conrad indicates that the split narrative is founded in and stems from the different narrative voices that exist in the novel. Those voices can either be two different persons or the same person somehow altered later during the story line. The different characters and their own narrative voices represent different attitudes and morals, and by portraying both sides of the ethical dilemma the author escapes having to take responsibility in emphasising or favouring either side of the coin and the responsibility of agreeing with one or the other narrative is left completely on the reader, while the author herself oscillates between the two narratives. In addition to having different narrators represent different attitudes, the same fictional character can have two narrative voices. According to Warhol, the narration in *Wuthering Heights* is not told completely in retrospect and as the story is being told at different points of the continuum of the story, the 'narrating' and 'experiencing' selves develop throughout the story, creating differing and altering narrative voices in one character (870). Consequently, as a character shifts from an experiencer to a narrator, they can represent different attitudes and values.

The novel begins with the narrative voice of Mr Lockwood – a new tenant in Thrushcross Grange. Lockwood's narrative voice presents a *Bildungsroman*, that carries no further significance than that of a romance and the life stories of different characters. The fact that Lockwood's narrative begins the novel may affect the way the novel is widely interpreted, as the readers' focus is shifted to listen the first narrative voice. Accordingly, Gilbert and Gubar state that

if we identify with Lockwood [...] we cannot fail to begin Brontë's novel by deciding that hell is a household very like *Wuthering Heights*. Lockwood himself, as if wittily predicting the reversal of values [...] calls the place "a perfect misanthropist's Heaven". (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 260)

If the reader passively agrees with the initial narrative voice, they most likely fail to discover the element of subversion that is present in the novel, where 'heaven' is 'hell' and vice versa. Many critics have evidently failed to notice the subverted narrative form and, consequently, have described the novel as confused and contradictory, or ignored the elements of societal critique altogether and deemed the novel a mere romantic story.

The other narrative level constructs of the narrative voices of Catherine Earnshaw, the female protagonist of the first generation and the first half of the novel, and her daughter Catherine Linton, the female protagonist of the second generation. However, these narrative voices are mostly heard through the medium of the housekeeper, Nelly Dean, who recapitulates what she has heard and seen Catherine and Catherine II say and write. Although she adds some of her own opinions and perhaps colours some of the events with her own sense of morale, the voices of the two Catherines are still relatively easily detected. As opposed to Lockwood's narrative's plain function of describing a tragic love story, Catherine Earnshaw's and Catherine Linton's narrative voices go beyond that and attack the prevailing status quo of the Victorian society.

Isabelle Armstrong has approached the issue of a subverted narrative by using glass as a metaphor. Armstrong juxtaposes Victorian era glass production culture with literature and "a language of transparency" (1). Armstrong sees one of the narratives as transparent glass above the more easily perceived and more widely accepted narrative. She further describes the element of transparency and how it "is something that eliminates itself in the process of vision. It does away with obstruction by not declaring itself as a presence" (11). When the unacceptable content is an invisible layer of glass, it cannot be as readily attacked and criticised. However, this interpretation valorises one of the narrative levels over the other, as do Gilbert and Gubar. As the existence of two narrative levels might be difficult to perceive, it requires the attention of an active reader. Adrienne Rich claims that to understand or to read a novel with a subverted narrative is

to question everything. To remember what it has been forbidden even to mention [...]. To do this kind of work takes a capacity for constant active presence, a naturalist's attention to minute phenomena, for reading between the lines, watching closely for symbolic arrangements, decoding difficult and complex messages left for us by women of the past. (13–14)

To perceive the two coexisting narratives and to understand the more covert and symbolic content, the reader must actively engage in the process of analysing the novel instead of passively agreeing with what is initially presented to them. However, Rich's claim of female authors deliberately leaving 'hidden messages' for the readers is an injudicious presumption with no direct evidence to support it.

4.3. The House of Wuthering Heights

In addition to clashing narrative voices creating a subverted narrative structure, much of the subversion is laid upon symbolism of opposing forces – in this case those of heaven and hell. These distinctive symbols enable the different narrative voices to express their attitudes on the subjects in question through their own point of view and respective sense of morale. The central objects which represent the religious notions of afterlife are the two houses around which much of the story circulates. Additionally, as the houses function as the symbols, the novel can conveniently include descriptions of anxiety of domestic spaces and spheres as “the function of the domestic sphere as ‘the eternal prison-house of the wife’ [...] that constituted the driving idea in earlier Female Gothic literature, remains central to [...] Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*” (Davison, 129). Not only is the discussion of opposing forces and representations central to the novel, but also reflecting the realities of domestic life during the Victorian era.

The house of Wuthering Heights represents hell in the first narrative level presented by Lockwood that subscribes to the more traditional Victorian attitudes and ideals, but in the subverted and more radical narrative it represents heaven. When Mr Lockwood first sets his eyes on the Heights, he gives a grim and Gothic-like description of the house. Already the name of the house – ‘Wuthering Heights’ – according to Lockwood is “descriptive of the atmospheric tumult to which its station is exposed in stormy weather” (Brontë, 4). The stormy weather symbolises the chaotic and ominous atmosphere that surrounds the house. The exterior of the house resembles a prison with its “narrow windows [...] deeply set in the wall, and the corners defended with large jutting stones” (Brontë, 4). This imagery immediately elicits a picture of a traditional prison, with stone walls and small windows that make it difficult to endeavour an escape. Once Lockwood enters the house, the prison-like imagery continues. The parlour Lockwood first enters has

its entire anatomy [...] bare to an inquiring eye. [...] The floor was of smooth white stone: the chairs, high-backed, primitive structures, painted green [...]. (5)

The description of the interiors emphasises the primitiveness and bareness of the house, equipped with only the necessities, lacking any kind of luxury that would make the house comfortable and homelike. In addition to the primitive air of the room, “above the chimney were sundry villainous old guns, and a couple of horse pistols, and, by way of ornament, three gaudily painted canisters disposed along tis ledge” (5). The guns symbolise hostility and, again, emphasise the imagery similar to a prison and even impose a wordless threat to those who would attempt an escape.

Furthermore, the people within the walls of the hostile architecture seem to resemble gruesome prison guards or rebellious prisoners. Lockwood describes Heathcliff a very asocial and nonempathetic person, stating that

his reserve springs from an aversion to showy displays of feeling – to manifestations of mutual kindness. He'll love and hate, equally under cover, and esteem it a species of impertinence to be loved or hated again [...]. (6)

Lockwood draws attention to Heathcliff's asocial and reserved nature, which resonates with his enclosed and prisonlike surroundings. Accordingly, Kavanagh states that

Wuthering Heights is a domain that is not only unsociable, in the sense of being isolated from a larger society; it is also internally asocial, enclosing an anarchic force that threatens to dissolve the cohesion of any 'world' (or 'self') the text might attempt to figure. (18)

Kavanagh draws attention to the asocial nature of the house's inhabitants and the house itself by describing it as isolated from the outside world and this further strengthens the house's resemblance to a prison. Moreover, describing the inhabitants as anarchists makes them resemble disobedient criminals that disrupt the status quo of the society by not conforming to established laws and rules.

In line with Lockwood's description of the house, Ms Dean gives a bleak description of its inhabitant which takes a rather religious tone. Describing Heathcliff, she states that "it appeared as if the lad were possessed of something diabolical [...]" (Brontë, 69). In addition to associating Heathcliff with diabolical qualities, she exclaims in her narrations "what infernal house we had" (69). Moreover, Catherine Earnshaw directly compares Heathcliff with the devil saying, "your bliss lies, like his [Satan's] in inflicting misery [...]" (119). All these associations to hell and the devil are significant in creating the subverted narrative since it lies heavily on symbolism of heaven and hell.

4.4. The House of Thrushcross Grange

While Wuthering Heights represents hell in one of the narrative levels, opposingly, Thrushcross Grange represents heaven. The house is first described when Heathcliff and Catherine have gone

roaming on the moors and Catherine is left to lodge at the Grange, while Heathcliff is made to return to the Heights and there he describes the house and its inhabitants to Ms Dean, saying,

ah! it was beautiful – a splendid place carpeted with crimson, and crimson-covered chairs and tables, and a pure white ceiling bordered by gold, a shower of glass-drops hanging in silver chains from the centre, and shimmering with little soft tapers. [...] We would have thought ourselves in heaven! And now, guess what your good children were doing? Isabella – I believe she is eleven, a year younger than Cathy – lay screaming at the farther end of the room, shrieking as if witches were running hot needles into her. Edgar stood on the hearth weeping silently, and in the middle of the table sat a little dog, shaking its paw and yelping, which, from their mutual accusations, we understood they had nearly pulled in two between them. The idiots! That was their pleasure! to quarrel who should hold a heap of warm hair, and each begin to cry because both, after struggling to get it, refused to take it. [...] I'd not exchange, for a thousand lives, my condition here, for Edgar Linton's at Thrushcross Grange [...]. (Brontë, 50–51)

As opposed to the Heights, the Grange is described as very homelike with its luxurious decorations. Instead of plain stone floors, the floors in the Grange are carpeted and instead of guns decorating the walls, there the ceiling is bordered with gold and from it hangs ornate 'glass-drops' in silver chains. While the Heights relies on bare necessities, the Grange is best described as excessive. Furthermore, where diabolical and hellish connotations are drawn to the Heights and its inhabitants, Heathcliff straightforwardly declares the Grange as heavenly. What further emphasises the distinction between the hellish Heights and heavenly Grange is that Heathcliff – often compared to the devil in the novel – does not feel at home in the Grange. Moreover, the contrast is repeated later by Edgar Linton, as Isabella has married Heathcliff and she begs for Edgar's forgiveness. Ms Dean recounts the exchange to Lockwood saying,

I went to the master and informed that his siter had arrived at the Heights, and sent me a letter expressing [...] her ardent desire to see him; with a wish that he would transmit to her, as early as possible, some token of forgiveness by me. 'Forgiveness?' said Linton. 'I have nothing to forgive her, Ellen – you may call at Wuthering Heights this afternoon, if you like, and say that I am not angry, but I'm sorry to have lost her: especially as I can never think she'll be happy. It is out of the question my going to see her, however; we are eternally divided [...]. (154)

A widely recognised notion is that heaven and hell are eternally divided and those in heaven cannot step down into hell in aid of those suffering there. So is the case with the two houses in the novel, at least according to Edgar Linton. The function of making the two houses symbolise heaven and hell, is to create “a strong sense of contradiction between two ‘worlds’ – opposed universes of symbolic activity, centred in the Heights and Thrushcross Grange” (Kavanagh, 15). By describing the two houses with the religious imagery of heaven and hell, the distinction between the two opposing worlds or universes, as Kavanagh describes them, is emphasised. Those universes, in this case, are representative of opposing ideals specific to certain social classes of different economic standing in the Victorian society.

5. The Story of the First Generation

Wuthering Heights describes the lives of two generations, narrated mostly by the governess Ms Dean, also referred to as Nelly or Ellen. The central characters of the first generation are Catherine Earnshaw, Heathcliff and Edgar and Isabella Linton. This chapter discusses the characters and their marriages, paying most attention to the story and character of Catherine.

5.1. Catherine as the Female Monster

Catherine Earnshaw, hereby referred to as Catherine, lodges in the hell-like house of *Wuthering Heights* during her childhood years. The reader is first introduced to Catherine's story when Lockwood sneaks into her former chamber. Lockwood's intruding male gaze, inspecting the interiors of the chamber where he was not initially granted permission to enter, is almost immediately defied and rebelled against. Lockwood describes the instance, saying,

the ledge, where I place my candle [...] was covered with writing scratched on the paint. This writing, however, was nothing but a name repeated in all kinds of characters, large and small – Catherine Earnshaw, here and there varied to Catherine Heathcliff, and then again to Catherine Linton. (Brontë, 20–21)

Lockwood describes Catherine's name as "obtrusive" (21). Much like Medusa's gaze, Catherine's name obtrudes and disturbs the male gaze; this is the first indicator of Catherine's rebellion towards patriarchy, although post-mortem in this instance. These small scribbles on the ledge then expand into a hasty diary-like narrative, as Lockwood inspects some of the books in the chamber. Catherine's own writing also gives implications of her rebellious and brave, or decadent and diabolical nature, depending on the narrative level. As if making a metatextual reference to the novel's structure, Lockwood begins to "decypher her faded hieroglyphics" (21). This phrase functions as a hint of the novel's two coexisting narratives, with the word 'faded' making an implication toward the covert nature of the novel's true subject and its two coexisting narratives. From Catherine's own writings, Lockwood finds out that she is planning, with Heathcliff, "to rebel [...]" (21). Catherine writes of one act of rebellion, where Joseph – a servant in *Wuthering Heights* – makes her and Heathcliff read, and Catherine states how

‘I could not bear the employment. I took my dingy volume [...] and hurled it into the dog kennel, vowing that I hated a good book. (23)

In this instance it is portrayed how Catherine overtly disobeys the patriarchal and conservatively minded figure, and refuses to engage in the employment Joseph assigned to her. Another act of rebellion declares itself when Catherine and Heathcliff escape the house to go “scamper in the moors” (23). In these instances, it is demonstrated how Catherine, with Heathcliff, rebel against the authorities in *Wuthering Heights*.

Not only is the content of Catherine’s diary indicative of rebellion or decadence, but also the simple act of writing and literacy. During the nineteenth century, intellect, literacy, and mental exercises were in many cases deemed unfit occupations for women and outside of their proper sphere. The phenomenon of an intellectual woman was dreaded so much that it

was recorded in medical annals. A thinking woman was considered such a breach of nature that a Harvard doctor reported during his autopsy on a Radcliffe graduate he discovered that her uterus had shrivelled to the size of a pea. (Wendy Martin qtd. in *The Madwoman in the Attic*, 56)

This illustrates how some conservatively minded people considered intellect an utterly unfeminine trait. However, Gilbert and Gubar present the matter in a rather biased and one-sided manner, as female intellect could not have been considered absolutely abhorrent what with the upsurge of female authors and a whole genre of literature named after the female authors of that particular period. Nonetheless, women – in middle-class families in particular – were relegated with duties that would not provide much mental stimulus, and intellectual occupations were limited only to women of certain social classes. As intellect and, consequently, literacy in middle-class women was deemed unfeminine and decadent according to nineteenth-century terms, Catherine’s diary-like scribbles are “a trace of the ambiguous power of her pen, of her capacity for channelling her rebellion [...]” (Kavanagh, 19). According to this notion, a pen and writing brings agency to Catherine’s character. Moreover, Kavanagh argues that “oppression is always associated with a clumsy silence [...]” (20). Consequently, expressing and voicing herself can be interpreted as rebellion.

Furthermore, what is widely considered representative of women’s oppressed position, is the scene where Lockwood attempts to stop Catherine’s ghost from entering the chamber. Lockwood awakes on a tapping on the window, thinking a branch is swaying in the wind, and attempts to silence the tapping:

I rose and endeavoured to unhasp the casement. The hook was soldered into the staple, a circumstance observed by me, when awake, but forgotten. ‘I must stop it, nevertheless!’ I muttered, knocking my knuckles through the glass, and stretching an arm out to seize the importunate branch: instead of which, my fingers closed on the fingers of a little, ice-cold hand! The intense horror of nightmare came over me; I tried to draw back my arm, but the hand clung to it, and a most melancholy voice sobbed. [...] As it spoke, I discerned, obscurely, a child’s face looking through the window – Terror made me cruel; and, finding it useless to attempt shaking the creature off, I pulled its wrist on to the broken pane, and rubbed it to and fro till the blood ran down and soaked the bed-clothes [...]. The fingers relaxed, I snatched mine through the hole, hurriedly piled the books up in a pyramid against it, and stopped my ears to exclude the lamentable prayer. (Brontë, 26–27)

The violent and gruesome description characteristic to Gothic literature can be claimed to illustrate the aggression some female authors were faced with when attempting to expand or escape their spheres. The spectre of a little girl, attempting to enter the same chamber and house where Lockwood lodges can be interpreted to resemble Victorian era women attempting to attain the same occupations men were allowed to have. This scene is the

most commented on by critics [...]. Whatever the focus critical commentaries have taken, all agree that the scene symbolises Brontë’s broader analysis of the position of women: Lockwood’s violence against the spectre of Cathy and his subsequent piling of books against the window are active metaphors for both female oppression and women’s limited access to systems of education. (Martin Willis, 24)

Not only does the violence in this scene reflect the overall oppression and even literal violence women faced during the Victorian era, but also, the staked books on the windowsill represent how women were not granted similar access to education as men were.

As the story progresses, Lockwood discovers more about Catherine from Ms Dean, who gives a thorough account of the history of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. Ms Dean describes how Mr Earnshaw – Catherine’s father – was off to Liverpool and Catherine “chose a whip” for him to bring her as a present (Brontë, 37). Gilbert and Gubar argue that “symbolically, the small Catherine’s longing for a whip seems like a powerless younger daughter’s yearning for power” (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 264). The whip symbolises authority and dominance and provides agency and a concrete means to defy authorities, similarly to the pen. These attributes were not socially

acceptable to associate with women during the nineteenth century. Thus, already during her childhood, Catherine expresses qualities of rebellion or decadence. Ms Dean describes Catherine, saying

she had ways with her such as I never saw a child take up before; and she put all of us past our patience fifty times and oftener in a day [...] we had not a minute's security that she wouldn't be in mischief. [...] singing, laughing plaguing everybody who would not do the same. A wild, wick slip she was [...]. (Brontë, 43)

Qualities that can be interpreted as decadent according to Victorian culture's terms are her being energetic, mischievous, wild, or even savage. Showalter defines decadence as "the pejorative label applied by the bourgeoisie to everything that seemed unnatural, artificial, and perverse, from Art Nouveau to homosexuality, a sickness with symptoms associated with cultural degeneration and decay" (*Sexual Anarchy*, 169). To generalise, anything that deviated notably from the conservative values and the 'normality' of society, was deemed decadent.

Other instances of Catherine's rebellious nature are revealed by Ms Dean, as she recounts how Catherine "liked exceedingly, to act the little mistress; using her hands freely, and commanding her companions [...]" (Brontë, 44). In this instance the undesired or decadent trait described is claiming authority, although in play. Moreover, Catherine's father, Mr Earnshaw, would scold Catherine for not conforming to ideals of femininity and for disobeying, saying,

'Nay, Cathy [...] I cannot love thee; thou'rt worse than thy brother. Go, say thy prayers, child, and ask for God's pardon. I doubt thy mother and I must rue that we ever reared thee!'. (44)

So strongly does Mr Earnshaw react to Catherine's nonconformity, that he regrets she was ever born. Nevertheless, Catherine is not disheartened by scolds from her father, and instead, it "wakened in her a naughty delight to provoke him; she was never so happy as when we were all scolding her at once, and she defying us with her bold, saucy look, and her ready words [...]" (44). In another instance where Mr Earnshaw asks Catherine "'Why canst thou not always be a good lass, Cathy?'" , Catherine defies her father's words by answering "'Why cannot you always be a good man, father?'" (45). Here, as well, is portrayed Catherine's opposition toward patriarchal structures and patriarchal figures. Furthermore, the difference between Catherine's and her father's dictions is significant; Mr Earnshaw has a more archaic diction while Catherine's is more modern. If simplified, the dictions only illustrate the difference between two age groups or two different generations. However, it can also be interpreted so that the patriarchal voice of the father is given

archaic diction to imply that the values represented by that voice are outdated, while the anarchist and defying voice of the young girl is more modern and up-to-date. Another significant detail pointed out by Ms Dean is how Catherine's mischievous nature was catalysed or encouraged by Heathcliff, as

punishment grew a mere thing to laugh at. [...] they forgot everything the minute they were together again [...]. (49)

Characteristics, such as aggressiveness, energy, activeness and claiming authority or dominance are associated with decadence.

According to one of the narrative levels, Catherine comes to resemble an archetypal female monster repeated in literary tradition. However, according to the narrative level with feminist implications, Catherine can be seen, not as a monster, but as a defiant and brave heroine. Literary tradition dictated by male authors would regard

women who reject submissive silences of domesticity [...] as terrible objects – Gorgons, Sirens [...]. But from a female point of view the monster woman is simply a woman who seeks the power of self-articulation [...]. (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 79)

It should be pointed out that in this reading Gilbert and Gubar ignore the fact that the archetype of the monster can include both men and women in literary tradition, and similar anxieties of repressed self-articulation arguably function as catalysts behind both male and female monsters of literature. Nonetheless, if a woman writer is to affect the associations made with these archetypal female characters, she must claim them and mould them to use them as her own and make them fit her own purposes. This was arguably the way to literary autonomy as the female author had to “examine assimilate, and transcend the extreme images of “angel” and “monster” which male authors have generated for her” (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 16–17). That is, a female author must analyse thoroughly the stereotypes and archetypes created to represent herself and, subsequently, subvert their meanings. However, this is presumably something every author must do in order to create something original.

5.2. Descending to ‘Heaven’ from ‘Hell’

5.2.1. Initiation into Womanhood

Heathcliff and Catherine’s first encounter with the house of Thrushcross Grange is the beginning of Catherine’s initiation into womanhood and, later, fragmentation of self. In addition to describing the house itself, Heathcliff gives an account of the events at the house to Ms Dean, saying,

‘Cathy and I escaped from the wash-house to have a ramble at liberty, and getting a glimpse of the Grange lights, we thought we would just go and see whether the Lintons passed their Sunday evenings standing shivering in corners, while their father and mother sat eating and drinking, and singing and laughing, and burning their eyes out before the fire. [...] We ran from the top of the Heights to the park, without stopping – Catherine completely beaten in the race, because she was barefoot. [...] We crept through a broken hedge, groped our way up the path, and planted ourselves on a flower-pot under the drawing-room window. [...] I told you we laughed [...] The Lintons heard us, and with one accord, they shot like arrows to the door; there was silence, and then a cry, “Oh, mamma, mamma! Oh, papa! Oh, mamma, come here. Oh, papa, oh!” They really did howl out, something in that way. We made frightful noises to terrify them still more, and then we dropped off the ledge, because somebody was drawing the bars, and we felt we had better flee. I had Cathy by the hand, and was urging her on, when all at once she fell down. “Run, Heathcliff, run!” she whispered. “They have let the bull-dog loose, and he holds me!” ‘The devil had seized her ankle, Nelly; I heard his abominable snorting. She did not yell out – no! She would have scorned to do it, if she had been spitted on the horns of a mad cow. I did though: I vociferated curses enough to annihilate any fiend in Christendom, and I got a stone and thrust it between his jaws, and tried with all my might to cram it down his throat. A beast of a servant came up with a lantern [...] the dog was throttled off, his huge, purple tongue hanging half a foot out of his mouth, and his pendant lips streaming with bloody slaver. ‘The man took Cathy up [...] He carried her in [...]. (50–52)

Catherine’s metaphorical fall from ‘hell’ to ‘heaven’ begins with a literal fall, followed by a vicious attack of a guard dog, which makes her bleed. All these events – the fall, the violent attack and bleeding – are symbolic of initiating Catherine into womanhood. As mentioned above, the literal

fall symbolises the metaphorical fall ‘to grace’. The violence is an act of forcing the woman into submission and, consequently, bleeding, from one perspective, can be interpreted as the beginning of Catherine’s menstruation. This is significant in not only initiating her into womanhood, but also initiating the end of her freedom, due to the fact that menstruation limited a woman’s existence notably. Showalter describes how managing hygiene in households other than the woman’s home was a challenge and caused anxiety and shame, and physical activities the woman could participate in, such as travelling or exercise, were limited or forbidden altogether (*The Female Malady*, 57). Thus, like most other Victorian women, Catherine would hereon end be restricted within the home. The Lintons took Catherine into their house where she would spend some weeks carefully tended and taught how to act like a proper woman. The confinement is representative of this custom of restricting young girls’ physical spheres once menstruation began, and the cultivation of manners represents Catherine’s initiation into proper womanhood.

After Catherine is relieved of the dog at her ankle, she is wheeled into the Grange and tended for her wounds. Heathcliff is allowed in the house for a few seconds, and he described to Ms Dean how

the woman servant brought a basin of warm water, and washed her feet; and Mr Linton mixed a tumbler of negus, and Isabella emptied a plateful of cakes into her lap, and Edgar stood gaping at a distance. Afterwards, they dried and combed her beautiful hair, and gave her a pair of enormous slippers, and wheeled her to the fire, and I left her, as merry as she could be, dividing her food between the little dog and Skulker [the guard dog], whose nose she pinched as he ate [...]. (Brontë, 53)

Like guardian angels or heavenly saviours, the Lintons take care of Catherine, showering her with all the luxuries of an upper-class home. However sweet the tending, it can also be interpreted as patronising and “castrating” Catherine (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 272). As Catherine is tended like a helpless pet, she is striven of her autonomy and agency. Taking all of these factors into account, it can be claimed that Catherine does not willingly enter the Grange, but rather “the Grange seizes her [...] a metaphoric action which emphasizes the turbulent and inexorable nature of the psychosexual *rites de passage* *Wuthering Heights* describes [...]” (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 271). In other words, not only are the literal fall, violence, and bleeding symbolic of the ‘rites of passage’, but also Catherine’s unwillingness to enter the Grange, which draws attention to the oppressive nature of the Victorian era society and marriage, where women, in many cases, did not have had a say in arranging the marriage, but were treated as objects of exchange between the husband and the father.

Along with the progression of these events, Catherine's fragmentation of self is also initiated. While lodging in the Grange, Catherine discovers what the Lintons consider 'heaven' – the perfectly peaceful domestic environment – she finds repulsive and this becomes her personal 'hell'. As the energetic and dynamic atmosphere of the Heights is 'heaven' to Catherine, consequently, she finds the stable, rigid, and immobile atmosphere of the Grange to be hellish. These associations are based on the idea "that the state of being patriarchal Christianity calls "hell" is eternally, energetically delightful, whereas the state called "heaven" is rigidly hierarchical [...] and "kind" as a poison tree" (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 255). Although according to the Bible and Christian notions, hell is in constant tumult and confusion, it is mobile and energetic, and where heaven is in eternal bliss, it is also unchanging and strictly hierarchical. Additionally, what arguably made the traditional notion of heaven and Christianity in general oppressive for Victorian era women, is the fact that qualities of purity and high morale were the measure of femininity. This new and unfamiliar environment deepens Catherine's sense of fragmentation, which further develops when she finally marries Edgar and permanently moves to the Grange.

Another factor that prompts Catherine's fragmentation is her and Heathcliff's separation. Catherine remains in the Grange, while Heathcliff is forced to return to the Heights. A suggested interpretation by Gilbert and Gubar is that her fragmentation begins because she is being rid of an essential part of herself, an ally in rebellion and an encourager to mischief, the 'whip' that gives her agency, or that Catherine and Heathcliff are somehow two halves of one being (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 265). This is allegedly confirmed when Catherine exclaims "I am Heathcliff!" (Brontë, 87). However, not only does this interpretation negate the notion of Catherine being an autonomous heroine, since according to it she needs a male character in order to have agency, but also it contradicts the notion of Heathcliff being a patriarchal, violent villain if he is underpinned as a valiant ally to Catherine. Catherine's exclamation 'I am Heathcliff' does not have to be interpreted as implying oneness of their selves, but rather the likeness, which emphasises Catherine's rebellious nature, while preserving her autonomy. Therefore, already from Catherine's first encounter with the Grange, the qualities of a perfect Victorian era woman – 'the angel in the house' – are being systematically imposed upon her.

5.2.2. From Monster to Angel

To be considered fit for marriage and a proper woman fit for the eighteenth-century society in general, Catherine must become the archetype of the angel in the house. Ms Dean describes her countenance and manners thoroughly altered after staying at Thrushcross Grange; Catherine

stayed at Thrushcross Grange five weeks, till Christmas. By that time her ankle was thoroughly cured, and her manners much improved. The mistress visited her often, in the interval, and commenced her plan of reform by trying to raise her self-respect with fine clothes and flattery [...]. so that, instead of a wild, hatless little savage jumping into the house, and rushing to squeeze us all breathless, 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. (Brontë, 55)

In this fragment Catherine's old rebellious and 'monstrous' self is being contrasted with the altered, graceful, and angelic Catherine. However well guised as the angel in the house, Catherine reveals to Ms Dean that she is unhappy with her new role. She describes a dream she had saying

[i]f I were in heaven, Nelly, I should be extremely miserable [...] I dreamt once, that I was there. [...] heaven did not seem to be my home; and I broke my heart weeping to come back to earth; and the angels were so angry that they flung me out, into the middle of the heath on the top of Wuthering Heights; where I woke sobbing for joy. (85)

It can be interpreted that in Catherine's dream heaven represents Thrushcross Grange. To be in heaven is to be alike to an angel, and Catherine does not feel at ease with the role or the environment. Along with dreams indicating Catherine's unhappiness with the narrow restrictions of femininity, she still shows glimpses of her 'monstrous' nature hiding behind the angelic guise. On one instance Ms Dean and Catherine have a disagreement, and Ms Dean recounts how Catherine,

supposing Edgar could not see her, snatched the cloth from my hand, and pinched me, with a prolonged wrench, very spitefully on the arm. [...] I started up from my knees, and screamed out. 'O, Miss, that's a nasty trick! you have no right to nip me, and I'm not going to bear it!' 'I didn't touch you, you lying creature!' cried she, her fingers tingling to repeat the act, and her ears red with rage. She never had power to conceal

her passion, it always set her whole complexion in a blaze. [...] She stamped her foot, wavered for a moment, and then, irresistibly impelled by the naughty spirit within her, slapped me on the cheek a stinging blow that filled both eyes with water. ‘Catherine, love! Catherine!’ interposed Linton, greatly shocked at the double fault of falsehood, and violence which his idol had committed. [...] The insulted visitor moved to the spot where he had laid his hat, pale and with a quivering lip. ‘That’s right!’ I said to myself. ‘Take warning and begone! It’s a kindness to let you have a glimpse of her genuine disposition.’. (75)

Catherine fulfils the role of the angel in the company of those who oppress her, in this case her husband-to-be, and when she thinks he cannot not see her, she reveals once again her decadent qualities. This is indicative of the state of fragmentation that Catherine began to feel once introduced to the Grange and the Lintons. Nevertheless, Catherine revealing a glimpse of her true nature does not drive Edgar away as “he possessed the power to depart, as much as a cat possesses the power to leave a mouse half killed, or a bird half eaten [...]” (76). Catherine and Edgar’s affairs are compared to a cat-and-mouse play, where Catherine is the tortured victim that eventually dies in the claws of the cat.

5.2.3. Catherine’s Marriage to Edgar – from Fragmentation to Illness

Eventually Catherine and Edgar are married. Ms Dean describes Edgar, saying “[h]e had a sweet, low manner of speaking, and pronounced his words as you do, that’s less gruff than we talk here, and softer” (Brontë, 74). He is described as mannerly and soft, reflecting the environment in which he was brought up. In another commentary it is stated how Edgar resembles “a conventional Victorian hero; he is presentable and well-mannered, sincere but somewhat smug, honest but thoroughly conventional, good-looking but pallid, devoted to Catherine but incapable of understanding or possessing her” (Watson, 91). Heathcliff and Edgar are described as opposites and as contrasting each other, representing and reflecting the two different worlds or universes where they best fit into – Heathcliff in ‘hell’ and Edgar in ‘heaven’.

Sharing her life with someone who is the complete opposite of the people she grew up with, Catherine’s sense of fragmentation progresses severely, eventually driving her to a condition

recognised as 'hysteria' during that era. As a husband, Edgar is severely patronising but not domineering. He had

a deep-rooted fear of ruffling her [Catherine's] humour. He concealed it from her; but if ever he heard me [Ms Dean] answer sharply, or saw any other servant grow cloudy at some imperious order of hers, he would show his trouble by a frown of displeasure that never darkened on his account. (Brontë, 97)

Although Edgar seems to have Catherine's best interest in mind and seems to be taking care of her, this can also be interpreted as sheltering her in a suffocating and stifling manner, as Catherine's freedom and agency are evidently restricted as she longs to be back on the moors and in Wuthering Heights, but cannot leave the estate. In another instance, is described how

[n]o mother could have nursed an only child more devotedly than Edgar tended her. Day and night, he was watching, and patiently enduring all the annoyances that irritable nerves and a shaken reason could inflict [...]. (140)

Here, the patronising undertone of the caretaking is more distinct when Edgar is compared to a mother taking care of her child, rather than a husband tending his wife. This emphasises the dysfunctional hierarchy in their relationship. Nonetheless, Edgar is not described as violently domineering. This in turn functions to emphasise the distinct contrast that exists between him and Heathcliff, which further supports the claim that they represent two different worlds. Rather than opposing Catherine's mood swings, Edgar bends and sways along with them; when

Catherine had seasons of gloom and silence, now and then: they were respected with sympathizing silence by her husband [...]. The return of sunshine was welcomed by answering sunshine from him. (98)

Edgar's lack of aggression and submissiveness in situations of conflict also manifests itself in encounters between him and Heathcliff. Prompted by his docile behaviour, Catherine mocks him, saying,

'[i]f you have not the courage to attack him [Heathcliff], make an apology, or allow yourself to be beaten. It will correct you of feigning more valour than you possess. [...] Heathcliff would as soon lift a finger at you as the kind 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'. (121)

Although Edgar treats Catherine patronisingly, Catherine still domineers over him with overt defiance. The defiance Catherine expresses is hostile, aggressive, and belittling in nature, as Catherine describes Edgar ‘a sucking leveret’, indicating that she considers him cowardly.

As these conditions progress, Catherine starts to show symptoms such as delirium, hallucinations, agoraphobia and self-harm through starvation. Self-harm can be interpreted as a last resort to gain agency. As she is unable to have an effect on her surroundings and unable to escape the constraints of marriage, the only way to have an effect on anything at all is to harm herself and the suppressed rebellious energy manifests itself through ‘madness’. Ms Dean recounts the events of Catherine spiralling into delirium: Catherine

lay dashing her head against the arm of the sofa, and grinding her teeth, so that you might fancy she would crash them into splinters! [...] In a few seconds she stretched herself out stiff, and turned up her eyes, while her cheeks, at once blanched and livid, assumed the aspect of death. [...] she started up – her hair flying over her shoulders, her eyes flashing, the muscles of her neck and arms standing out preternaturally.
(Brontë, 124–125)

This passage illustrates vividly the description of horror, characteristic to Gothic literature. It can be argued that in this instance the qualities specific to Gothic literature function to emphasise the anxiety and distress Catherine experiences as well as giving a description – albeit a rather exaggerated description for rhetoric’s sake – of the condition ‘hysteria’, commonly diagnosed to Victorian era women.

From violent and physical convulsions Catherine’s state finally progresses to delirium, and Ms Dean describes how

[a] minute previously she was violent; now, supported on one arm, and not noticing my refusal to obey her, she seemed to find childish diversion in pulling the feathers from the rents she had just made, and ranging them on the sheet according to their different species: her mind had strayed to other associations. (128)

Catherine seems to regress into a childlike state, making a mess of the feathers in the pillow. In addition, she disassociates and focuses on the minute exercise of arranging the feathers.

Disassociation and regression to childlike behaviour can be interpreted as a manifestation of Catherine’s extreme longing to be back in Wuthering Heights, where she lived as a child.

Qualities of disassociation continue and intensify as she begins to hallucinate and explains,

there are two candles on the table making the black press shine like jet.’ ‘The black press? where is that?’ I [Ms Dean] asked. ‘You are talking in your sleep!’ ‘It’s against the wall, as it always is,’ she replied. ‘It does appear odd – I see a face in it!’ ‘There is no press in the room, and never was,’ said I, resuming my seat, and looping up the curtain that I might watch her. ‘Don’t you see that face?’ she enquired, gazing earnestly at the mirror. And say what I could, I was incapable of making her comprehend it to be her own; so I rose and covered it with a shawl. ‘It’s behind there still!’ she pursued, anxiously. ‘And it stirred. Who is it? I hope it will not come out when you are gone! Oh! Nelly, the room is haunted! I’m afraid of being alone!’ (129–130)

The Gothic descriptions of horror continue as Catherine believes the room to be haunted when she inspects her own face in a mirror. Disassociation from self and not recognising her own reflection in a mirror is a notable factor, as it further supports the impression of Catherine’s fragmented self. This description is in accordance with the archetype of the ‘madwoman’, to whom duality of self is often linked. Furthermore, as Catherine is evidently afraid of the reflection, it depicts the profound conflict and struggle that exists between the two halves of the fragmented self – the two opposing archetypes of the monster and the angel.

When the delirious fit finally subsides, Catherine exclaims, “‘Oh dear! I thought I was at home [...] I thought I was lying in my chamber at Wuthering Heights” (130). The fact that she imagined being back in Wuthering Heights can be interpreted as her longing to be back in freedom, out of the restraints of marriage and away from the unfamiliar environment. Furthermore, she describes herself as “the lady of Thrushcross Grange, and the wife of a stranger; an exile, and outcast [...]” (132). This description emphasises her feelings of fragmentation and detachedness, as she claims to be an ‘exile’ and an ‘outcast’. Lastly, Catherine straightforwardly states,

I wish I were out of doors – I wish I were a girl again, half savage and hardy, and free ... and laughing at injuries, not maddening under them! 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 [...]. (132)

Catherine overtly expresses her longing to be ‘savage’ instead of a mannerly housewife. Characterising Catherine as ‘savage’ or ‘wild’ creates a contrast and a sense of conflict between her and her oppressor, the civilised and mannered Edgar, as well as the role of an angel that is being imposed upon her. Furthermore, this fragment can be seen as pointing to the notion of the ‘noble

savage' – a primitive and uncivilised person untainted by manmade rules and regulations, possessing innate goodness.

Under the pressure of patriarchal structures, many female figures in Victorian era literature did not have an outlet to express their intellect or creativity and, subsequently, spiralled into 'madness'. The recurring image of a madwoman is said to represent women's "uniquely female feelings of fragmentation, their own keen sense of the discrepancies between what they are and what they are supposed to be" (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 78). In other words, the 'monstrous' or 'decadent' female character, like Catherine, feels like an exile while fulfilling the unfamiliar role of the angel in the house. However, it should be noted that Gilbert and Gubar give an extremely gendered description of the psychological state of fragmentation that can surely affect all genders, not just women.

Catherine's 'madness' finally drives her to her death along with a physical illness. Instead of Catherine being a victorious heroine overthrowing the restraints of patriarchy she dies in oppression. This is a way to symbolically depict the cultural and social atmosphere where nineteenth-century women lived – a way to document "the casualties of a battle of the sexes [...]" (*No Man's Land*, 66). One way to interpret the 'documentation of casualties' is to claim that as female authors in the nineteenth century had very little 'mothers in literature' they would have found it difficult to envision a victorious female character, or at least victorious through her own active efforts. However, a tragic death of the protagonist – common to Gothic literature – arguably impacts the reader more strongly as opposed to a victorious character.

Before Catherine dies, she gives birth to her daughter, and

[i]t was named Catherine, but he [Edgar] never called it the name in full, as he had never called the first Catherine in short, probably because Heathcliff had a habit of doing so. The little one was always called Cathy, it formed to him a distinction from the mother, and yet, a connection with her; and his attachment sprang from its relation to her, far more than its being his own. (Brontë, 196)

This begins a narrative very similar to Catherine's. As Catherine descended from 'hell' to 'heaven', Catherine II ascends from 'heaven' to 'hell' and the story of the first generation is rewound. Another link between the Catherines' stories is their names, as both of them are called in short in their childhood.

5.3. Heathcliff and Isabella

Unlike Catherine, Edgar's sister Isabella first resembles the angel in the house, resonating with the environment where she grew up. She is described a "charming young lady of eighteen; infantile in manners, though possessed of keen wit, keen feelings, and a keen temper, too, if irritated" (Brontë, 106). In addition to being characterised as childlike, it is said about her that she has "dove's eyes – angel's" (112). This creates a direct link to the archetype of the angel in the house. Isabella and Catherine are in many ways opposites of each other, much like Edgar and Heathcliff; Isabella is

as weak as Catherine is strong, as conventional as Catherine is unconventional, as superficially attracted to Heathcliff as Catherine was to Edgar [...]. An emotional, giddy girl who had no knowledge of men or their motives, she felt only the physical attraction of a dark, handsome, well-dressed newcomer to her small circle of acquaintances. (Watson, 91)

Catherine and Isabella grow up in very different worlds just like Heathcliff and Edgar – Catherine represents the chaos and tumult of hell, and Isabella the rigidity and purity of heaven.

Nevertheless, Catherine and Isabella are similar to each other in that both of them marry for vain reasons and into an unfamiliar world opposite to what they were used to of childhood. The angelic Isabella marries the diabolical Heathcliff and moves from the heavenly Grange to the hellish Heights.

Just like Isabella's angelic nature contrasts with Catherine's rebellion and 'monstrosity', Heathcliff contrasts with Edgar's characteristics. To a stranger like Lockwood, Heathcliff seems

in dress and manners a gentleman – that is, as much a gentleman as man a country squire: rather slovenly, perhaps, yet not looking amiss, with his negligence, because he has an erect and handsome figure – and rather morose – possibly some people might suspect him of a degree of under-bred pride [...]. (Brontë, 5–6)

As Lockwood is not so closely acquainted with Heathcliff, he cannot give an in-depth description of him, but he still strikes Lockwood as dark, 'morose', and proud of his lower standing in the society's class structures. This is in accordance with how Ms Dean describes Heathcliff. She first goes on to warn Lockwood about Heathcliff, saying, he is as "rough as a saw-edge, and hard as whinstone! The less you meddle with him the better" (36). She then recounts incidents of Heathcliff's childhood which already give hints of his diabolical nature. Heathcliff was discovered in the streets by Mr Earnshaw and brought to Wuthering Heights. He was then

a dirty, ragged, black-haired child; big enough both to walk and talk – indeed, its face looked older than Catherine’s – yet, when it was set on its feet, it only stared round, and repeated over and over again some gibberish that nobody could understand. (38)

What strikes the reader here, is not only the ominous undertone of the description, but also the way Ms Dean refers to the child with the pronoun ‘it’, making Heathcliff seem inhumane and foreign. Otherness and foreignness are significant qualities, as

[e]arly romance fantasies define and confine otherness as evil and diabolic: difference is located ‘out there’, in a supernatural creature. [...] Narratives of diabolism [...] are still crucial indices of cultural limits: they might seem empty discourses now, but they are still pertinent, for they return us to an encounter with that area which has been ‘silenced by culture’. (Jackson, 53–54)

Heathcliff’s mysterious character with an unknown background emphasises his evil and diabolical qualities. Additionally, as references of supernatural forces and religious images are included in the narrative, it draws attention to the clashing values and attitudes of a Victorian era society, where the polar opposites of traditional Christian values and more liberal and atheist values coexisted.

Ms Dean continues her description of Heathcliff, recounting how

[h]e seemed a sullen, patient child; hardened, perhaps, to ill-treatment: he would stand Hindley’s [Catherine’s brother] blows without winking or shedding a tear, and my pinches moved him only to draw in breath, and open his eyes as if he had hurt himself by accident, and nobody was to blame. [...] *he* was as uncomplaining as a lamb; though hardness, not gentleness, made him give little trouble. (Brontë, 39–40)

In addition to being described inhumane or foreign, he is portrayed as hardened, showing little to no emotion when ill-treated. When Heathcliff is a grown-up and has married Isabella, the characteristics that were merely hints of what was to come have progressed further. Isabella enquires in a letter,

[i]s Mr Heathcliff a man? If so, is he mad? And if not, is he a devil? I shan’t tell my reasons for making this inquiry; but, I beseech you to explain, if you can, what I have married [...]. (143)

Isabella characterises Heathcliff as animal or inhumane, questioning whether he is a man at all or, instead, the devil. In another instance Heathcliff is stated to be “a most diabolical man, delighting to wrong and ruin those he hates, if they give him the slightest opportunity” (235). Hints of ‘otherness’

and inhumaneness in Heathcliff as a child culminate to direct references to the devil in his adulthood. It is important to point out that “the demonic is not supernatural, but is an aspect of personal and interpersonal life, a manifestation of unconscious desire” (Jackson, 55). In fiction, descriptions of supernatural can surely be intended and read in a literal sense, but a symbolic reading negates this possibility. Gothic works of literature that include religious imagery can be interpreted in a symbolic sense so that the symbols represent societal structures and values, as opposed to interpreting the objects in their face value.

As is the marriage of Catherine and Edgar, Heathcliff and Isabella’s marriage is the union of people from two opposing worlds. Where Edgar looks after Catherine in a patronising manner, Heathcliff is more actively, violently, and overtly oppressing in their marriage. Ms Dean goes to see Isabella in *Wuthering Heights* after she and Heathcliff are married, and discovers the immediate effects of their marriage on her. Ms Dean describes how

[h]er pretty face was wan and listless; her hair uncurled; some locks hanging lankly down, and some carelessly twisted round her head. Probably she had not touched her dress since yester evening. (Brontë, 155)

The unrefined exterior indicates both regression of living standards, as well as resembles Isabella’s lowered spirits. Heathcliff describes Isabella’s displeasure with her new conditions, as he vulgarly exclaims,

[s]he degenerates into a mere slut! She is tired of trying to please me, uncommonly early – You’d hardly credit it, but the very morrow of our wedding, she was weeping to go home. However, she’ll suit into this house so much the better for not being over nice, and I’ll take care she does not disgrace me by rambling abroad. (158)

In addition to Isabella being displeased with the new situation, Heathcliff speaks of her possessively, not letting her bring ‘disgrace’ upon him by leaving the house. Isabella herself also reaffirms the possessive nature of their marriage by stating, “I’ve been told I might leave him before; and I’ve made the attempt, but I dare not repeat it!” (160). Not only does Heathcliff treat her possessively, but the conditions described seem closer to captivity. Heathcliff even goes on to question her sanity and claims, “you’re not fit to be your own guardian, Isabella, now; and I, being your legal protector, must retain you in my custody, however distasteful the obligation may be [...]” (160). In this instance, Heathcliff makes a reference to legal aspects of marriage, which were reality during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, thus juxtaposing the events and story of *Wuthering Heights* to the actual conditions of those centuries. This further establishes the point that the novel

does, indeed, criticise the marriage institution of the Victorian era by portraying the injustices that married women faced.

In addition to diminished legal rights, Isabella suffers from violence in their marriage. One day Isabella arrives back to the Grange with “a deep cut under one ear, which only the cold prevented from bleeding profusely, a white face scratched and bruised, and a frame hardly able to support itself through fatigue” (183). She had evidently been the victim of violence in this instance, and gives a thorough account of the state of their marriage to Ms Dean:

I notice, when I enter his presence, the muscles of his countenance are involuntarily distorted into an expression of hatred; partly arising from his knowledge of the good causes I have to feel that sentiment for him, and partly from original aversion – it is strong enough to make me feel pretty certain that he would not chase me over England, supposing I contrived a clear escape; and therefore I must get quite away. I’ve recovered from my first desire to be killed by him. I’d rather he’d kill himself! He has extinguished my love effectually, and so I’m at my ease. I can recollect yet how I loved him; and can dimly imagine that I could still be loving him [...]. Even if he had doted on me, the devilish nature would have revealed its existence, somehow. Catherine had an awfully perverted taste to esteem him so dearly, knowing him so well – Monster! (185)

Hostility and violence – even the urge to kill one another – sets the tone of their marriage. Isabella draws attention to Heathcliff’s devilish nature and the stark contrast between herself and Catherine, as Catherine was affectionate toward him despite his monstrous and devilish qualities. Isabella then continues to recount the events that finally drove her to escape Wuthering Heights:

The back of the settle and Earnshaw’s person interposed between me and him; so instead of endeavouring to reach me, he snatched a dinner knife from the table, and flung it at my head. It struck beneath my ear, and stopped the sentence I was uttering [...] In my flight through the kitchen I bid Joseph speed to his master; I knocked over Hareton [Hindley’s son], who was hanging a litter of puppies from a chair back in the doorway; and, blest as a soul escaped from purgatory, I bounded, leaped, and flew down the steep road [...]. And far rather would I be condemned to a perpetual dwelling in the infernal regions, than even for one night abide beneath the roof of Wuthering Heights again. (194)

This fragment not only describes Heathcliff's violent and aggressive nature, but it also illustrates the violence that occurred in marriages in reality and was allowed to some extent. As Isabella describes herself as a 'soul escaped from purgatory', it illustrates the religious symbolism assigned to the two houses and emphasises the contrast between Lintons and the Earnshaws and Heathcliff. Isabella's hasty escape also indicates that she was, indeed, held captive in the house; another unjust practice that was allowed in marriage during the Victorian era.

Both Catherine and Edgar's and Isabella and Heathcliff's marriages can be considered to represent of the actual state of affairs during the nineteenth century. Some marriages were peaceful on the surface level, but husbands tended to patronise their wives by treating them more like a child than their equal. Middle-class married women were 'protected' from hard work – both physical and mental – as they were considered weak and unsuitable for such employments and, subsequently, were tended carefully, suffocating any attempt of personal development. On the other hand, there were marriages much like Isabella and Heathcliff's where husbands treated their wives with outright hostility and violence, exploiting their legal advantages to carry out the injustices. Furthermore, the way the female characters are striven of their respective 'world' – Catherine from her personal heaven to hell and Isabella likewise – represents how marriage could, in the worst-case scenario, feel for the woman with her rights diminished. It can be precarious to consider a work of fiction as a report of actual real-life conditions, nonetheless, the conditions of the marriages in the novel resemble the conditions of a Victorian era marriage institution in many ways.

6. The Story of the Second Generation

The story of Catherine Linton – hereby referred to as Catherine II – has very similar qualities to that of Catherine Earnshaw, but her story begins where her mother’s ends. Instead of growing up in the hell-like Wuthering Heights and attaining decadent or monstrous characteristics along with the upbringing and the environment, Catherine II is first depicted as a decorous angel in the house as a result of growing up in the heaven-like Thrushcross Grange. Gilbert and Gubar describe this element of a rewound story arguing that “Catherine II is really her mother’s “non-identical double”” (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 298). In other words, while Catherine II is similar to her mother when it comes to her inherent nature and characteristics, her story is that of her mother’s, only presented backwards. Thus, in a way, Catherine II is the ‘anti-Catherine’. Furthermore, the story of the second generations illustrates the subvertedness of the novel’s narrative structure, as well, as decadent qualities in Catherine II can be interpreted as representing either monstrosity or bravery. The two opposing worlds that Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange represent are described in the second generation’s narrative, as well. Additionally, the realities of a Victorian era marriage along with oppression through legislation and brutality are depicted. This chapter discusses the story of Catherine Linton and her relationship with her two cousins, Hareton and Linton, and the similarities and differences between the two generations’ stories.

6.1. Catherine II as the Angel in the House

Catherine Linton’s story begins in the rigid, heaven-like Thrushcross Grange. Already from her childhood, she is trained and moulded into the resemblance of the archetypal angel in the house. Catherine II, for the most parts, succeeds in conforming to those expectations. Ms Dean describes Catherine II’s characteristics to Lockwood:

She was the most winning thing that ever brought sunshine into a desolate house – a real beauty in face [...]. Her 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. However, it

must be acknowledged, she had faults to foil her gifts. A propensity to be saucy was one; and a perverse will that indulged children invariably acquire, whether they be good tempered or cross. (Brontë, 201)

Although Catherine II reminds Ms Dean of the first Catherine, she does not quite resemble her. She has softer manners as opposed to her mother, and being raised in the wholesome environment of the Grange, she learns the ways of a mannerly eighteenth-century lady already in her childhood. Catherine II cares for her father deeply and it is argued that “Catherine II promises to become an ideal Victorian woman, all of whose virtues are in some sense associated with daughterhood, wifehood, motherhood” (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 299). It should be noted here, that although Gilbert and Gubar limit the analysis on the Victorian era, the novel is set in the eighteenth century. This contradiction may be due to the authors carelessly mixing the content of the novel with the environment where the novel was written.

In addition to being educated into a proper woman, Catherine II suffers from anxiety of enclosed spaces in Thrushcross Grange, as did her mother. As a child, Catherine II

had not once been beyond the range of the park by herself. Mr Linton would take her with him, a mile or so outside, on rare occasions; but he trusted her to no one else. [...] Sometimes, indeed, while surveying the country from her nursery window, she would observe – ‘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?’. (Brontë, 202)

Although the Grange is a pleasant and comfortable place to live in, as opposed to the hellish Heights, it forms into a prison for Catherine II, as she is forbidden to venture too far away from the house. Thus, the Grange resembles a sheltered and enclosed paradise, whereas the Heights resembles the free wilderness.

Although Catherine II initially represents the archetypal angel, some implications of a rebellious nature still exist behind the façade, as the qualities of a perfect Victorian era woman are merely imposed upon her by her father the same way that they were imposed upon her mother when she lived, rather than them being inherent to her. This is demonstrated in how Ms Dean describes Catherine II’s ‘faults’, such as ‘sauciness’ or a ‘perverse will’, or in other words, a defiant and stubborn nature. In addition to these qualities, Catherine II’s rebellion is also portrayed literacy, as was the case with her mother. Catherine II uses literacy and writing as a way to rebel against Ms Dean and her father. Catherine finds out that her cousin, Linton, lives in Wuthering Heights, but she

is forbidden to visit there. Consequently, she and Ms Dean argue whether she could write a letter to Linton:

‘But may I not write a note to tell him why I cannot come?’ she asked, rising to her feet. ‘And just send those books, I promised to lend him – his books are not as nice as mine, and he wanted to have them extremely, when I told him how interesting they were – May I not, Ellen?’ ‘No, indeed, no, indeed!’ replied I with decision. ‘Then he would write to you, and there’d never be an end of it – No, Miss Catherine, the acquaintance must be dropped entirely – so papa expects, and I shall see that it is done!’. (237)

Ms Dean forbids Catherine II to write letters to her cousin, which, subsequently, renders writing a rebellious and defiant act. This can be interpreted to resemble the attitudes towards women engaging in intellectual and creative exercises, such as writing, in the nineteenth century. Catherine II defies this order and Ms Dean discovers she has been engaged in correspondence with Linton for quite a while:

Weeks passed on, and Cathy recovered her temper, though she grew wondrous fond of stealing off to corners by herself, and often, if I came near her suddenly while reading, she would start and bend over the book, evidently desirous to hide it; and I detected edges of loose paper sticking out beyond the leaves. She also got a trick of coming down early in the morning, and lingering about the kitchen, as if she were expecting the arrival of something; and she had a small drawer in a cabinet in the library which she would trifle over for hours, and whose key she took special care to remove when she left it. One day, as she inspected this drawer, I observed that the playthings, and trinkets, which recently formed its contents, were transmuted into bits of folded paper. My curiosity and suspicions were roused; I determined to take a peep at her mysterious treasures [...]. Though I could not but suspect, I was still surprised to discover that they were a mass of correspondence, daily almost. (238)

As was with Catherine Earnshaw and her scribbles on the windowpane and in the margins of old books, the letters of Catherine II also represent rebellion through writing. However, the rebellion was not overt and aggressive at first, but Catherine II attempted to keep it a secret from those she defied. This can be claimed to resemble the way some female authors had to hide their engagement with writing, for example with the use of pseudonyms in published works.

6.2. Ascending from 'Heaven' to 'Hell'

6.2.1. Initiation into Womanhood

Catherine II discovers a farmhouse near Wuthering Heights in a similar manner her mother did the Grange. She is introduced to the actual house of Wuthering Heights later. Some notable differences between Catherine and Catherine II, however, are that Catherine II sets off on a ride on the moors alone, whereas her mother began the expedition with Heathcliff. This would seemingly mark Catherine II as a more autonomous figure as opposed to her mother as she led the expedition alone and did not have an ally in mischief as her mother did. Ms Dean recounts this event from the beginning, how Catherine II

sprang up as gay as a fairy, sheltered by her wide-brimmed hat and gauze veil from the July sun, and trotted off with a merry laugh, mocking my cautious counsel to avoid galloping, and come back early. The naughty thing never made her appearance at tea. One traveller, the hound, being an old dog, and fond of its ease, returned; but neither Cathy, nor the pony, nor the two pointers were visible in any direction; and I despatched emissaries down this path, and that path, and, at last, went wandering in search of her myself. [...] My suspense was truly painful; and, at first, it gave me delightful relief to observe, in hurrying by the farm-house, Charlie, the fiercest of the pointers, lying under a window, with swelled head, and bleeding ear. I opened the wicket, and ran to the door, knocking vehemently for admittance. A woman I knew, and who formerly lived at Gimmerton answered [...]. 'you are come a seeking your little mistress" don't be frightened. She's here safe – but I'm glad it isn't the master.' [...] I entered, and beheld my stray lamb, seated on the hearth, rocking herself in a little chair that had been her mother's, when a child. Her hat was hung against the wall, and she seemed perfectly at home, laughing and chattering, in the best spirits imaginable, to Hareton, now a great strong lad of eighteen, who stared at her with considerable curiosity and astonishment; comprehending precious little of the fluent succession of remarks and questions which her tongue never ceased pouring forth. (Brontë, 204–206)

Catherine II is well equipped for her expedition – riding a pony, accompanied by dogs, and wearing clothing appropriate in protecting her from the sun. Her mother, on the other hand, ran barefoot on the moors with no one else but Heathcliff. This would imply that Catherine II's sheltered and

privileged position was a significant factor in creating autonomy, although that autonomy was not achieved by Catherine II herself, but provided to her. Subsequently, this would imply that the autonomy was, in fact, merely ostensible in this instance. Furthermore, as is the case of the first generation's Catherine, bleeding marks the introduction of Catherine II to the realm of 'hell', this being indicative of the initiation into womanhood, although Catherine II herself does not bleed in this case. Catherine II is taken into an estate owned by Heathcliff and she is more active and has more agency in the new environment as opposed to her mother who was wheeled into the Grange and tended, which implies passivity and being rid of agency. These details further establish the claim that the second generation's story is that of the first generation's, but rewound and that Catherine II is the 'anti-Catherine', as her story progresses to the opposite direction where her mother's progressed. Ms Dean speculates a more detailed description of the events, as Catherine II herself does not comply to give it to Ms Dean:

she arrived without adventure to the gate of the farmhouse, when Hareton happened to issue forth, attended by some canine followers who attacked her train. They had a smart battle, before their owners could separate them: that formed an introduction. Catherine told Hareton who she was, and where she was going; and asked him to show her the way; finally, beguiling him to accompany her. He opened the mysteries of the Fairy cave, and twenty other queer places [...]. (210)

As opposed to her mother, Catherine II is not directly taken into the constraints of a lofty country estate, but she continues to roam the moors outside in freedom, autonomously on her own two legs.

In addition to bleeding, Catherine II also experiences the symbolical fall from her current state in the realm of 'heaven'. Ms Dean and Catherine II are scrambling on the moors:

we neared a door that opened on the road: and my young lady, lightening into sunshine again, climbed up, and seated herself on the top of the wall, reaching over to gather some hips that bloomed scarlet on the summit branches of the wild rose trees, shadowing the highway side: the lower fruit had disappeared, but only birds could touch the upper, except from Cathy's present station. In stretching to pull them, her hat fell off; and as the door was locked, she proposed scrambling down to recover it. I bid her be cautious lest she got a fall, and she nimbly disappeared. But the return was no such easy matter; the stones were smooth and neatly cemented, and the rosebushes and blackberry stragglers could yield no assistance in re-ascending. (245)

Catherine II's 'fall' is not a literal fall as was her mother's but, opposingly, she has more agency in this event. It is, in fact, her hat that falls but Catherine II herself 'nimble' descends from the wall to fetch the hat. In addition to implying agency, this also indicates that Catherine II is not altogether unwilling in entering the symbolic realm of 'hell'. Moreover, the fact that Catherine II cannot climb back up the wall supports the symbolism of heaven and hell that the subverted narrative structure is largely based on. According to the Bible, a person that enters hell cannot return to heaven or to earth for that matter, and thus the symbolism is in accordance with this notion. Instead of falling to grace or descending to heaven, Catherine II falls from grace and ascends to hell in the subverted narrative form.

6.2.2. From Angel to Monster

The close affairs with the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights and, later, a forced marriage initiates Catherine II's fragmentation, or rather the dissolution of the exterior of an angel that she was cultivated to be, as the decadent features are inherent to her and hidden beneath. Even before the marriage, they are evident in her characteristics. Catherine II's longing for energy and activeness, as opposed to rigidity and passivity, is demonstrated in how she resists to sitting indoors. Linton asks Catherine,

'[w]ouldn't you rather sit here?' [...] addressing Cathy in a tone which expressed reluctance to move again. 'I don't know,' she replied, casting a longing look to the door, and evidently eager to be active. (Brontë, 231)

In addition to longing for activeness that could be misconstrued for decadence, in this instance is also demonstrated the contrast between the passive and oppressive 'heaven' – which is Linton's designated 'realm' – and the active and energetic 'hell' fitting to Catherine II. In addition to activeness, Catherine expresses aggression, as quarrelling with Linton, Catherine

gave the chair a violent push, and caused him to fall against one arm. He was immediately seized by a suffocating cough that soon ended his triumph. (252)

A notable aspect here is the fact that Linton is described to have failed or lost to Catherine II which, consequently, is indicative of Catherine II's inclination to dominance and authority. Another instance overtly depicts, not only Catherine II's longing for activity and energy and Linton's for

passiveness and rigidity, but also the subversion between the concepts of 'hell' and 'heaven'.

Catherine recounts to Ms Dean how,

'[o]ne time [...] we were near quarrelling. He said the pleasantest manner of spending a hot July day was lying from morning till evening on a bank of heath in the middle of the moors, with the bees humming dreamily about among the bloom, and the larks singing high up over head, and the blue sky, and bright sun shining steadily and cloudlessly. That was his most perfect idea of heaven's happiness – mine was rocking in a rustling green tree, with a west wind blowing, and bright, white clouds flitting rapidly above; and not only larks, but throstles, and blackbirds, and linnets, and cuckoos pouring out music on every side, and the moors seen at a distance, broken into cool dusky dells; but close by great swells of long grass undulating in waves to the breeze; and woods and sounding water, and the whole world awake and wild with joy. He wanted all to lie in an ecstasy of peace; I wanted all to sparkle, and dance in a glorious jubilee. 'I said his heaven would be only half alive, and he said mine would be drunk; I said I should fall asleep in his, and he said he could not breathe in mine [...]. (261)

Linton's perception of what heaven should be like – phlegmatic dozing in the still and quiet air – resembles the traditional Christian ideals and ideas of heaven that Catherine II finds dull. The traditional Christian ideas of heaven referred to here are largely derived from the Bible, according to which heaven never alters and is in an eternal state of peace and calm. Catherine II describes her own conception of heaven, where the wind blows briskly, a multitude of different birds are singing, and the grass and clouds are in constant movement. Her description depicts energy, liveliness, and even chaos, which Linton finds suffocating.

Another decadent quality Catherine II exhibits, is her open and active disobedience of Ms Dean by escaping the Grange in order to visit Linton in Wuthering Heights. The two argue, Ms Dean exclaiming,

'I'll have that lock mended, and you can escape by no way else.' 'I can get over the wall,' she said, laughing. 'The Grange is not a prison, Ellen, and you are not my jailer. (255)

This instance depicts anxiety of spaces that the first Catherine experienced in the Grange, as well, and Isabella in Wuthering Heights. As opposed to them, Catherine II defies Ms Dean openly and

succeeds in her escapes. In addition to active defiance Catherine II shows qualities of authority and dominance as she compares herself to Linton, stating,

I'm older than he is, you know, and wiser, less childish, am I not? And he'll soon do as I direct him with some slight coaxing – He's a pretty little darling when he's good. I'd make such a pet of him, if he were mine [...]. (255)

Catherine II belittles Linton calling him less wise than she is, childish and, additionally, calls him demeaning names such as 'pretty little darling' or 'pet' with an annex, 'mine', asserting ownership over him. Furthermore, she believes she can control and direct Linton as she pleases, with a little bit of 'coaxing'. A woman belittling and dominating a man was widely considered unorthodox in a Victorian society, and most importantly, decadent.

From the very beginning when Linton is brought to the Grange, his character is described weak, unenergetic and fair – those qualities resembling the side of her mother – and later on, a bitterness and unfairness is revealed in his nature, which in turn resembles his father's side. When he is brought to the Grange, he is

wrapped in a warm, fur-lined cloak, as if it had been winter. A pale, delicate effeminate boy, who might have been taken for my master's younger brother, so strong was the resemblance, but there was a sickly peevishness in his aspect, that Edgar Linton never had. (213)

Alike to his uncle, Linton is described delicate and even feminine. It is important to be aware of the different gender system and definitions of 'masculine' and 'feminine' in this novel. Attributes given to masculinity in a more traditional definition – evidently employed in this novel – are strength, energy, and health, whereas feminine features were delicateness, passiveness and even sickliness. The 'sickly peevishness' is inherited from Heathcliff, for Ms Dean does not recognise this quality in Edgar. Ms Dean continues to describe Linton and how his "looks and movements were very languid, and his form extremely slight; but there was a grace in his manner that mitigated these defects, and rendered him not unpleasing" (229). Languidness and 'slightness' of form contrast Linton with Catherine II's energetic and lively nature. Later, when more of Linton's nature is revealed as he grows up into his adolescence, Ms Dean deems him

[t]he worst tempered bit of sickly slip that ever struggled into its teens Happily, as Mr Heathcliff conjectures, he'll not win twenty! I doubt whether he'll see spring indeed – and small loss to his family, whenever he drops off; and lucky it is for us that his

father took him – The kinder he was treated, the more tedious and selfish he'd be.
(256)

As Heathcliff claims Linton from the Grange to live in Wuthering Heights, Linton begins to resemble his father more than his mother, concurring with the oppressive and patriarchal qualities that Heathcliff resembles.

When Catherine II and Linton first meet, she tends the tired and feeble boy, but does so patronisingly, asserting her intent to dominate Linton. Tired from the journey to the Grange from his original home,

Linton slowly trailed himself off, and lay down. Cathy carried a foot-stool and her cup to his side. At first she sat silent; but that could not last; she had resolved to make a pet of her little cousin, as she would have him to be; and she commenced stroking his curls, and kissing his cheek, and offering him tea in her saucer, like a baby. This pleased him, for he was not much better; he dried his eyes, and lightened into a faint smile. (214)

Catherine II asserts dominance over Linton in how she offers him tea from her saucer as one would to a baby. The physical setting of Linton laying down and Catherine II sitting upright beside him creates a sense of authority, as well. Furthermore, this instance depicts the rewind nature of the story of the second generation when compared to the story of the first generation, as Catherine Earnshaw was the one being taken care of like a child, while Catherine Linton is the one that tends her cousin.

More than Linton, Heathcliff is the one that actively attempts to submit Catherine II under the restraints of patriarchy. Heathcliff's oppressive and aggressive nature is revealed on one instance when he first meets Catherine II and lures her into Wuthering Heights. While he does so, he seizes Ms Dean's arm and she is forced to enter the house along with the unwitting Catherine II. While Heathcliff drags Ms Dean by the arm, he reveals his plans of how "the two cousins may fall in love, and get married" (228). Here the oppressive nature of the Victorian era marriage institution is reflected; as often was the case, marriage was not a question of love and free will on the part of the woman, but rather, she was considered an object in the trade between a father and the husband. Heathcliff finally carries out his plan and, consequently, takes Catherine II and Ms Dean as captives into the Wuthering Heights:

We reached the threshold; Catherine walked in; [...] Mr Heathcliff, pushing me forward, exclaimed – ‘My house is not stricken with the plague, Nelly; and I have a mind to be hospitable to-day; sit down, and allow me to shut the door.’ He shut and locked it also. I started. [...] ‘I’m not afraid of you!’ exclaimed Catherine [...]. She stepped close up; her black eyes flashing with passion and resolution. ‘Give me the key – I will have it!’ she said. ‘I wouldn’t eat or drink here, if I were starving.’ Heathcliff had the key in his hand that remained on the table. He looked up, seized with a sort of surprise at her boldness, or, possibly, reminded by her voice and glance, of the person from whom she inherited it. She snatched at the instrument, and half succeeded in getting it out of his loosened fingers; but her action recalled him to the present; he recovered it speedily. ‘Now, Catherine Linton,’ he said, ‘stand off, or I shall knock you down [...] ‘We will go!’ she repeated, exerting her utmost efforts to cause the iron muscles to relax; and finding that her nails made no impression, she applied her teeth pretty sharply. [...] Catherine was too intent on his fingers to notice his face. He opened them, suddenly, and resigned the object of dispute; but, ere she had well secured it, he seized her with the liberated hand, and, pulling her on his knee, administered, with the other, a shower of terrific slaps on both sides of the head [...]. (284–285)

Where the oppression imposed upon Catherine Earnshaw was more passive, abstract, and patronising in nature, the oppression in this case is more active, aggressive, overt, and tangible. The first Catherine was oppressed by attitudes and ideals that she was expected to comply with, while Catherine II is physically seized and held captive and chastised with slaps on her head. In addition to more distinct oppression, Catherine II’s rebellion is more aggressive and violent as she applies both her nails and teeth to Heathcliff’s fingers in order to attain the key from his hand. Where Catherine had to suppress her rebellious nature in order to fulfil her role as the angel, Catherine II overtly and violently rebels against her oppressors. It is argued that obsessive imagery of enclosure and captivity in Victorian era female texts stems from anxiety of being figuratively trapped into male texts (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 83). This argument resonates with Brontë’s writing, as Catherine II is very concretely locked and imprisoned in a man’s house. Linton then reveals the reason for their imprisonment, explaining how

‘[p]apa wants us to be married [...] And he knows your papa wouldn’t let us marry now; and he’s afraid of my dying, if we wait; so we are to be married in the morning,

and you are to stay here all night; and, if you do as he wishes, you shall return home next day, and take me with you.’ (Brontë, 286–287)

Thus, in the case of Catherine II, the oppression is depicted more concretely and clearly than in the case of her mother, as it is stated outright that she is to be held captive unless as she agrees to marry Linton.

Catherine II, then, finally agrees on marrying Linton and the hierarchies between them seemingly shift. Linton explains how Heathcliff

says I’m not to be soft with Catherine – she’s my wife, and it’s shameful that she should wish to leave me! He says, she hates me, and wants me to die, that she may have my money, but she shan’t have it; and she shan’t go home! she never shall! she may cry and be sick as much as she pleases. (294)

Catherine II is subjugated by being held captive and by Linton treating her with hostility as opposed to ‘softness’. Furthermore, property issues of a nineteenth-century marriage are also demonstrated, as Linton explains how

uncle is dying, truly, at last – I’m glad, for I shall be the master of the Grange after him – and Catherine always spoke of it as *her* house. It isn’t hers! It’s mine – papa says everything she has is mine. All her nice books are mine – she offered to give me them, and her pretty birds, and her pony Minny, if I would get the key of our room, and let her out: but I told her she had nothing to give, they were all, all mine. And then she cried, and took a little picture from her neck, and said I should have that – two pictures in a gold case – on one side her mother, and on the other, uncle [...] I said *they* were mine, too [...]. (295–296)

As was dictated in nineteenth-century legislation, all property of the woman that she had attained before the marriage, would become the husband’s property. Similarly, Linton is inferring how Catherine II now has no rights to what she had before their marriage, and how all that she owned or would have inherited is now legally his. The arrangement and practicalities of Linton and Catherine II’s marriage is an example given of the nineteenth-century marriage institution and how a marriage could legally be arranged and what practices were allowed within a marriage during that era.

Instead of the forced marriage spiralling Catherine II into madness and an untimely death as in her mother’s case, the fragmentation or revelation of her true disposition makes her retaliate against the patriarchal structures even more vehemently, which can be perceived as she portrays decadent and

monstrous qualities. Although Catherine II was brought up in a caring, although patronising, environment and was cultivated to be calm, mannerly, and disposed, the encounter with the more overt patriarchal structures, such as a forced marriage and captivity, roused within her a more prevalent sense of rebellion.

The decadent characteristics that Catherine II shows in little glimpses start to prevail and eventually overthrow the guise of the angel. According to Ms Dean, once Catherine II and Linton had been married, “she looked more sulky, and less spirited than when I had seen her first” (315).

Furthermore, as Lockwood himself is acquainted with Catherine II, when he is nearly attacked by dogs in *Wuthering Heights*, he describes the event and Catherine II herself:

a lusty dame, with tucked-up gown, bare arms, and fire-flushed cheeks, rushed into the midst of us flourishing a frying-pan; and used that weapon, and her tongue, to such purpose, that the storm subsided magically, and she only remained, heaving like a sea after a high wind [...]. (7)

The decadent qualities described here by Lockwood are ‘savageness’ or being unrefined, as her gown is tucked-up and her arms bare, instead of being dressed elegantly, as would be proper to a Victorian lady. Other decadent elements are a violent nature and energy as she threatens the animals with a frying-pan and, with her flushed cheeks, ‘heaves like a stormy sea’. In addition to these characteristics, her decadence is given a more religious undertone, as she pretends to be a witch on an instance where she and the servant, Joseph, have an argument:

‘I’ll show you how far I’ve progressed in the Black Art – I shall soon be competent to make a clear house of it. The red cow didn’t die by chance; and your rheumatism can hardly be reckoned among providential visitations!’ ‘Oh, wicked, wicked!’ gasped the elder, ‘may the Lord deliver us from evil!’ ‘No, reprobate! you are a castaway – be off, or I’ll hurt you seriously! I’ll have you all modelled in wax and clay; and the first who passes the limits I fix, shall – I’ll not say what he shall be done to – but, you’ll see! Go, I’m looking at you!’ The little witch put a mock malignity into her beautiful eyes, and Joseph, trembling with sincere horror hurried out praying and ejaculating ‘wicked’ as he went. (16)

As Catherine II is associated with witchcraft, it further supports her characterisation as an archetypal female monster and her association to the symbolic realm of ‘hell’ which is her personal heaven. Moreover, Catherine II, once again, asserts dominance through ‘fixing limits’ that shall not be passed without punishment. Joseph, a caricatural conservative and extremely religious figure,

condemns her 'wicked', which is arguably representative of how conservatively minded people considered and treated 'decadent' female figures in the Victorian era.

6.3. Catherine II and Hareton – Imagining Female Victory

As Linton dies of a long illness, the focal point from his and Catherine II's affairs turns to Catherine II and Hareton's affairs. Hareton differs from Linton in many ways as did Heathcliff from Edgar.

As opposed to a feminine, languid, and sickly boy, Hareton is described as

a well-made, athletic youth, good looking in features, and stout and healthy, but attired in garments befitting his daily occupations of working on the farm, and lounging among the moors after rabbits and game. Still, I thought I could detect in his physiognomy a mind owning better qualities than his father ever possessed. Good things lost amid a wilderness of weed, to be sure, whose rankness far over-topped their neglected growth; yet, notwithstanding, evidence of a wealthy soil that might yield luxurious crops, under other and favourable circumstances. (Brontë, 209)

In addition to being described more masculine in the Victorian era tradition's sense, as opposed to Linton, Ms Dean deems his nature to have better and more amiable qualities than his father, Hindley Earnshaw, and detects potential for further growth of character if allowed better circumstances. Ms Dean can be seen using the theory of 'nature and nurture', where the effects and significance of genes as opposed to upbringing and environment are compared to each other. Ms Dean implies that despite Hareton's rough upbringing, he still has innate goodness in his 'wealthy soil' that could bear 'luxurious crop' in better conditions and perhaps even be moulded into a gentleman.

However, Hareton initially behaves and acts brutishly due to the effects of the environment where he grows up. Ms Dean speculates that

Mr Heathcliff, I believe, had not treated him physically ill; thanks to his fearless nature, which offered no temptation to that course of oppression; it had none of the timid susceptibility that would have given zest to ill-treatment, in Heathcliff's judgement. He appeared to have bent his malevolence on making him a brute: he was never taught to read or write; never rebuked for any bad habit which did not annoy his keeper; never led a single step towards virtue, or guarded by a single precept against vice. And from what I heard,

Joseph contributed much to his deterioration by a narrow-minded partiality which prompted him to flatter, and pet him, as a boy, because he was the head of the old family. [...] If the lad swore, he wouldn't correct him; nor however culpably he behaved. It gave Joseph satisfaction, apparently, to watch him go the worst lengths. (209)

Hareton was to be Heathcliff's product of malevolence and vengeance on Hindley Earnshaw. He was deliberately cultivated to be the very opposite of Catherine II; Hareton was brought up in a way that moulded him into a brute, whereas Catherine II was educated to be a mannerly and sophisticated angel.

Catherine II and Hareton's affairs are largely delineated by Catherine II asserting dominance over Hareton, as was the case with Catherine II and Linton's affairs. When Catherine II first meets Hareton and travels to Heathcliff's estates, signs of a domineering status in relation to Hareton can be perceived. Much like Catherine Earnshaw's name scribbled on the windowsill obtruded Lockwood, so does Catherine II's gaze obtrude Hareton as "he could not stand a steady gaze from her eyes, though they were just his own" (207). In male literary tradition, the obtrusive male gaze functioned as an oppressive structure, but here the traditional arrangement and roles have been reversed. If the subversion of the narrative structure is heeded, Catherine II is rendered a female heroine, while according to the more traditionally inclined narrative level, she resembles the archetypal female monster. The dominance continues as Catherine II exclaims to Hareton

'[n]ow, get my horse,' she said, addressing her unknown kinsman as she would one of the stable-boys at the Grange. 'And you may come with me. I want to see where the goblin hunter rises in the marsh, and to hear about the *fairishes*, as you call them – but, make haste! What is the matter? Get my horse, I say'. (207)

Although Hareton is Catherine II's cousin, she treats him as she would a servant – someone below her in a hierarchy. In another instance when Catherine II is visiting Wuthering Heights with Ms Dean, Hareton is advised to keep company to her. Again, Hareton finds it difficult to look directly at her as he

had his countenance completely averted from his companion. He seemed studying the familiar landscape with a stranger's, and an artist's interest. Catherine took a sly look at him, expressing small admiration. (232)

While Hareton is unable to look directly at Catherine II, and is satisfied with looking at the landscape instead of her, Catherine II, on the other hand, directs her gaze on Hareton. In addition to

employing a defiant gaze, Catherine II has authority over Hareton in literacy. Ms Dean describes an event, saying,

I heard Cathy inquiring of her unsociable attendant, what was that inscription over the door? Hareton stared up, and scratched his head like a true clown. ‘It’s some damnable writing,’ he answered. ‘I cannot read it.’ ‘Can’t read it?’ cried Catherine, ‘I can read it ... It’s English ... but I want to know why it is there.’ Linton giggled – the first appearance of mirth he had exhibited. ‘He does not know his letters,’ he said to his cousin. ‘Could you believe in the existence of such a colossal dunce?’ ‘Is he all as he should be?’ asked Miss Cathy seriously, ‘or is he simple ... not right? I’ve questioned him twice now, and each time he looked so stupid I think he does not understand me; I can hardly understand *him*, I’m sure’. (233)

Not only is Catherine’s authoritative stance in this instance shown through her education and ability to read, but also through the fact that she overtly belittles and ridicules Hareton for not being able to read. A similar episode repeats itself on another occasion, as Catherine II is visiting Wuthering Heights, again, and Hareton

moved off to open the door, and, as he raised the latch, he looked up to the inscription above, and said, with a stupid mixture of awkwardness, and elation: “Miss Catherine! I can read yon, nah.” “Wonderful,” I [Catherine II] exclaimed. “Pray let us hear you – you *are* grown clever!” ‘He spelt, and drawled over by syllables, the name – “Hareton Earnshaw.” “And the figures?” I cried, encouragingly, perceiving that he came to a dead halt. “I cannot tell them yet,” he answered. “Oh, you dunce!” I said, laughing heartily at his failure. ‘The fool stared, with a grin hovering about his lips, and a scowl gathering over his eyes, as if uncertain whether he might not join in my mirth; whether it were not pleasant familiarity, or what it really was, contempt. (262–263)

Literacy and education were often denied altogether of nineteenth-century middle-class women, and higher education, intellect, and literacy was an exclusively male practice and occupation and, thus, a means of oppressing women. In this case the traditional roles have been reversed, and the woman is the one more educated as opposed to the male figure. Nonetheless, Catherine II’s social stance as an upper middle-class woman is what forms the basis of her authoritative position in comparison to Hareton and is the cause of her educatedness. Although a man of Hareton’s standing – a working-class man – would not have been denied education, he is still not educated due to Heathcliff’s

spiteful plan to raise him up to be an illiterate brute. Catherine II uses this advantage to ridicule Hareton, thus emphasising the sense of authority on Catherine II's part and the submission on Hareton's part.

Not only are literacy, intellect, and a higher standing in the social class system means of dominating for Catherine II, but also physical violence. Catherine II recounts the events of her leaving Wuthering Heights after an argument between her, Hareton, and Linton:

when at length they compelled me to depart, and I had got some hundred yards off the premises, he [Hareton] suddenly issued from the shadow of the road-side, and checked Minny and took hold of me. "Miss Catherine, I'm ill grieved," he began, "but it's rayther too bad –" 'I gave him a cut with my whip, thinking, perhaps he would murder me – He let go, thundering one of his horrid curses, and I galloped home more than half out of my senses. (265–266)

The whip functions as a symbol for dominance in the story of the first narrative, as well, when Catherine Earnshaw wished her father to bring her a whip. In this instance, Catherine II uses the whip to defend herself and, seemingly, to dominate Hareton.

Once Linton dies of his sickness and Catherine II is left to live in Wuthering Heights with those who remain, Hareton attempts to reconcile, only to have Catherine II deter his attempts. An instance is described where Catherine II leaves her secluded chamber and joins the rest in the parlour and

[h]aving sat till she was warm, she began to look round, and discover a number of books in the dresser; she was instantly upon her feet again, stretching to reach them, but they were too high up. 'Her cousin, after watching her endeavours a while, at last summoned courage to help her; she held her frock, and he filled it with the first that came to hand. 'That was a great advance for the lad – she didn't thank him; still, he felt gratified that she had accepted his assistance, and ventured to stand behind as she examined them, and even to stoop and point out what struck his fancy in certain old pictures which they contained – nor was he daunted by the saucy style in which she jerked the page from his finger; he contented himself with going a bit farther back, and looking at her, instead of the book. (312)

Although Hareton offers Catherine II help in this instance and seems to be willing to reconcile their old grudges, Catherine II still insists on acting in an aggressive manner. The defiant behaviour

bolsters Catherine II's autonomous, even solitary, stance. Catherine II persists in defying Hareton, as he,

not quite awake to what he did, but attracted like a child to a candle, at last, he proceeded from staring to touching; he put out his hand and stroked one curl, as gently as if it were a bird. He might have stuck a knife into her neck, and started round in such a taking. "Get away, this moment! How dare you touch me? Why are you stopping there?" she cried, in a tone of disgust. (313)

Catherine II's rebellion against Hareton's actions are straightforward and overt. On the one hand, her behaviour can be concluded to be mere 'sauciness' and ill behaviour associated with decadence, while on the other it can also be interpreted as bravery, as she acts defiantly. However, Hareton's behaviour draws special attention to itself, as so far this is the first instance where a male character seems to express amiable intentions as opposed to hostile oppression or stifling patronisation. Hareton and Catherine II's relationship seems to act as a turning point for reconciliation – not merely reconciliation between Hareton and Catherine II, but in 'the war of the sexes'; the war between the oppressor and the oppressed who struggles for emancipation.

The story of Catherine II ends, not in defeat through death, but in a seeming victory. Firstly, as Heathcliff – the one who took Catherine II as captive and oppressed her – dies, Catherine II gains economic authority as she inherits ownership of Thrushcross Grange. Lockwood finds this out when he comes to settle issues concerning rent with Heathcliff:

'What business sir?' Said Nelly [...] 'About the rent,' I answered. 'Oh! then it is with Mrs Heathcliff you must settle,' she observed, 'or rather with me. She has not learnt to manage her affairs yet, and I act for her; there's nobody else.' I looked surprised. 'Ah! you have not heard of Heathcliff's death, I see!' she continued. 'Heathcliff dead?' I exclaimed, astonished. (326)

However, it should be noted that Catherine II did not defeat Heathcliff through her own active efforts. Gilbert and Gubar argue that "in women's texts, men generally win tests of bodily strength, but women outwit or outlast men who fortuitously succumb to fatal mischances" (*No Man's Land*, 66–67). In this case, the victory is gained through outlasting rather than outwitting. A fitting fragment from Emily Dickinson's writings, that can be applied to this instance, reads "I rose – because He sank –" (qtd. in *No Man's Land*, 172). In other words, female victory in Victorian era female literature was in many cases not achieved by the woman actively fighting and defeating the male oppressor, but rather through a stroke of luck.

In addition to defeating Heathcliff by outlasting him, Catherine II outwits Hareton. As has been established, literacy was a form of authority or dominance and it gives agency to the female character. Hareton is illiterate and uncivilised as opposed to the well-learned Catherine II.

Kavanagh argues that

for the woman, the control of language and writing provides a kind of counter-phallic power which surreptitiously (and ironically) channel libidinal energies through social ambitions, whose ostensible pacifism and ‘maturity’ only mask a more subtle and effective form of unconscious aggression. (20)

In other words, literacy was a way through which nineteenth-century women could exert power and dominance as well as gain agency. With the means of literacy and writing they could defy the patriarchal structures, although covertly and secretly in some instances, as in *Wuthering Heights*. Furthermore, writing was a form of self-expression, where they could portray their feelings of aggression and frustration of being oppressed.

In addition to outwitting Hareton, Catherine II emasculates and dominates him through the traditionally hierarchical positioning of a teacher and a student as she teaches Hareton to read. This event is overlooked by Lockwood:

‘Con-trary!’ said a voice, as sweet as silver bell – ‘That for the third time, you dunce! I’m not going to tell you again – Recollect, or I pull your hair!’ ‘Contrary, then,’ answered another, in deep, but softened tones. ‘No, read it over first correctly, without a single mistake.’ The male speaker began to read [...] having a book before him. His handsome features glowed with pleasure, and his eyes kept wandering from the page to a small white hand over his shoulder, which recalled him by a smart slap on the cheek, whenever its owner detected such signs of inattention. (Brontë, 324–325)

Not only does Catherine II teaching Hareton imply authority, but also the actual physical positioning of Hareton sitting down by the table and Catherine II standing imperatively behind him with her hand on his shoulder.

With the patriarchy at least for a moment subsided, between the two sides in the ‘battle of sexes’ “the treaty had been ratified, on both sides, the enemies were, thenceforth, sworn allies” (332). The battle of the sexes refers to the power struggle between the oppressor and the oppressed and the battle is that of one side striving for emancipation and the other attempting to keep women oppressed and stifled. However, it should be noted that the opponents in the battle were not so

clear-cut, as there were men standing up for the emancipation of women, and surely, there were women standing up for more conventional values. The opponents in this battle are not simply male and female, but rather abstract ideas and practical conventions; oppression and domesticity opposing proto-feminism and the expansion of women's spheres beyond the domestic. The battle was between the conservatively minded and the liberal-minded, and the focus of the conflict was the equality of sexes

Some critics have interpreted Catherine Linton to represent regression and oppression, as she reconciles with Hareton in the end, while Catherine Earnshaw would represent rebellion and feminism as she died a heroic death unreconciled and in a place she was not able to call her home. Concurring with this interpretation, the novel has been characterised as a description of a "war between nature and culture" (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 305). In this context, nature is synonymous for rebellion and emancipation, while culture represents the oppressive and stifling patriarchal structures. Additionally, Gilbert and Gubar argue that *Wuthering Heights* ends, not in female victory, but rather in a return to the status quo that Catherine Earnshaw attempted to rebel against. They claim that "the Heights – hell – has been converted into the Grange – heaven; and with patriarchal history redefined, renovated, restored, the nineteenth century can truly begin [...]" (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, 302). This claim, however, is unsupported taking in consideration the indications of female authority and dominance present and evident in the ending of Catherine II's story. Therefore, it can be claimed that the ending of Catherine II's story is more of a victory than was the story of the first Catherine.

7. Conclusion

The aim of this study is to establish that *Wuthering Heights* employs a subverted narrative structure that allows controversial issues to be discussed in a covert manner. The issues in question are the nineteenth-century marriage institution, its legislative and practical levels, as well as women's position in the Victorian era society. Based on a heretic narrative technique, the subverted narrative structure is largely constructed of religious imagery of heaven and hell, angels, and the devil. The two houses represent both hell and heaven depending on which narrative voice is describing them. This study focuses mostly on those narrative voices which describe the outwardly hellish Heights as heaven, and the Grange as hell. The female protagonists, Catherine Earnshaw and Catherine Linton alter between monstrous and angelic, whereas the male characters are more rigid in their characterisation and do not experience fragmentation of self. In addition to discussing these issues with the means of a subverted narrative structure, the novel overtly depicts issues such as marital brutality and legislation concerning marriage, reflecting the cultural environment and values of the nineteenth-century England.

The theory of the subverted narrative structure is derived largely from Gilbert and Gubar's research, although they are certainly not the only researchers to have discussed the issue. However, their argumentation expresses notable biases and simplifications of issues. For instance, the discussion of fragmentation and disassociation, both psychological conditions universal to all genders, were strongly associated to women and claimed to be a 'uniquely female condition'. The representations the authors assigned to some characters were contradictory in some parts, for instance, Heathcliff was described as a benevolent ally to Catherine Earnshaw and a patriarchal oppressor of Catherine Linton.

Although Victorian era proto-feminist texts, such as *Wuthering Heights*, have been quite widely studied especially in the 1970s along with the upsurge of feminist ideologies, much of the research shows biases much like Gilbert and Gubar's research, which is why revision of the research was needed. Further research is still needed on the male characters and their representations, as this study focuses mostly on the female characters.

In conclusion, this study claims that both Catherine and Catherine II represent rebellion and are figures of emancipation, but in different ways. The function of Catherine's character and story is to document the symbolic female fatalities under the oppression of patriarchy, whereas Catherine II's story imagines female victory and 'corrects' the wrongs of the first Catherine's story.

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