The Concept of Revenge in Emily Bronte's
Wuthering Heights

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Abstract
The main purpose of this research is to depict the theme of revenge in Emily Bronte’s novel Wuthering Heights. This purpose is achieved by a careful examination of the novel concerned making use of some critical essays on the subject. The research is divided into four sections: section one is an introduction in which the statement of the research is stated; section two entitled Heathcliff and the Earnshaws deals with Heathcliff’s relation with the Earnshaws, namely Hindley; section three concentrates on Heathcliff’s relation with the Lintons, specifically Edgar and Isabella; section four offers a brief conclusion of the research.

I. Introduction
It is generally agreed among Emily Bronte’s critics that the theme of revenge is an important theme in her novel Wuthering Heights. Walter Allen states that “Wuthering Heights is a novel of revenge, with Heathcliff the revenger” (196). Commenting on the structure of Wuthering Heights, Sanger affirms that Heathcliff’s “revenge is the main theme of the root” (288) of the novel. As far as the theme of revenge is concerned, Ismail Salami, in his Study of Thirty Great Novels, alludes that “Heathcliff’s revenge against those who have wronged him taints all relationships at Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange” (527).

Obviously, the theme of revenge in Emily Bronte’s Wuthering Heights is focused on Heathcliff’s relation with the Earnshaws and the Lintons. Referring to Heathcliff’s bad nature, Charlotte Bronte, in her “preface to Wuthering Heights” believes that Heathcliff’s “stands
unredeemed; never once swerving in his arrowstraight course to perdition” (qtd. in sale 11) from the time when he was first brought to Wuthering Heights by old Earnshaw to the hour when Nelly Dean found him dead at the end of the novel. In its review to Wuthering Heights, The Examiner calls the novel “a strange book, ... and the people who make up the incidents of the novel are savages ruder than those who lived before the days of Homer. Heathcliff may be considered as the hero of the novel, if a hero there be. He is an incarnation of evil qualities, implacable hate, ingratitude, cruelty, falsehood, selfishness, and revenge.... He is linked to one virtue and a thousand crimes” (qtd. in sale 281).

Consequently, the theme of revenge in Wuthering Heights appears to be of considerable significance as the main subject of the present research. It will be shown through Heathcliff’s relation with the Earnshaws and the Lintons respectively.

2. Heathcliff and the Earnshaws

At his first introduction to old Earnshaw’s house, Heathcliff was unkindly received by almost all the family, particularly by Hindley who “hated him” (Wuthering Heights, chapter 4, p. 39). On the contrary, old Earnshaw, seeing “the poor, fatherless child” (ch. 4, p. 40) badly treated, he “took to Heathcliff strangely, believing all he said” (ibid)). This, in fact, deepened Hindley’s, the only son, disappointment. Hindley began to regard his father as “an oppressor rather than a friend, and Heathcliff as a usurper of his parents’ affections” (ibid).

Q.D Leavis believes that Heathcliff “by intrigue soon outs the legitimate son Hindley” (308), and this brings about the destruction of two families: the Earnshaws and the Lintons as well.

Heathcliff understood quite well how to make use of Mr. Earnshaw’s sympathy with him at the expense of Hindley. This is shown when Mr. Earnshaw gave Hindley and Heathcliff ponies;
Heathcliff’s soon become lame and when he discovered this he told Hindley saying:
“you must exchange horses with me, I don’t like mine, and if you won’t I shall tell your father of the three thrushings you’ve given me this week, and show him my arm, which is black to the shoulder”.

“Take my colt, gipsy, then! said young Earnshaw, “And I pray that he may break your neck; take him, and be damned, you beggarly interloper! and wheedle my father out of all he has, only afterwards show him what you are, imp of Satan—And take that, I hope he’ll kick out your brains!”

(Ch.4.p.41)

So, from the very beginning, Heathcliff’s existence in the Earnshaw’s family “bred bad feelings in the house” (ch.4.p.40). And at Mr. Earnshaw’s death two years later, the young master was ready to pay Heathcliff back what he considered his usurping of his father’s affections. In this respect Catherine Earnshaw, Hindley’s sister, believes that “Hindley is a detestable substitute” (ch.3.p26) to his father and “his conduct to Heathcliff is atrocious” (ibid).

At the very beginning of his being the master of the house, Hindley was tyrannous with Heathcliff. He ordered him to live with the servants instead of the family depriving him from any kind of education, and forced him to labour all the day on the farm. In fact, “Heathcliff bore his degradation pretty well at first, because Cathy taught him what she learnt, and worked or played with him in the fields. They both promised fair to grow up as rude as savages” (ch.6.p.46). Hindlesy’s bad treatment to both Heathcliff and Catherine makes them very close to each other, and they “contrived some naughty plan of revenge” (ibid). Heathcliff desired to be given the privilege of “painting the house - front with Hindley’s blood” (ibid..p48).
Heathcliff was greatly degraded at Catherine’s return to Wuthering Heights after five weeks of absence. At her arrival to her family, Hindley ordered Heathcliff to “come and wish Miss Catherine welcome, like the other servants” (ch.7.p.51). And at dinner, when Hindley met Heathcliff, “he shoved him back with a sudden thrust” ordering his servant, Joseph to “keep the fellow out of the room” and “send him to the garret till dinner is over. He’ll be cramming his fingers in the tarts, and stealing the fruits, if left alone with them a minute” (ch.7.p.55). And when Nelly said that Heathcliff must have his share from the dainties, Hindley replied that he “shall have his share of my hand” (ibid). Hindley goes on his severe treatment to Heathcliff when he allowed Edgar Linton, his guest, to “take the law into your [Edgar’s] own first “(ibid) to thrust Heathcliff. Consequently, Heathcliff’s abhorrence to Hindley was deepened, and his desire for revenge is obvious when he told Nelly: “I’m trying to settle how I shall pay Hindley back I don’t care how long I wait, if I can only do it, at last. I hope he will not die before I do!” “For shame, Heathcliff” said I [Nelly] It is for God to punish wicked people; we should learn to forgive”. “No, God won’t have the satisfaction that I shall”, he returned. “I only wish I knew the best way! let me alone, and I’ll plan it out; while I’m thinking of that, I don’t feel pain”. (ch.7.p.57)

After his wife’s death, Hindley became more violent and tyrannous. His treatment to Heathcliff was worse than before. In fact, Hindley’s bad treatment to Heathcliff, as Nelly remarked, “was enough to make a fiend of a saint”(ch.7.p.61). On the other hand, Heathcliff’s “diabolical” features were apparent. Heathcliff was pleased to watch Hindley “degrading himself past redemption; and became daily more notable for savage sullenness and ferocity”(ibid). It is clear that Hindley’s sudden degeneration and his inability to bear
the grief of his wife’s death give Heathcliff the chance for the revenge he has longed for.

Heathcliff’s return to Wuthering Heights, after three-year absence, gives him an excellent opportunity to satisfy his old grudge against Hindley. At his first visit to Thrushcross Grange after Catherine’s marriage, Heathcliff revealed to Catherine the purpose behind his coming back: “just to have one glimpse of your face, ...; afterwards settle my score with Hindley” (ch.10.p.85).

However, Heathcliff spent an hour in Thrushcross Grange; then he left to Wuthering Heights because, as he stated, “Mr. Earnshaw invited” (ibid.,p.83) him. Thus, Heathcliff came to live in the house of his old enemy, Hindley, who had turned at that time to gambling and drinking. Finding Heathcliff well supplied with money, Hindley invited him to stay with him at Wuthering Heights. And Heathcliff understood excellently well how to make use of this opportunity to destroy his old enemy. Commenting on the importance of Heathcliff’s return to Wuthering Heights, Q.D: Leavis stated that it was “the spark that set off the train of gunpowder” (317). He went on saying:

It follows from the social development of the theme

That Heathcliff should go out into the world to make his fortune and came back to avange himself, a cruel hard landlord, near close-handed and given over to avarice, meanness and greed. Plotting to secure the property of both Earnshaws and Lintons and also to claim equality with them socially (310). Finding Hindley in his worst condition, physically and mentally, Heathcliff started to perform his plan of revenge against him. The first thing he did was teaching Hareton, Hindley’s son, bad things, such as cursing, swearing and uttering taboo words against his father and the others. Hareton told Nelly that he liked Heathcliff because “he pays Dad back what he gives to me----he curses Daddy for cursing me----he says I mun do as I will” (ch.II.p.95). And when Nelly asked him whether the curate teaches him to read and write, Hareton said, “No, I
was told curate should have his----teeth dashed down his------throat, if he stepped over the threshold. Heathcliff had promised that”'(ibid). Apparently, Heathcliff as a part of his plan of revenge against the Earnshaws, includes Hareton to keep him completely ignorant and unrefined. It is quite clear that Heathcliff’s method of revenge is not limited to Hindley only; it also involves Hareton, his son, “whom out of revenge for the way he [Heathcliff] was treated as a boy, he brings him up as a mere brute” (Sanger, 288). concerning Heathcliff’s hatred to Hareton, Ewbank remarks that “Heathcliff must hate Hareton in so far as he himself was dealt with by Hindley” (328). However, Heathcliff succeeded to make Hareton as brute as he was made so by Hareton’s father. In this respect Nelly observed: 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 judgment. He appeared to have bent his malevolence on making him 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. (ch.18.p.161)

Heathcliff came back to Wuthering Heights after his elopment with Isabella Linton, Edgar’s sister, finding Hindley in his weakest situation. Obviously, Hindley is, now, completely in Heathcliff’s power. He is utterly in debt to Heathcliff, and then Heathcliff held a mortgage on Wuthering Heights. In fact Hindley could not avoid gambling with Heathcliff; he hoped to regain all his losses. Eventually, Heathcliff led him to complete bankruptcy and then to death.

Hindley died after a bloody quarrel with Heathcliff in which Heathcliff “kicked and trampled on him, and dashed his head
repeatedly against the flags” (ch.17.p.147). Then, it was announced that Hindley has gambled away all his estate and “mortgaged every yard of land he owned for cash to supply his mania for gaming, and he [Heathcliff] was the mortgagee” (ch.18.p.155). Thus, Hareton, Hindley’s son, lost his chance of being a natural heir of his father; and he “was reduced to a state of complete dependence on his father’s inveterate enemy; and lives in his own house as a servant deprived of the advantage of wages” (ibid).

Eventually, Heathcliff became the actual owner of the Earnshaw’s property, Wuthering Heights, fulfilling the purpose of his project of revenge against the Earnshaws. And then Heathcliff directed his attention to the Lintons.

3. Heathcliff and the Lintons

Heathcliff’s hatred to the Lintons is established very early in the novel. During her stay at Thrushcross Grange, Catherine and Edgar Linton became close to each other. Soon their relation is developed into love affair. When Catherine returned to Wuthering Heights, it was obvious that she was completely flattered by their attention and highly impressed by the luxary in which the Linton lived. Consequently, Edgar Linton became a frequent visitor to the Heights. The growing intimacy between Catherine and Edgar disturbed Heathcliff’s natural love to Catherine. In other words, Edgar’s relation with Catherine was certainly at the expense of Heathcliff’s love to her. Thus, there was a growing rivalry between Heathcliff and Edgar Linton.

As an acknowledgement of their kindness to Catherine, the Earnshaws had invited the Lintons to spend a morning at Wuthering Heights. This invitation had been accepted on one condition put by Mrs. Linton; it is “that her darlings [Edgar and Isabella] might be kept carefully from that naughty, swearing boy [Heathcliff]” (ch.7p.52). However, the next Christmas, Edgar and his sister, Isabella were at Wuthering Heights. During their existence there, Heathcliff was brutally treated by Hindley. He was prevented from joining them.
when they were together. And when Edgar made an inane remark about Heathcliff’s hair saying that it is “like a colt’s mane over his eyes” (ibid.p.55), Heathcliff became furious and he threw a basin of hot apple-sauce at Edgar’s face. For this, Heathcliff was severely punished by Hindley. So Heathcliff’s hatred to Edgar was deepened.

Obviously, Heathcliff hated Edgar looking on him as a rival for Catherine’s affection. And when Catherine and Edgar married, Heathcliff included Edgar within his plan of revenge. Heathcliff’s aim was to make Edgar’s life as miserable as possible with his wife, Catherine; and later on hurting him by marrying and mis-treating his sister Isabella, and forcing his daughter, Catherine into an unnatural marriage.

Heathcliff’s frequent visits to Thrushcross Grange and his meeting with Catherine were a source of disturbance to Edgar (ch.10.p.85).

In fact, Heathcliff put Edgar into an unenvied situation in what is known the “kitchen scene” in which Edgar and Heathcliff confronted each other physically. Edgar’s weakness was quite apparent, and Heathcliff’s strength prevailed. This made Catherine scold her husband for his physical weakness and admire Heathcliff for his strength. So Heathcliff succeeded to a large extent to drop Edgar so low in his wife’s regard.

“I have been so far forbearing with you, sir,” he[Edgar said, quietly, “not that I was ignorant of your miserable, degraded character,…, and Catherine wishing to keep up your acquittance, I acquised----foolishly. Your presence is a moral poison that would contaminate the most virtuous; for that cause, and to prevent worse consequences, I shall deny you, hereafter, admission into this house, and give notice, now, that I require your instant departure. Three minutes’ delay will render it involuntarily and ignominious”.

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“Cathy, this lamb of yours threatens like a bull”! he [Heathcliff] said, “It is in danger of splitting its skull against my knuckles. By God, Mr. Linton, I’m mortally sorry that you are not worth knocking down”!

“I wish you joy of the milk-blooded coward, Cathy”! said her friend [Heathcliff]. “I compliment you on your taste; and that is the slavering, shivering thing you preferred to me! I would not strike him with my fist, but I’d kick him with my foot, and experience considerable satisfaction. Is he weeping, or is he going to faint for fear?”

The next Linton to whom Heathcliff directed his project of revenge is Edgar’s sister, Isabella. Unfortunately, Isabella, despite her sister’s in law warning from Heathcliff, had infatuated with him. Nelly, help me to convince her of her madness. Tell her what Heathcliff is----an unreclaimed creature, Without refinement, without cultivation; an arid wilderness of furze and whinstone.......pray don’t imagine that he conceals depths of benevolence and affection beneath a stern exterior! He is not a rough diamond------a pearl------containing oyster of a rustic; he’s a fierce, pitiless, wolfish man...., and he’d crush you, like a sparrow’s egg, Isabella, if he found you a troublesome charge. I know he couldn’t love a Linton; and yet he’d be quite capable of marrying your fortune and expectations. Avarice is growing with him a besetting sin.
Nelly Dean also warned Isabella from falling into Heathcliff’s trap. She advised her to “banish him from her [Isabella] thoughts. He is a bird of bad owen, no mate” (ch.10.p.90) for Isabella.

Isabella insisted on loving Heathcliff blindly; and she didn’t listen to what she called their “slanders” (ibid.p.91). She thought that Heathcliff was “not a fiend; he had an honourable soul, and a true one” (ibid).

When Catherine told Heathcliff about Isabella’s affections, he was completely indifferent; and he showed his contempt and hatred to her as she belonged to the Lintons.

“And I like her too ill to attempt it”, said [Heathcliff], “except in a very ghoulish fashion. You’d hear off odd things’ if I lived alone with that mawkish, waxen face, the most ordinary would be painting on its white the colours of the rainbow, and turning the blue eyes black every day or two, they detestably resemble Linton’s.” (ibid.p.93)

Then Heathcliff began to consider the subject seriously asking if Isabella “is her brother’s heir. Is she not“? (ibid). Obviously, Heathcliff planned to make use of Isabella’s affection to perform his project of revenge against the Lintons. Nelly Dean remarked that she saw Heathcliff “smile to himself-grin rather- and lapse into ominous musing whenever Mrs. Linton has occasion to be absent from the apartment” (ibid).

After a short time, Isabella and Heathcliff married. And thus, Isabella fell easily into Heathcliff’s trap. In fact Heathcliff’s marriage to Isabella “carries on most vividly the theme of hate or revenge in the novel” (Coles Notes.p.39). Heathcliff believes that Lintons as well as the Earnshaws make his life miserable by taking Catherine away from him. Heathcliff hates Isabella because she is one of the Lintons. So it could be stated that Heathcliff’s motive behind marrying Isabella is to make one of the Lintons suffer; and give Edgar considerable pain.
What is important in this respect is Heathcliff’s hope to gain control on the Lintons’ property. However, Edgar foils this hope by disowning his sister and cutting her out of his will.

Isabella’s imagination of Heathcliff as a Byronic hero doesn’t last for a long time. She soon discovered her fatal mistake and foolishness. Heathcliff appeared to her to be ruthless, brutal, with no conscience and spark of humanity with those whom he considered his enemies. Isabella’s misery with Heathcliff is quite evident in her letter to Nelly Dean after her coming back with Heathcliff to Wuthering Heights.

Is 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----

…………………………………………………………………… he is ingenious and unresting in seeking to gain my abhorrence’
I sometimes wonder at him with an intensity that deadens my fear, yet, I assure you, a tiger or a venomous serpent could not rouse terror in me equal to that which he wakens.
He told me of Catherine’s illness, and accused my brother of causing it; promising that I should be Edgar’s proxy in suffering, till he could get a hold of him. I do hate him---I am wretched----
I have been a fool.                                  (ch.13.pp.115-123)

When Nelly Dean visited Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff explained to her his brutal treatment to Isabella from the moment they left Thrushcroos Grange till their coming back to Wuthering Heights. The first thing she saw me do on coming out of the Grange was to hang up her little dog; and when she pleaded for it the first words I uttered were a wish that I had the hanging of every being belonging to her.
Now, was it not the depth of absurdity-------of genuine idiocy------ for that pitiful, slavish, mean-minded brach to dream that I could love her? Tell your master, Nelly, that I never in all my life, met with such an abject thing as she is. She even disgraces the name of Lintons; and I have sometimes relented, from pure lack of innovation, in my experiments on what she could endure, and still creep shamefully cringing back! ….if she desired to go, she might; the nuisance of her presence outweighs the gratification to be derived from tormenting her!

(Ch.14. P.127)

Heathcliff’s above-mentioned speech is of considerable importance related to the theme of revenge. It “marks the sudden disillusioning of Isabella who after a very short time from her marriage loses her romantic infatuation and discovers what his [Heathcliff’s] real feelings for her are” (Ewbank 324). It also “echoes back to the image used by Catherine in trying to talk Isabella out of her growing infatuation (ibid): “I’d as soon put that little canary into park on a winter’s day, as recommend you to bestow your heart on him” (Ch.10. P.89). Ewbank goes on saying, “Isabella’s world is the cosy and artificial world of the cage.bird, or the lap.dog; Heathcliff”, to use Catherine’s words is a “fierce, pitiless, wolfish man” (Ch.10. P.89). “Isabella wilfully and disastrously blinds herself to the incompatibility of the wild and the tame”(324).

Isabella, herself, talked about her misery with Heathcliff when she informed Nelly that Heathcliff is:
a living fiend, a monster and not a human being!
I’ve been told I might leave him before; and I’ve made the attempt, but I dare not repeat it!…whatever he may pretend, he wishes to provoke Edgar to desperation; he says he has married me on purpose to obtain power
over him; and he shan’t obtain it….I’ll die first!
I just hope, I pray he may forget his diabolical prudence, and kill me! The single pleasure I can imagine is to die, or to see him dead!

(ch.14.p.128)

Then Heathcliff became furious. He ordered Isabella to go upstairs leaving him alone with Nelly; “he seized, and thrust her from the room, and came back muttering” (ch.14.p.128):
I have no pity! I have no pity! The more the worms writhe, the more I yearn to crush out their entrails!
It is a moral teething, and I grind with greater energy,
In proportion to the increase of pain. (ibid)

After Catherine’s death, Heathcliff’s brutality with Isabella was unbearable. On the day After Cathrine’s funeral, Heathcliff and Hindley, as mentioned earlier, had a bloody quarrel in which Hindely is completely beaten. Heathcliff accused his wife, Isabela, of conspiring with Hindley against him. When Isabella tried to defend herself, Heathcliff ordered her to “get up, and be gone out of [his] sight”, shouting “get up, wretched idiot, before I stamp you to death” (ch.17.p.150). Then he “snatched a dinner knife from the table and flung it at” (ibid). Isabella’s head causing a cut beneath her ear. However, Isabella managed to escape from Wuthering Heights to live in the south near London, where “she had a son born, a few months subsequent to her escape” (ibid.p.151). The boy was christened Linton. Thirteen years later, Isabella died. Linton was taken to live with his father at Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff revealed his intention of using Linton as a pawn in his plan to have full control over the families of the Earnshaws and the Lintons. Heathcliff told Nelly that Linton will be “the prospective owner of your place” (ch.20.p.170) meaning Thrushcross Grange. He also revealed that he intends to succeed Linton after Linton’s death.
The next phase of Heathcliff’s plan to destroy the Linton was to design a love affair between his unhealthy son, Linton and Catherine, Edgar’s daughter who, by some coincidences, became a frequent visitor to Wuthering Heights where she met Heathcliff, his son, and Hareton. During these visits, Heathcliff encouraged his son to court Catherine Linton. He also supervised Linton’s letters to his uncle, Edgar in which he requested to have a meeting, in the moors, with him and his daughter Catherine. Linton’s letters continue and Edgar allowed his daughter and Linton to meet each other once a week under Nelly’s supervision (ch.25.pp.206.207) Consequently, Catherine fell in love with Linton. Obviously, Catherine’s falling in love with Linton was part of Heathcliff’s plan of revenge. Heathcliff, fearing his son may die soon, was driving Linton to bring about the marriage he aimed for.

Catherine Linton and Nelly Dean went to meet Linton Heathcliff outside Wuthering Heights. Linton appeared to be pale and feeble; his health was worse than before. Then Linton fell down. Heathcliff ordered him to get on his feet. Linton was trembling with fear from his father; but with Catherine’s help he rose up. Heathcliff asked Catherine to go to Wuthering Heights with Linton because “he shudders if I touch him” (ch.27.p.219). Catherine refused, but then she agreed to accompany Linton. When they entered the house, Heathcliff closed the door behind them and locked it. Obviously, Catherine was “Kidnapped by Heathcliff” (sanger 288).

Knowing that Edgar was really dying, Heathcliff wanted his son, Linton, to marry Catherine before her father’s death. So he’d not let Catherine go back to see her dying father before marrying his son. All Nelly’s and Catherine’s attempts to escape were in vain. Being desperate, Catherine was forced to marry Heathcliff’s son. And a day after her marriage, her father died. Thus, the other half of Heathcliff’s project of revenge was accomplished. Heathcliff had already taken Isabella’s money by marrying her. Linton Heathcliff succeeded Edgar,
i.e., became his heir after his death, according to old Mr. Linton’s will, as Nelly remarked (ch.27.p.223) Who bestowed Thrushcross Grange to Isabella’s son, not to Edgar’s daughter. All Catherine’s personal property became Linton’s after their marriage. Then Linton died a short time after his marriage, having made his will leaving the Grange and all his personal properties to his father, Heathcliff (ch.30.p.233). Thus, Heathcliff was in possession of Thrushcross Grange and all Catherine’s property. So Heathcliff’s plan of revenge on the Lintons was completely accomplished.

Heathcliff’s method of revenge didn’t stop at crushing the second generation of the Earnshaws and the Lintons; it continued to torment their descendants: Hareton Earnshaw and Catherine Linton. Heathcliff, with cold blood, drove them to suffer and live as servants in their father’s land. Catherine believes that Heathcliff’s cruelty rises from his miserable life.

“Mr. Heathcliff, you have nobody to love you; and however miserable you make us, we shall still have the revenge of thinking that your cruelty rises from your greater misery! You are miserable, are you not? Lonely, like the devil, and envious like him? Nobody loves you--------nobody will cry for you, when you die!

(ch.29.p.288)

4.Conclusion

It has been shown apparently that the theme of revenge in Emily Bront’s Wuthering Heights is concentrated on Heathcliff’s relations with the Earnshaws and the Lintons. Heathcliff is treated brutally by Hindley Earnshaw who degraded him to the position of a servant preventing his love with Catherine. The Lintons, Heathcliff feels, usurp his only cause of happiness, Catherine. So Heathcliff’s hate to the Earnshaws and the Lintons fosters his desire for revenge. Heathcliff’s purpose is to crush both the Earnshaws and the Lintons and get control of their property. With the Earnshaws namely Hindley,
Heathcliff succeeded to accomplish his design of revenge. He repaid Hindley’s brutal treatment to him when Hindley’s health began to decline. Heathcliff has also gambled away Hindley’s estate, and finally holds a mortgage on Wuthering Heights and all the land belonging to it. After Hindley’s death, Heathcliff became the owner of Wuthering Heights, and had the last descendant of the family, Hareton, completely in his power.

After crushing the Earnshaws, Heathcliff turned his attention to the Lintons. In this respect, Heathcliff succeeded to a large extent to perform his project of revenge against them. Heathcliff succeeded to make Edgar Linton suffer, he destroyed Edgar’s relation with his wife, Catherine. He crushed Isabella and took all her personal property by marrying her. Then he forced Catherine Linton to marry his dying son, Linton who inherited the Grange after his uncle’s Edgar, death. After his son’s death, Heathcliff, according to his son’s will, came into possession of Thrushcross Grange and all Cathery’s personal property. To conclude is to recall Arnold Kettle’s suggestive remarks concerning Heathcliff’s revenge.
Heathcliff’s revenge may involve a pathological condition of hatred, but it is not at bottom merely neurotic. It has a moral force. For what Heathcliff does is to use against his enemies with complete ruthlessness their own weapons, to turn on them (stripped of their romantic veils) their own standards, to beat them at their own game. The weapons he uses against the Earnshaws and the Lintons are their own weapons of money and arranged marriages. He gets power over them by the classic methods of ruling class, expropriation and property deals.

(qtd. in Salami p,527)

So it could be safely stated that Heathcliff’s project of revenge is perfectly accomplished. His triumph is complete on those whom he
considered his enemies. He crushed them and took their properties having their descendants completely in his power.

Bibliography


