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Bakalářská práce

Heathcliff jako romantický hrdina

Heathcliff as a Romantic Hero

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Abstract

The aim of the bachelor thesis is primarily in the opening chapter to define Romanticism in English literature of the nineteenth century. Yet the main focus is on the concept of the Romantic hero both in poetry and prose of English Romantics (Byron, Shelley). The thesis also tries to characterize the main male character of Emily Brontë's novel *Wuthering Heights* in detail focusing particularly on his Romantic features. At the end it tries to outline primary internal discrepancies of the Romantic characters in novels of the Victorian period.

Anotace

Úkolem práce nejprve bude v úvodní kapitole definovat romantismus v anglické literatuře 19. století s důrazem na pojetí romantického hrdiny v poezii a próze anglických romantiků (Byron, Shelley). Práce se dále pokusí podrobně charakterizovat hlavní mužskou postavu románu Emily Brontë *Na Větrné hůrce* a soustředí se na její romantické rysy. V závěru práce nastíní základní vnitřní rozpory romantických postav románu viktoriánského období.

Contents

1. Introduction	7
2. British Romanticism and its Definition	8
3. The Romantic Period from the Historical Point of View.....	9
4. Romantic Features	11
4.1. The Concept of the Romantic Poet	11
4.2. Romantic Landscape	12
4.3. The Picturesque, the Beautiful and the Sublime	13
4.4. The Everyday and the Exotic	14
4.5. Escapism and the Supernatural	15
4.6. Individualism and Imagination	16
4.7. The Romantic Hero	17
4.7.1. Romantic Hero Types.....	18
5. Heathcliff as a Romantic Hero	20
5.1. Heathcliff's Mysterious Origin	20
5.2. Heathcliff's Appearance and its Consequences.....	22
5.3. Wandering.....	25
5.4. Heathcliff's Character.....	26
5.4.1. Heathcliff at the Children's Age	27
5.4.2. Heathcliff's Adolescence and Adulthood.....	27
5.4.3. The Positive Qualities of Heathcliff.....	30
5.5. The Influence of the Past	31
5.6. Revenge.....	32
5.7. The Relationship of Heathcliff and Catherine	34
5.7.1. Transcendence.....	37

5.8.	Heathcliff's death	41
6.	Heathcliff and Other Romantic Characters of Victorian Literature.....	42
6.1.	Heathcliff and Mr. Rochester	42
6.2.	Heathcliff and Catherine versus Rochester and Jane	44
7.	Conclusion.....	47
8.	Bibliography	49
8.1.	Primary Literature	49
8.2.	Secondary Literature.....	49
8.3.	Internet Sources	50
8.3.1.	Authors Available.....	50
8.3.2.	No Authors Available	51

1. Introduction

The Romantic era belongs among one of the most fascinating periods in British literary history. Not only did it give birth to a variety of extraordinary literary characters, but it also brought completely new generation of very talented poets and writers into focus.

In this bachelor thesis I aim to, firstly, define Romanticism, mention the historical context, in which it started to flourish and name the most typical authors of this literary Movement.

Secondly, I proceed by enlisting the most specific Romantic features with respect to its main motifs, themes, principles and literary elements, which were commonly used by Romantic writers. In the fourth chapter I fully concentrate on the central subject matter of this thesis – the concept of the Romantic hero. In that chapter I focus on the main types of Romantic heroes in prose and poetry of the nineteenth century with the slight emphasis on the most prominent Byronic hero subtype. At the same time, my goal is to expose some of the most characteristic features of Romantic heroes as they are stated in academic literature, which should serve as a footing to the practical part of the thesis.

Thirdly, chapter number five, which is of the highest significance to my thesis takes the main male character of the novel *Wuthering Heights* as its subject. Heathcliff, whom I analyse in detail, represents one of the most ambivalent characters in British literature and therefore, he aroused my interest. I mainly try to point out the Romantic features of this protagonist and highlight his development in course of the novel.

Finally, in the sixth chapter I compare Heathcliff with another Romantic hero and I particularly make notice of the Romantic attributes and qualities, in which they either differ or correspond.

2. British Romanticism and its Definition

Firstly, it needs to be said that the task of precisely defining Romanticism appears as a very difficult if not impossible problem. The fact that the Romantic period belongs among the shortest in literary history does not make it easy to be defined due to its complexity and diversity.¹ According to a definition: *“Romanticism is a period, movement, style, or genre in literature, music, and other arts starting in the late 1700s and flourishing through the early to mid 1800s, a time when the modern mass culture in which we now live first took form.”*² The so called Romantic Movement therefore took over control of the literary scene after the Enlightenment era and later was slowly replaced by Realist and Victorian genre.

Yet, when I use a phrase *“Romantic movement”* it does not mean that the authors themselves were really cooperating with each other or promoted some ideas together. It was not a movement in the true sense of the word. Calling the period of the time a Romantic Movement *“is indispensable but also a little misleading: there was no self-styled “Romantic movement” at the time, and the great writers of the period did not call themselves Romantics.”*³ We have to be able to distinguish between several meanings of the word *romantic*. In common sense as we know it the meaning is simple: it is an adjective relating to love. A romantic person is usually considered impractical, sentimental or a little foolish. This has definitely nothing to do with Romantic writers although the theme of love can occasionally appear in their works.⁴ In contrast in arts and literature the word possesses a broader meaning not confined just to love. It is crucial to point out the difference in spelling between words Romantic and romantic. The capitalized one stands for the literary period whereas the lowercase

¹ GREENBLATT, Stephen and M ABRAMS. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 8th ed. New York: Norton, c2006., p. 1

² WHITE, Craig. Craig White's Literature Courses: Terms/Themes: Romanticism. In: *Craig White, Literature Human Sciences & Humanities* [online]. Houston [cit. 2016-04-14]. Retrieved from: <http://coursesite.uhcl.edu/HS/Whitec/terms/R/Romanticism.htm>

³ BEADLE, Richard. English Literature. In: *Encyclopædia Britannica* [online]. [cit. 2016-04-14]. Retrieved from: <http://www.britannica.com/art/English-literature/The-Romantic-period>

⁴Romanticism. *Brooklyn College* [online]. Brooklyn, 2009 [cit. 2016-04-14]. Retrieved from: <http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/english/melani/cs6/rom.html>

one represents the common meaning and this fact may help the reader to distinguish whether the writer means the literary movement or just a related-to-romance fact.

Romantic literature combines a lot of different themes, motifs, styles of writing and last but not least many very diverse authors. During centuries scholars have singled out six typically Romantic writers or the “big six”⁵ as Duncan Wu calls them – Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley and Byron. The contemporary literary critics, however, called them differently. The early Romantics namely Coleridge, Wordsworth accompanied by Robert Southey have been known as the “Lake Poets” because what those three had in common was that they all had lived in the English Lake District.⁶ Another two – Byron and Shelley but most typically Byron were united to Southey’s quite derogatory term “Satanic school”.⁷ Keats, lastly, belonged to the so called “Cockney School”.⁸

Not only that the writers did not know that they were considered romantic, because the term was invented posthumously, but also as Seamus Perry claims “*most of the writers concerned would not have chosen it, had they been given the chance.*”⁹ Accordingly I assume the term itself rather artificial but on the other hand the literary classification is necessary for better orientation of the reader. Moreover in following chapters I will focus more on all the Romantic features, thus we may find out that the term is not so inadequate after all.

3. The Romantic Period from the Historical Point of View

Before I start to concentrate on the main point of the thesis, which is the character from the only novel written by the well-known British author Emily Brontë called *Wuthering Heights*, it is important to introduce the Romantic Movement as such in

⁵ WU, Duncan. *A Companion to Romanticism*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 1998., p. 3

⁶ Lake Poet. *Encyclopædia Britannica* [online]. [cit. 2016-04-14]. Retrieved from: <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Lake-poet>

⁷ Satanic School. *Encyclopædia Britannica* [online]. [cit. 2016-04-14]. Retrieved from: <http://www.britannica.com/art/Satanic-school>

⁸ WU, Duncan. *A Companion to Romanticism*. p. 4

⁹ WU, Duncan. *A Companion to Romanticism*. p. 4

connection with the historical period in which it originated because that helps us understand the romantic hero problematic with all its features described later on.

The historical background had in fact a strong impact on the newly emerging generation of Romantic authors. In the cradle of Romanticism, England, the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century was marked with the sign of resumption of disputes with England's eternal enemy – France. During the Napoleonic Wars Great Britain with its allies fought against France led by a great leader Napoleon Bonaparte. This was preceded by several events which among others significantly influenced not only writers and artists but also the entire life in England.

An event in the history, which is in most books dealing with the Romantic Movement considered to be crucial, is undoubtedly the French Revolution. Basically, Romantic literature appears to be a reaction to it, which is not surprising if we accept the statement that: "*Literature records or reflects the actual society or world.*"¹⁰ The contemporary English authors even wrote politically coloured pamphlets and the topic of the French Revolution frequently appeared in their works e.g. in Wordsworth's *The Prelude* or in Blake's poem *The French Revolution* (1791). The reason why the English poets were engaged so much in what was happening across the Channel is clear - they were very supportive of the Revolution because they hoped that it would bring a political change to the rigid British Establishment. This feeling related to the need of the overall change in society. England at that time due to ongoing industrial and agricultural revolution was not in fact problem-free. Urbanization, social inequality or unemployment going hand in hand with human exploitation and degradation belonged among the most serious social issues.¹¹ Romantic Movement represented a counter-reaction to these problems in British society.

English Romantics stood against rationalism; preferring passion and defending the idea of individualism especially stressing the personal feeling and imagination contrary

¹⁰ WHITE, Craig. Craig White's Literature Courses: Terms/Themes: Romanticism. In: *Craig White, Literature Human Sciences & Humanities* [online]. Houston [cit. 2016-04-14]. Retrieved from: <http://coursesite.uhcl.edu/HS/Whitec/terms/R/Romanticism.htm>

¹¹ PECK, Eva and Alexander M PECK. *Anglická Literatura: Panorama of English Literature*. 1. vyd. Dubicko: INFOA, 2002., p. 270

to the Enlightenment.¹² Even though the ideals of the French revolution failed resulting in Robespierre's Reign of Terror and the expectations of the young poets were not fulfilled, the "revolution in literature" persisted and gave rise to Romanticism.

4. Romantic Features

As well as every literary epoch has its specific characteristics and main principles, Romanticism possesses its own too. Even though the main romantic figures are all completely dissimilar and distinctive in their styles or attitudes we can find some topics, motifs or features in their works which connect them. These are considered romantic features and they define the whole movement. Some of them are likely to be found in E. Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. However, it is important to highlight that not all of the features apply to the majority of writers. I will try to mention and describe the most important of them in the following paragraphs.

4.1. The Concept of the Romantic Poet

Apart from the different values respected by the Romantic poets, also the style of writing and the concept of the role of the author have changed. The outer nature and environment was no longer perceived as the principal bases of the poem, but the inner feelings of the author or the external objects only after recreating them in the mind of the author became the most important part.¹³ For this reason, the main form used and the most convenient was lyrical poem. Also, to express the author's feelings more convincingly the first person narrator was often used. The first person "I" did not serve only as a lyrical speaker but it often reflected author's own opinions, feelings,

¹² FORWARD, Stephanie. The Romantics. In: *British Library* [online]. [cit. 2016-04-14]. Retrieved from: <http://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/the-romantics>

¹³ GREENBLATT, Stephen and M ABRAMS. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 8th ed. New York: Norton, c2006., p. 8-9

impressions etc. Sometimes the writers stylized themselves into another persona – a bard (Shelley, Coleridge) a prophet or “a chosen son” (Wordsworth).¹⁴

Wordsworth claims that poetry is “*the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling*”¹⁵ so it becomes clear that another quality that a good Romantic poet must have had was the ability to write unconsciously, without making any previous decisions or following any rules. This has partly influenced another change – the previously popular rhymed stanzas were slowly being replaced by a blank verse although with a rhythmical pattern.¹⁶

The writers of that time also began to use language of everyday life.¹⁷ The simple commonly used language helped to popularize reading poetry among people of the lower class.

4.2. Romantic Landscape

The theme of nature plays an essential role in the whole concept of Romanticism. The English Romantic poets cherished nature in their works and it inspired them greatly. The growth of the urban population at that time, which had harmful effects on nature, caused that many poets preferred to stay in the countryside. Nature can be both beautiful and terrifying and Romantic poets are fond of picturesque sights such as mountains, lakes, the sky and generally the wild and an uninhibited parts of nature. As one example for all I would emphasize the poem named “*Mont Blanc*” by P. B. Shelley published in 1817 which clearly shows his fascination with this kind of landscapes.

¹⁴ GREENBLATT, Stephen and M ABRAMS. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 8th ed. New York: Norton, c2006., p. 10

¹⁵ WORDSWORTH & COLERIDGE. WITH AN INTROD. AND NOTES BY MARTIN SCOFIELD. *Lyrical Ballads and Other Poems*. Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 2003., p. 8

¹⁶ Romanticism. *The Literature Network* [online]. [cit. 2016-04-14]. Retrieved from: <http://www.online-literature.com/periods/romanticism.php>

¹⁷ WHITE, Craig. Craig White's Literature Courses: Terms/Themes: Romanticism. In: *Craig White, Literature Human Sciences & Humanities* [online]. Houston [cit. 2016-04-14]. Retrieved from: <http://coursesite.uhcl.edu/HSH/Whitec/terms/R/Romanticism.htm>

*“The everlasting universe of things
Flows through the mind, and rolls its rapid waves,
Now dark—now glittering—now reflecting gloom—
Now lending splendour, where from secret springs
The source of human thought its tribute brings
Of waters...”*¹⁸

In the first stanza of Mont Blanc he also demonstrates a representation of the power of human imagination in nature. What mattered to the Romantics was the aesthetic value of nature, they sought for beautiful, picturesque and of course sublime landscapes. We can find these concepts in poems of all the authors forming the big six.

4.3. The Picturesque, the Beautiful and the Sublime

Many authors and people engaged in aesthetic studies were trying to define these concepts,¹⁹ which I believe is rather difficult because their meanings overlap one another. However, although these three terms may seem the same, there are slight differences between them. According to Edmund Burke who in his book *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* formulates a difference between beauty and sublime by claiming that *“The beautiful concerns social or sexual relations and turns upon feelings of pleasure; the sublime concerns the solitary individual and turns upon the still more powerful feelings of terror or pain...”*²⁰ the first of them has relatively positive connotations, the second one is negative. The notion of the picturesque could be somewhere in between those two,

¹⁸ SHELLEY, Mary Wollstonecraft a Percy Bysshe SHELLEY. *History of a Six Weeks' Tour Through a Part of France, Switzerland, Germany and Holland: with Letters Descriptive of a Sail Round the Lake of Geneva, and of the Glaciers of Chamouni*. London: Published by T. Hookham, jun. Old Bond Street; and C. and J. Ollier, Welbeck street, 1817., p. 175

¹⁹ WU, Duncan. *A Companion to Romanticism*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 1998., p. 72

²⁰ WU, Duncan. *A Companion to Romanticism*., p. 72

because we can imagine either a perfect and neat garden or an old ruin covered with moss as being picturesque.

On the other hand a German philosopher Immanuel Kant who greatly inspired and influenced members of the Romantic Movement came to the conclusion that the beautiful is determined by possessing the “form” but the sublime seems to be “limitless” and lacks the “form”.²¹ Generally the word sublime can be associated with heights, or mountain tops, which were also favourite settings for many poems e.g. again Shelley’s *Mont Blanc* or *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*:

*“The moon is up, and yet it is not night—
Sunset divides the sky with her—a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli’s mountains; Heaven is free
From clouds...” (XXVII)²²*

This fondness for the mountains as we can guess from the title is exactly what E. Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights* and Romantic writings of the 19th century have in common.

4.4. The Everyday and the Exotic

In the older times, poetry has always been a core discipline of literature. Very often it dealt with noble people and sublime themes. The Romantics in contrast: “experimented with the simple treatment of simple subjects.”²³ (Norton Anthology, p.12) They were trying to popularize a humble, common life consisting of simple situations of ordinary people, which had been until then content of a pastoral poetry.

²¹ WU, Duncan. *A Companion to Romanticism*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 1998., p. 73

²² BYRON, George Gordon Byron. *Childe Harold,s Pilgrimage*. Leipzig, 1862., p. 152

²³ GREENBLATT, Stephen and M ABRAMS. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 8th ed. New York: Norton, c2006., p. 12

On the other hand, Romantic authors, specifically Wordsworth, promoted sympathy for the “disgraced, outcasts, delinquent – convicts, female vagrants, gypsies . . . idiot boys and mad mothers.”²⁴

It can be observed that the Romantics were more or less trying to join together two completely contrary subjects – the everyday plus ordinary on one side and the exotic and unexpected on the other. The main purpose of the Romantic works was to astonish the readers, to make them wonder. Thus Romantic writers have been using the familiar in different ways, surprising settings within strange adventures.

4.5. Escapism and the Supernatural

In the not so peaceful conditions of their times it is quite natural that the Romantics were seeking for an escape. These tendencies may be clearly appreciable in Byron’s *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* partly set in Albania or Coleridge’s touch of China in *Kubla Khan*. Not only wrote they about far-flung corners from the geographical point of view, but they were also using another form of escapism in their works namely the past. One of Keats’s poems called *The Eve of St. Agnes* takes place in medieval times and exactly this era seems to be the most popular among the Romantics. According to the Northon Anthology, Romantic epoch could be also called as “*medieval revival*”.²⁵ The imagination along with dreaming whose importance they emphasized provided a perfect tool for getting away from reality.

The supernatural elements which appear more typical for gothic fiction have also its own role in Romantic poetry and prose. As to impress the reader, Coleridge was repeatedly using mysterious features even magic. He aimed to break the laws of

²⁴ GREENBLATT, Stephen and M ABRAMS. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 8th ed. New York: Norton, c2006., p. 12

²⁵ GREENBLATT, Stephen and M ABRAMS. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*., p. 14

nature in ordinary situations and by that to set a greater contrast between the everyday and the unknown, beyond human experience.²⁶

4.6. Individualism and Imagination

Imagination and fantasy have been considered as the most important quality of the Romantic writer. The imagination represents a supreme value and its role when creating a good poem looks indispensable. In this case, the stress on the imagination strongly contrasted with the domination of reason of the Enlightenment thinkers. Both Coleridge and Wordsworth suggested in their works some kind of the definition and the true meaning of the imagination. Coleridge in his *Biographia Literaria* divides imagination into two parts when he claims that: *“Imagination then I consider either as primary, or secondary. The primary Imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The secondary Imagination I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency, and differing only in degree, and in the mode of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate: or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially vital, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead.”*²⁷

We can see that according to Coleridge, every human possesses the primary imagination, because it provides the ability of unconsciously producing images in their minds. That is how we learn about the world and how we perceive it. The secondary imagination, in contrast, does not belong to everybody. Only poets make use of it by actively and consciously re-creating reality in their works.

²⁶ GREENBLATT, Stephen and M ABRAMS. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature.*, p. 13

²⁷ COLERIDGE, Samuel Taylor, James ENGELL and Walter Jackson BATE. *Biographia literaria, or, Biographical sketches of my literary life and opinions.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983., p. 91

Wordsworth's opinions on this topic seem similar. In his work *Lyrical Ballads* (on which he collaborated with Coleridge) he declares that imagination is not a passive state but an active, transforming power which changes an ordinary into an unusual.

Another point is that in both descriptions of the term imagination the authors stress out the meaning of imagination from the point of view of an individual person. Romanticism emphasizes the importance of the individual to society. Romantics are more interested in the inner self than in general features of reality and apparently, they think of themselves as of unique individuals who are strong enough to go against the flow. This is not surprising because the feelings of the author himself matter the most. The principle of individualism applies not only on the author of the Romantic writing but also on the characters. The most accurate example could be the concept of the so called "*Byronic Hero*".

4.7. The Romantic Hero

Since Romantic writers were trying to oppose to preceding literary period, classicism²⁸, which from certain points of view may be seen as vastly different, they obviously needed to create new literary archetypes. The most typical feature of the Romantic novel characters is therefore the so called Romantic hero. It is important to clarify that the Romantic Movement possesses a very strong heroic tradition.

A cast of characters who belong to the pattern of the Romantic hero can be also labelled as Byronic hero, developed by Lord Byron, most controversial of the Romantic writers. Through the Byronic hero element perspective it is possible to examine many aspects of the Romantic literature as such. Giving many examples of literary protagonists clearly influenced by the Byronic hero, including Heathcliff, Mr. Rochester, Eugene Onegin or Captain Ahab, Thorslev states that The Byronic hero is: "*The figure with the most far-reaching consequences for nineteenth century Western*

²⁸ A Brief Guide to Romanticism. *Poets.org* [online]. 2004 [cit. 2016-04-14]. Retrieved from: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/brief-guide-romanticism>

*literature.*²⁹ With no doubt, this hero prototype has inspired writers throughout Europe when it appeared in works of famous French, Russian, Polish, German writers besides being introduced in an American literature as well.

Plenty literary scholars claim that the first truly Byronic hero appears in Byron's epic poem which I have mentioned previously - *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. Nevertheless, some other critics consider Byron himself a Byronic hero when they take his personality as well as bohemian lifestyle into account.³⁰ These two assumptions can be, however, unified in an elegant way. Childe Harold, as he has been created in the mind of Byron must, in my opinion, at least partly represent Byron himself, project his own ideas, values and spirit to some extent. Despite Byron's denial of this option by writing repeatedly in the Preface that Harold is a "*fictitious character*" and a "*child of the imagination*" some parallels between them cannot be overlooked.³¹

4.7.1. Romantic Hero Types

Thorslev in his essay "*The Byronic Hero Types and Prototypes*" classifies several types of Romantic heroes. Firstly, he attempts to give a name to a pre-romantic hero predecessors and characterize them. Then he gives examples of four Romantic figures together with applying the pre-romantic kinds of heroic behaviour on them individually.

The first pre-romantic prototype which serves as a source for the nineteenth century Romantic Movement heroes is *the Child of Nature*. Clearly, this type of hero has been inspired by the young, natural and goodhearted "noble savage". The second one – the *Man of Sensibility* – contains two subtypes, the *Man of Feeling* and the *Gloomy Egoist*. The first one of them can be described as a sentimentalized persona seeking for love. The darker *Gloomy Egoist* on the other hand possesses melancholy,

²⁹ THORSLEV, Peter Larsen. *The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes*. 2nd print. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1965. Minnesota archive editions., p. 3

³⁰ Byronic Hero: Definition, Characteristics & Examples. *Study.com* [online]. [cit. 2016-04-14]. Retrieved from: <http://study.com/academy/lesson/byronic-hero-definition-characteristics-examples.html>

³¹BYRON, George Gordon Byron. *Childe Harold,s Pilgrimage*. Leipzig, 1862., p. 1

pessimism and Gothic characteristics. Completely inspired with the gothic feeling is another type, *The Gothic Villain*. Thorslev points out that this kind of hero is of more powerful personality, mysterious and sinful.³² This typology then applies to a variety of nineteenth century Romantic heroes.

According to Thorslev, all of these heroes are rather sensitive to the outer world. He mentions especially the fact that they all appreciate natural beauty. Furthermore he claims that another quality they have in common is their "*longing for absorption in the universe around them*".³³ Another couple of attributes he ascribes to Byronic heroes are connected to their strong capability of feeling and sentiment. He highlights mainly tenderness, passion and love.³⁴

Nevertheless, Atara Stein in her work "The Byronic Hero in Film, Fiction, and Television" defines the Byronic Hero by stating that: "*Such a hero exhibits supernatural abilities, adherence to a personal moral code, ineptitude at human interaction, and an ingrained defiance of oppressive authority.*"³⁵ They are most often outlaws or outcasts and what is interesting, they are also male. Stein moreover describes the Byronic hero by adjectives "powerful", "autocratic" and "antisocial"³⁶ all of which quite well fit to Heathcliff.

Another author trying to define the Byronic hero named Deborah Lutz expresses her conviction that the Byronic hero is: "*The tormented melancholy failure who nears success and then fails and experiences the eternal loss, the repetition of the impossibility of bliss.*"³⁷ The above mentioned eternal loss is, in my opinion, traceable in *Wuthering Heights* as hidden in both Catherine's marriage to Linton and later her death. However, from Heathcliff's point of view the second option is not undoable. He

³² THORSLEV, Peter Larsen. *The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes*. 2nd print. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1965. Minnesota archive editions., p. 27 - 61

³³ THORSLEV, Peter Larsen. *The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes*. 2nd print. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1965. Minnesota archive editions., p. 188

³⁴ THORSLEV, Peter L. *The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes.*, p. 188

³⁵ STEIN, Atara. *The Byronic Hero in Film, Fiction, and Television*. Pbk. ed. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009., p. 8

³⁶ STEIN, Atara. *The Byronic Hero in Film, Fiction, and Television.*, p. 6

³⁷ LUTZ, Deborah. *The Dangerous Lover: Gothic Villains, Byronism, and the Nineteenth-Century Seduction Narrative*. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, c2006., p. 52

believes that they reunite in his death. At the end, when the little boy claims to Nelly that he saw “*Heathcliff and a woman, yonder, under t’ Nab, [...] un’ Aw darnut pass ‘em*”³⁸ it seems that Heathcliff’s senses were right and the two lovers really found peace and in death wander together at the moors.

5. Heathcliff as a Romantic Hero

Heathcliff, the most significant male protagonist of E. Brontë’s masterpiece *Wuthering Heights* has been a fascinating figure for a lot of both contemporary critics and many generations of readers since the beginning. The inconsistency as well as the ambivalence of this remarkably complexly drawn Brontëan character has always been the subject of disputes and controversy. Consequently, plenty of Heathcliff’s analyses has been already written from a wide variety of different points of view. However, my aim in this chapter is to point out to his Romantic features, to show to what extent he really is a hero and finally to mention those characteristics of him which are similar to the Byronic hero archetype.

5.1. Heathcliff’s Mysterious Origin

Their often speculative origin might be very frequently occurring phenomenon within Romantic heroes. Heathcliff is no exception to this assumption. From the very beginning, that is from the moment when little Heathcliff is brought to *Wuthering Heights* by the old Earnshaw his origin is shrouded in mystery. Besides, this arrival of his is portrayed by Nelly Dean only after the reader acquires a not very flattering picture of Heathcliff from the preceding passage where the narrator - Lockwood - and Heathcliff meet each other for the first time. Lockwood’s previous description of

³⁸ BRONTË, Emily, Ian JACK and Patsy STONEMAN. *Wuthering Heights*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Oxford world's classics (Oxford University Press)., p. 299, All subsequent quotes are from this edition

Heathcliff as *"the solitary neighbour that I shall be troubled with"* (WH, p. 1) only intensifies the suspiciousness of where Heathcliff came from.

Heathcliff is nothing more than a dirty orphan from Liverpool when he arrives to Wuthering Heights under Mr. Earnshaw's overcoat. The sudden and a bit surprising revelation of him from underneath Earnshaw's coat as Nelly narrates her first memory of Heathcliff to Lockwood is itself rather strange. It might feel like he just came out of "nowhere". He simply appears and nobody can ever change that. Moreover, the reactions of the rest of the family are, to put it mildly, rather cold. Nelly herself is frightened of him right away and no wonder. Did anybody not know where and how exactly Earnshaw had found him, apart from that he has been abandoned somewhere on the street: *"starving and houseless and as good as dumb"* (WH, p. 31) but also his age is unknown along with his race. Furthermore, he repeats some words that nobody would understand, speaking with a foreign language, which gives the impression of something sinister hidden in him. There is also the first hint of the idea that Heathcliff might not be from this world. This may be seen in Earnshaw's more or less hyperbolic remark that: *it's as dark almost as if it came from the devil"* (WH, p. 31). The fact that although the old Earnshaw tried to ask people whether they know to whom the little boy belong but nobody knew, only escalates the overall baffling mystery hanging in the air.

To sum up the obvious: Heathcliff's background is completely uncertain. The reader as well as the other characters knows very little about his nature at least at the beginning. Obviously, due to him being a foundling he is stigmatized from the start since he lacks any family ties. His newly acquired family, the Earnshaws, never fully accepts him. As a proof of this statement I take the fact that he had never been given the last name Earnshaw. Also, when they first see him, he is being referred to as "it" not "he" which is degrading and it may also represent the imaginary boundary between him and the Earshaws. His questionable origin, accordingly, in my opinion form a great part of his personality. It might partly be the reason for his quite unpredictable behaviour.

The circumstances although unclear indicate that more likely Heathcliff is originally rather a poor child brought to poor conditions and therefore been left alone or gotten rid of in the streets. However, Nelly, at one point of the story suggests a completely different scenario, when she tells to Heathcliff: *“Who knows, but your father was Emperor of China and your mother an Indian queen [...] and you were kidnapped by wicked sailors and brought to England. Were I in your place, I would frame high notions of my birth.”* (WH, p. 50) This speech of Nelly trying to cheer Heathcliff up after meeting Edgar Linton is the first case of someone admitting that there is a possibility of Heathcliff being superior to both residents of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. In my opinion, this simple vision might have influenced Heathcliff’s future actions and strengthen his dignity.

5.2. Heathcliff’s Appearance and its Consequences

Heathcliff’s next attribute which is typical for the Romantic hero type in general lies in the appearance. The way the Romantic or Byronic hero look like has its specifics. The main and one of the most important characteristics, regarding how the hero looks like, is the request of contrast to other protagonist. That does not only concern the appearance, of course, but it can be seen on the hero’s visage prominently. The Romantic hero is very often different than the others, distinct and special in his own manner. This relates to the overall Romantic writing as the Romantics stressed the importance of individuality over society.

Not only Heathcliff’s mysterious arrival at Heights, but also his looks give a rise to concern. Since he is described as *“dark as if it came from the devil”* (WH, p. 31), the darkness here may seemingly denote three references. Firstly, he is dirty because of the long journey and wandering in the streets. Secondly, his personality bears a trace of darkness and feels uncanny. In third place, he is dark-skinned. The racial difference plays an important role since Heathcliff represents an exotic element and it signalizes that in some way he does not fully belong among the others whether we are talking about the Earnshaw family, the town of Gimmerton or the human world. He is directly

called *"gipsy brat"* by Mrs. Earnshaw as well as by Edgar when he exclaims: *"What, The gipsy – the plough-boy?"* (WH, p. 83) and a few times more. Concerning his hair, he is described as having black hair, rather long judging by Mr. Linton's mocking remark that: *"They are long enough already [...] it's like a colt's mane over his eyes."* (WH, p. 51)

The reader gets a closer picture about how his facial features look like, when Nelly takes him in front of the mirror and gives us a little more detailed description. According to her he is having *"two lines between his eyes", "thick brows", "couple of black fiends, so deeply buried, who never open their windows boldly, but lurk glinting under them, like devil's spies"* (WH, p. 50) The comment about his eye's being compared to a devil's spies only enhances the spookiness and his wild nature. Later at the same page, she also calls him quite handsome so the reader can gather that he really is handsome but I would suggest that rather in his individual, special way, not in the sense of being pretty as Edgar is described.

Most significantly, however, his appearance and his difference shows sharply in contrast with the Linton family. After the scene when Heathcliff and Catherine sneak near Thrushcross Grange and they get caught, Heathcliff has to face several racial comments towards him based only on his looks being called *"gypsy", "lascar", "American or Spanish castaway"* (WH, p. 44) and Mr. Linton's exclamation that: *"The villain scowls so plainly in his face, would it not be a kindness to the country to hang him at once, before he shows his nature in acts, as well as features?"* (WH, p. 43) From all those comments on Heathcliff I would suggest that his ethnicity is either ambiguous or more likely a mixture. Therefore his otherness is possibly to be called by variety of names.

The vast difference between Heathcliff and the Linton element grows even wider after Catherine's return to Heights. Under the influence of the cultivated Linton family, she arrives all changed. For example, their fingers are put in contrast here – Heathcliff's being described as *"dusky"* (WH, p. 47), on the other hand Catherine's are expressed with a verb *"whitened"* (WH, p. 47) as a symbol of the time spent being pampered at the Grange. The black and white polarity contrast is also typical for the

Romantic novels. Heathcliff representing the black on the one hand – black hair, dark skin, sharp look and surrounded by his gloomy character and on the other, the white personified by Edgar Linton's angel-like looks – light hair, fair skin, well-behaved with blue eyes.

After the confrontation of him with this seemingly perfect family, as if that were not enough under all those circumstances Heathcliff has to face another humiliating moment this time from his beloved one – Catherine. She laughs at him immediately when she sees him, exclaiming *“How very black and cross you look! [...] but that's because I'm used to Edgar and Isabella Lintons.”* (WH, p. 47) No wonder that these situations made him realize how different he is and consequently, he feels dissatisfied with that. At this point he really tries and wants to change himself, mainly for Catherine's sake, but still. He in fact goes and asks Nelly for help: *“Nelly, make me decent, I'm going to be good.”* (WH, p. 49) He also confides in her that he envies Edgar: *“I wish I had light hair and a fair skin, and was dressed, and behaved as well, and had a chance of being as rich as he will be!”* (WH, p. 50) I would say that his appearance and race determine his social status. His skin colour basically prevents him from being successful, wealthy and recognized by society and he realizes that in his young age, that's why he expresses a desire to resemble Linton.

Obviously, he is not able to change his appearance but he partly achieves his goal when he, after his later disappearance, comes back quite rich, moreover with changed manners and looks, in the second half of the novel. Nelly barely recognises him after his transformation. According to her: *“He had grown a tall, athletic, well-formed man, beside whom my master seemed quite slender and youth-like.”* (WH, p. 84) This suggests that he has achieved dominant position over Edgar. After that she continues in similar fashion: *„His countenance was much older in expression and decision of feature than Mr. Linton's; it looked intelligent and retained no marks of former degradation. A half-civilized ferocity lurked yet in the depressed brows and eyes full of black fire, but it was subdued; and his manner was even dignified, quite divested of roughness, though too stern for grace.”*(WH, p. 84-85) This mysterious alteration has partly hidden Heathcliff's savage temper underneath a gentleman-like appearance. However still his true nature cannot be completely erased thus it remains in his eyes

full of black fire. This also might and, in my opinion, have in fact a huge impact on naïve Isabella Linton who fell in love with him or more likely with the mistaken picture of him.

5.3. Wandering

It is generally known about Romantic heroes that they are fond of traveling or more precisely of wandering through the countryside. This aspect can be observed for instance in Byronic Childe Harold Pilgrimage. Thanks to the fact that the Romantic writers themselves celebrated nature and were highly inspired by the wilderness of the pure landscapes there are also notions of this feeling of wanderlust in *Wuthering Heights*. Throughout the whole novel Heathcliff is likely to be seen outdoors rather than in the house. His connection with nature is undeniable. Furthermore the local landscape masterly portrayed by Emily Brontë conspicuously resembles Heathcliff himself. The inhospitable moors along with grim weather make a perfect match with his personality. That is also where he got his name from – the first part of his name symbolising the uncultivated surroundings of *Wuthering Heights*.

Especially in the first part of the novel the landscape serves to both children Heathcliff and Catherine as a means of escape from home. They often played in the fields together remaining there all day roaming around the moors. That was, I believe, one of the happiest times of Heathcliff's life. This inclination of Heathcliff to nature can remind us of the Child of Nature prototype from Thorslev's typology. It is true that Heathcliff showed his affection to nature and so he could be considered as being inspired by Rousseauistic noble savage, though, only to some, little extent. In my opinion his enigmatic and ruthless character slightly contradicts this idea. I would suggest that more than Heathcliff would the label of noble savage suit Hareton who is described by Nelly as having: "honest, warm and intelligent nature" (WH, p. 286). Hareton is undoubtedly more good-natured man than Heathcliff had ever had a chance to be.

The second trace of this tendency to wander I consider his sudden disappearance after overhearing Catherine's dialogue with Nelly. His three-year absence remains unexplained and nobody knows where he was staying or what he was doing all that time. Brontë cleverly left out all the details so the reader is provided a space to guess whether Heathcliff joined the army, just travelled or was being educated. I guess that he was searching his own identity after his whole world broke down when he found out that Catherine was going to marry Edgar. Not mentioning the money he needs to acquire which has been his goal since the first occasion of meeting Linton's and resenting their superiority. Nevertheless, his mysterious disappearance and perhaps more his reappearance seem quite essential for the storyline. It reminds a lot of his first appearance in the Heights – just as then, he affects the course of events once again.

Heathcliff's fondness of rambling around can be also found in the last part of the book, just prior to his death. His odd manner of not eating and seeking for solitude is again combined with bemused and kind of romantic wandering outside the house. The strange behaviour is even weirder noticing the fact that some of his walks take place at night time. In order to meet Catherine's ghost he even spends several nights sleepless.

5.4. Heathcliff's Character

In my opinion, the most controversial feature of all is Heathcliff's character. The way how he behaves and his overall aura, is exactly what makes him so special being both favoured and hated by readers. Some might even claim that Heathcliff is clearly a villain, others consider him to be heroic, but I think that there is more to it than that and I would not depict it in such a black and white manner. Above that, his character is very complex and it develops as the story goes. Through certain situations and actions illustrating his qualities I will try to describe him as accurately as possible with an emphasis on the Romantic characteristics.

5.4.1. Heathcliff at the Children's Age

As a child, I have already mentioned Heathcliff did not get a warm-hearted welcome. With the exception of Mr. Earnshaw and later Catherine he was hated by the rest of them – mostly by Hindley and Mrs. Earnshaw including Nelly. Although once she even put Heathcliff to sleep on the stairs, that is how much she resented him at first, Nelly admits later that: *“He seemed a sullen, patient child”* (WH, p. 32) This is also followed by her statement that: *“He was the quietest child that ever nurse watched over [...] as uncomplaining as a lamb”* (WH, p. 33) At this point of the story Heathcliff has got mostly a positive effect on the reader. Nelly's simile of a lamb used to describe Heathcliff at this stage highly contrasts with his almost devilish introductory description made by Lockwood. Heathcliff shows his good spirit a little bit by not complaining and not squealing on Hindley, even though he could be certain that Mr. Earnshaw would have been on his side since Heathcliff became his favourite child. At this phase of the book and from what the reader knows so far, it is only natural to feel sorry for Heathcliff. However, even at the early age he is not completely innocent and vulnerable which is apparent from the situation when the lads – Hindley and Heathcliff get the horses from Mr. Earnshaw. Heathcliff insists on switching them in this manner: *“You must exchange horses with me; I don't like mine and if you won't I shall tell your father of the three thrashings you've given me this week and show him my arm, which is black to the shoulder.”* (WH, p. 33) In other situations he is acting as an intensely introspective, brooding man. He never tells anyone how he really feels inside and in this respect he resembles a Byronic hero.

5.4.2. Heathcliff's Adolescence and Adulthood

The injustice and harm was done to him in childhood and the bullying continued even in his adolescent age. Hindley abused him since they first met but after his return from school bringing his wife with him the oppression became worse than ever. Heathcliff's ill-treatment by Hindley is one of the key aspects influencing

Heathcliff's further development in the novel. It is left to speculations that if it hadn't been for Hindley's tyranny none of the following ill-behaved actions of Heathcliff would never have happened.

The manner in which he was raised and how he was treated might have had a huge impact on his later development as a character but I wonder if that would be the only reason. One could argue that Heathcliff possessed a dark, negative character ever since he was born. That implies that qualities which he holds might be either innate i.e. given to him by nature or acquired. Such considerations bring me to the fundamental question of psychology and pedagogy – To what extent is human being influenced by nurture and nature? In accordance with the biopsychosocial approach formulated by George. L Engel, I would suggest that the most probable explanation of Heathcliff's behaviour should be a golden mean between the two. In my personal opinion Heathcliff is a Byronic hero in his own nature, regardless of the circumstances, however, the outer conditions only grew the fact stronger and drove his behaviour into an extreme.

According to my consideration, the moment when his only serious attempt to change was in vain, was critical for Heathcliff. When he lets Nelly adjust his looks and she finally manages to brighten him up, he according to her: *"gradually lost his frown and began to look quite pleasant"* (WH, p. 50) they are interrupted by Hindley who starts to yell at him, Mr. Linton cannot omit several insulting comments on Heathcliff, who ends up locked in his chamber after this provoked scene. Without a doubt nothing discourages you more than when people disregard your efforts and moreover ridicule you in front of not only your enemies (the Lintons) but also your loved ones (Catherine). Immediately after this happened, he confides his plan in Nelly: *"I'm trying to settle how I shall pay Hindley back."*(WH, p. 53) The quest for revenge represents another Romantic symbol and I will try to analyse it later in the thesis. Here his direct speech illustrates the change in his conduct. He no longer wants to suffer in silence without a desire of vengeance – this is the first uttered sign of him making a decision

to set a vicious plan ahead. At this period of his life he could be quite analogous to Thorslev's *Gothic Villain*³⁹.

From this point on, to return to Heathcliff's character qualities he is by variety of characters mostly described by negative words such as "*diabolical*" (by Edgar, WH, p. 196) "*ruffian*" (by Cathy, WH, p. 222) "*monster*" (by Isabella, WH, p. 152) and also directly being spoken of as "*incarnate goblin*" (by Isabella, WH, p. 151), "*a ghoul or a vampire*" (by Nelly, WH, p. 293). Even Catherine who has the closest and the strongest relationship with Heathcliff of all calls him an "*ungrateful brute*" (WH, p. 100). Furthermore on occasion of warning Isabella against falling in love with Heathcliff, Catherine explains to her that he is "*a fierce, pitiless, wolfish man*" (WH, p. 90) since she knows him best. Mentioning a wolf, Isabella also at one part of her narration, when Heathcliff commands her to open the house for him, comments Heathcliff's expression with the detail of his "*sharp cannibal teeth, revealed by cold and wrath*" (WH, p. 156) This description rather brings on mind some kind of animal, a dangerous one, than a human being. Likening Heathcliff to an animal is not exceptional. If we have a closer look to the moment of Lockwood's arrival to Wuthering Heights while waiting for Heathcliff and Joseph to come back from the cellar, he is left alone in the room with Heathcliff's dogs and we might find out that there is, I would say, Heathcliff indirectly represented by the dogs. The link between him and them is obvious and it sets an image to the readers mind that Heathcliff is not quite man-like. The parallel continues when Mr. Lockwood is against his will stuck at Wuthering Heights because of the bad weather conditions. Heathcliff does not make any effort to help him return to the Grange neither does he seem to provide him lodging for that one night, which makes Lockwood feel greatly uncomfortable. He wishes to escape at all costs, so he tries to leave by himself notwithstanding, it is not safe for him. Eventually, he is stopped by the two of Heathcliff's dogs. Both the dogs and Heathcliff seem to be passionate, yet, powerful, aggressive predators.

Throughout the whole book, Heathcliff is moreover described indirectly by a lot of expressive words which Emily Brontë uses. For instance instead of saying that he

³⁹ THORSLEV, Peter Larsen. *The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes*. 2nd print. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1965. Minnesota archive editions.

smiles, he “sneers” (WH, p. 9) or “grins” (WH, p. 5) – words with negative connotations. He also “growls” (WH, p. 99) or “thunders” (WH, p. 157) instead of speaking at times. Isabella’s famous question: “*Is Mr. Heathcliff a man? If so, is he mad? And if not, is he a devil?*” (WH, p. 120) is just one of the many hints supporting the ruthlessness of Heathcliff’s character, yet, there is no apparent answer to this almost philosophical thought.

The last breaking point concerning a change in Heathcliff’s character is that of his final alteration shortly before his death. The grumpy and vicious man becomes rather melancholic. That much the change is visible that both women residing in Wuthering Heights - Nelly and Cathy are surprised or more exactly shocked. Heathcliff’s newly discovered image puzzles Cathy, when he even speaks to her, which he seldom does and moreover he looks according to her words: “*almost bright and cheerful! – No, almost nothing – very much excited and wild and glad!*” (WH, p. 290) Nelly describes his effort to smile by using a word unnatural: “*The same unnatural – it was unnatural – appearance of joy under his black brows.*” (WH, p. 292) Obviously, such a mean person like Heathcliff, was not expected to be in a good mood very often. After considering all the details we know about him, only two things could make him happy – fulfilment of the revenge or Catherine. Since Cathy still resisted, the first option was not the reason, it was a vision of his forthcoming reunion with Catherine.

5.4.3. The Positive Qualities of Heathcliff

The polarity of Heathcliff’s character makes him also a Romantic hero because of the unification of such evil but also good concealed in one person. His effect on the reader is either being irresistible in some situations or being despicable in others. Either way in the preceding paragraph I have mentioned the bad upon him for the most part. Now I am going to focus on some actions which really prove that he is not only the cold-hearted tyrant after all.

Although I think that Heathcliff possesses inborn prerequisites supporting rather the evil-self in him there is a piece of evidence that a part of his nature remained good. What I have on my mind is the moment when drunk Hindley dropped little Hareton off upstairs. Heathcliff came just in time to catch him “*by a natural impulse*”. (WH, p. 66) Even though Nelly thinks that Heathcliff regretted saving the poor boy by assuming that “*Had it been dark he would have tried to remedy the mistake by smashing Hareton’s skull on the steps*” (WH, p. 66) it still does not deny that his reaction was good by nature. Besides those are merely Nelly’s speculations since she cannot know for sure what was in Heathcliff’s head and she may be taken a not completely reliable narrator at times.

Another fact proving him partly good is that he is capable of love although I admit, that love as a positive aspect of his character might be a subject of disputes. One could argue that this kind of love he has for Catherine brings more harm than good and consequently it does not make him a better person. Despite this suggestion I would maintain that love itself is still generally seen as a positive emotion so that of Heathcliff towards Catherine should be no exception.

5.5. The Influence of the Past

The next topic concerning Heathcliff being an epitome of the Romantic hero is the motif of the past. The past has a great influence over Heathcliff’s whole life and in my view, everything he does from the point he loses Catherine in favour of Edgar Linton, he does on behalf of the past. A memory of his relatively happy childhood spent with Catherine is haunting him intensively. He is in fact doomed to share living in Wuthering Heights with Hareton and later Cathy (if he really wants his revenge fulfilled) which, I would say, must have caused him a lot of pain. For illustration I would mention a scene from the end of the novel, when he comes unexpectedly through the front door to the kitchen. An unusual sight of Cathy and Hareton sitting and reading together is revealed to him. In reaction to this, he admits: “*Five minutes ago Hareton seemed a personification of my youth, not a human being.*” (WH, p. 288) He surely

recalls the memories for his children's age. Certain amount of analogy may be seen in the early relationship of Heathcliff and Catherine and the one between Hareton and Cathy. Young Cathy educates and cultivates Hareton. It seems to me that Catherine did quite the same for Heathcliff only with a slight difference. Cathy helps Hareton with his personal growth, she tries to enhance his qualities. In contrast Catherine rather restricts and lessens Heathcliff's temper.

Furthermore, the memory has not only been triggered by the similarity of the relationships but also by the fact that both Cathy's and Hareton's "*eyes are precisely similar and they are those of Catherine Earnshaw*" (WH, p. 286), according to Nelly.

5.6. Revenge

For the theme of revenge being one of the central themes of the whole novel, it of course relates to the character of Heathcliff. He hates as deeply as he loves and those two contradictory passionate feelings support the Romantic aspect of him. His hatred towards the Lintons and to a large extent to the Earnshaws too, grows so strong that any evidence of forgiveness becomes inconceivable.

The first person upon whom Heathcliff decides to revenge is Hindley. After the humiliation done by Hindley at Christmas time, there may be the initial hint of revenge found when Heathcliff speaks of paying him back. (WH, p. 53) That is, however, just one half of the complete revenge plan. The second half comes on the scene at the moment when he is in his eyes betrayed by Catherine's acceptance of Edgar's proposal. Both halves of his planned revenge are, in my opinion, associated with one more aspect which Romantic heroes have in common – rejection of authority.

Heathcliff not only seeks revenge for the reason of losing Catherine and being bullied from Hindley but he also rejects social expectations by doing so. By this I mean that he is well aware that he is not expected to ever become anything more than just a regular servant at Wuthering Heights not by a single person in the novel. His quest for revenge therefore goes hand in hand with improving his social status. That happens

during his mysterious three-year absence when he decides to leave and seek out a better life in the world. All of a sudden the rough underestimated youth returns as a wealthy well-conducted (for appearances' sake) man. His revenge plan breaks out fully at that point. After Catherine dies, there is nothing to hold him back, to soften his sternness, so the thirst for revenge becomes his only joy. Not in the least does he care about his son or his wife, both of them represent only the tool for revenge. Personally, I think that this proves that he focuses on the self as the centre of existence, which appears typical for a Romantic hero. The ways which he uses to reach his goal are what else than dishonourable.

What I see as another piece of evidence that Heathcliff really conducts according to a Romantic hero pattern is his, I would say, commitment to pursuing matters of justice over matters of morality. To set the record straight – he pursues matters of what he imagines is justice over matters of morality. The years of torture along with the Catherine's rejection infuriates him as he considers it unjust and wrong. Regardless of the consequences or precisely because of the consequences of his actions, he strictly follows his intentions.

It seems as if he developed his own rules of morality. For instance, in order to join the two estates together – Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, he needs young Cathy to marry Linton before he dies. For this purpose he takes advantage of the fact that she has a soft spot for Linton by saying that: *"As true as I live, he's dying for you – breaking his heart at your fickleness, not figuratively, but actually."* (WH, p. 205) This Heathcliff's statement turns out half true – yes, Linton is not in a good condition but Heathcliff implies that it is Cathy's fault which is not based on truth. This shows how manipulative Heathcliff can act if he needs to. Similarly, his marriage with Isabella Linton has not been founded on real feelings on his part. As Nelly says to Catherine quite angrily after she spots Heathcliff with Isabella through a window: *"I wonder will he have the art to find a plausible excuse for making love to Miss, when he told you he hated her?"* (WH, p. 99) Obviously, he only does it on purpose of intruding into her favour to harm Edgar and after Catherine answers his question: *"She's her brother's heir, is she not?"* (WH, p. 94), it is more than evident, that he just wants to get the Linton's property as a part of his vengeance. The interesting thing about that is

how he managed to make her fall in love with him. It must be said that it did not cost him much effort. Actually, she fell for him on her own will. Seductiveness takes part in Romantic hero qualities too. Heathcliff himself claims about Isabella that: *“She abandoned them under a delusion [...] picturing me a hero of romance, and expecting unlimited indulgences from my chivalrous devotion”*. (WH, p. 133) From this statement, clearly, the difference between being Romantic and romantic unfolds. Despite his great capability of love, Heathcliff, as he just confirmed in this quotation, is not into romance and he mocks at Isabella’s mistaken vision of him. The wicked and crooked manner in which he attains his goals and little by little he performs his thoroughly planned revenge indicates that he either lacks moral standards or more likely, as I have suggested before, he follows his own established version of morality.

5.7. The Relationship of Heathcliff and Catherine

The most complicated sign carrying great importance and representing the most typical feature of Romantic heroes regards their feelings. In spite of being so cruel, full of hatred and scorn, Heathcliff deals with a strong feeling of love towards Catherine. As a highly emotional individual he fits perfectly to a category of the Romantic hero ideal.

The love of the two protagonists begins with a quasi-sibling relationship. This theme of sibling love appears quite frequently in Romantic authors’ works, e.g. in Shelley’s *“Laon and Cythia”* and this tendency also reflects Byron’s own attraction to his half-sister. Heathcliff and Catherine used to be allies in childhood. They formed a very intense bond between each other, however, the exact moment, when this happened, is unknown. From little information Nelly provides us with, we only know that initially after Heathcliff’s arrival to Wuthering Heights, both Cathy and Hindley *“refused to have it in bed with them”* (WH, p. 33), Cathy, angry, after finding out that the promised whip was lost, showed her emotions towards little Heathcliff by: *“grinning and spitting at the stupid little thing”* (WH, p. 32) A few lines later the two are *“very thick”* (WH, p. 32) without any further clarification to the reader. From the

point of view of Heathcliff, however, it appears quite natural to develop such a strong attachment with the only person, who did not despise him. Hindley's oppressive behaviour along with their rebellion against Joseph only brings them closer together and from this point on, the reader may acquire a feeling that they are soulmates, fated to remain together, because they are much alike.

An important turning point comes, when Heathcliff overhears Catherine's conversation with Nelly about marrying Edgar and mainly hearing her stating that "*It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff*". (WH, p. 71) After that he leaves and hears no more of what she said. From this point onwards, it is more or less certain that since they clearly love each other, their love is sentenced to remain unfulfilled at least throughout their earthly life. An unrequited, hopeless, unhappy, inaccessible or any other kind of love which is not a "happily-ever-after type of love" plays an important role in a typical Romantic or Byronic hero's life. Heathcliff's undying love for Catherine makes him even more prototypical Romantic hero, than he was with the other Romantic properties I mentioned so far. The relationship they share is, though, rather untypical.

Catherine is actually unattainable for Heathcliff since the beginning. First, she is beyond his social status. Second, when he eventually enhances his social position, she is already a married woman. Therefore their love cannot be happy except after death or in nostalgia for childhood. After having a closer look on how they express their love for each other, a certain degree of similarity may be traced. Both Catherine and Heathcliff describe their feelings by means of identification with the other. Firstly, Catherine proceeds in her previous speech about the degradation when marrying Heathcliff with the key declaration that she loves him "*not because he's handsome but he's more myself than I am.*"(WH, p. 71) Her love for Heathcliff is undoubtedly more pure, deep and genuine than that for Edgar Linton, under the condition that she actually loves Edgar. She puts two aspects in contrast - as superficial feature as one's appearance with the inner essence or resemblance and harmony of two people. The second half of the quotation may be, however, interpreted in another way. By labelling Heathcliff to be "more myself than I am" Catherine might actually mean, that he represents her real self, which has been surpassed by becoming a cultivated woman

after her stay at the Grange. She strengthens this fact of her sameness to Heathcliff by adding that *"Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same ..."* (WH, p. 71) Secondly, Heathcliff in the same fashion makes specific references to Catherine as to his *"life"* (WH, p. 148) and *"soul"*, (WH, p. 148) which also indicates the feeling of identification between the two.

Although their love seems mutual, they do not eventually end up together. What truly holds them apart, are not the circumstances but it is in fact Catherine by her own decision as Heathcliff himself points out: *"...nothing that God or Satan could inflict would have parted us, you, of your own will, did it"*. (WH, p. 142) Here, the inconsistency between Heathcliff's and Catherine's points of view concerning their affection may be traced. Heathcliff considers Catherine's marriage as a betrayal as well as a way of abandoning him. On the other hand, Catherine does not seem to see it that way. She, on the contrary, cannot understand why Heathcliff is not able to ignore the fact that she married Edgar as if it was no important thing.

As a matter of fact, Catherine goes even further in understanding their relationship than Heathcliff. She had claimed earlier that: *"I am Heathcliff – he's always, always in my mind – not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself – but as my own being..."* (WH, p. 73) The powerful statement referring to herself as a full embodiment of Heathcliff denotes that she believes, unlike Heathcliff, that nothing can ever separate them, not even herself. The separation is *"impracticable"* (WH, p. 73) she adds later on. Catherine therefore found a way of keeping both Edgar and Heathcliff. She keeps Edgar as a husband, conversely, she keeps Heathcliff as a part of her own self and she is so sure of their indivisibility that she can afford to do whatever she wants to without losing him.

Even though Catherine might not think it an act of selfishness, apparently in Edgar's and Heathcliff's opinion, she is hurting everyone around her. To her naïve incomprehension, they cannot stand each other, much less can they *"be friends"* (WH, p. 84) as she foolishly wishes after Heathcliff's return. The biggest misery of this Romantic love of Heathcliff to Catherine lies in the fact that he is forced to watch her – being a wife of his archenemy, moreover, expecting a baby with him, not being able to

see her, talk to her or hold her whenever he wants and in the end, watching her die. All these aspects show that their love really is more Romantic than romantic.

Loyalty undoubtedly belongs among Romantic hero qualities, whether it relates to certain people or some core beliefs and values. For the benefit of Heathcliff it must be mentioned that he, in some respect, remained loyal to Catherine the whole time. I do not consider his shady marriage with Isabella as an act of unfaithfulness, as he underwent it rather grudgingly because of the revenge and probably also out of spite to Catherine. A trace of his undeniable unswerving devotion to Catherine occurs in whatever he says or does and it occurs as a main motif of his overall existence.

5.7.1. Transcendence

Without a shade of a doubt, the moment of transcendence in their love cannot be omitted. Heathcliff loves Catherine beyond the grave. The fact that their love is transcendental, seems to be expressed several times by means of analogy with nature. When Catherine contrasts her love to Edgar to the one towards Heathcliff, she says: *“My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods. Time will change it, I’m well aware, as wither changes the trees – my love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath – a source of little visible delight but necessary”* (WH, p. 73) This affirmation stresses the eternity, immortality of their love as opposed to just ordinary, conventional and material love for Linton. Her love for Heathcliff seems fundamental, whereas the one towards Edgar is a bit shallow. When Catherine in the same monologue says about Heathcliff that: *“If all else perished and he remained, I should still continue to be, and if all else remained and he was annihilated, the Universe would turn into a mighty stranger. I should not seem a part of it.”* (WH, p. 73), it undoubtedly indicates that they cannot live a happy life without each other. It seems as though they were just two parts of one unity imprisoned in two bodies longing for creating a whole, and in doing so, completing a unified identity. Concerning their inseparability, Heathcliff often mentions his desire for dissolving with Catherine. The strong need of becoming one unit is therefore visible in the novel.

However, it is only after Catherine's death that Heathcliff gains a full status of Romantic hero. After losing his beloved one for good, he is heartbroken, claiming that he cannot live without her. Apart from concentrating his energies on his devilish revenge plan including intrigues towards Cathy and Linton, he sort of disappears from the reader's reach for a while. Nevertheless, the reader learns about his desperate and Romantic deeds retrospectively. More specifically about the two acts of violating Catherine's grave – first time soon after she passes away and the second time after some eighteen years. The two attempts of getting close to her dead body display perfectly the limitlessness of his affection. Their love represents an element which transcends boundaries of self, of their human existence.

The first time – the night of Catherine's burial - he tries to dig her coffin up with desire to see her and hold her in his arms again. The scene as narrated by Heathcliff to Nelly, contains prominent supernatural elements. When he reached the coffin and started to grub with his hands, he suddenly "*heard a sigh from someone above*" (WH, p. 256) and he also "*appeared to feel the warm breath of it displacing the sleet-laden wind*" (WH, p. 256). Those signs of someone else's presence directly imply the possible existence of ghosts, specifically Catherine's ghost at Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff confirms this by uttering: "*I felt that Cathy was there, not under me, but on the earth*". (WH, p. 256) Since then, as he claims, he was being haunted by Catherine's ghost. In spite of the fact that he feels relieved, knowing that Catherine's spirit occurs near him, at the same time he is experiencing an unbearable torture ever since. Heathcliff explains: "*I felt her by me – I could almost see her, and yet I could not!*" (WH, p. 256) This complaint of his suggests that Catherine unfortunately remained inaccessible even after her death, even without being restricted by social conventions like her marriage to Edgar. Heathcliff's own death seems to be the only way of reuniting with her again. In order to make it happen, he bribes the sexton to dig her grave up for the second time. By loosening one side of the coffin, (the one directed towards the spot where Heathcliff's grave is supposed to be), he insures that it is possible for their corpses to mingle at last. Such a behaviour, which lies almost on the verge of insanity, points out certain gothic features present in the character of Heathcliff, as well as his Byronic hero attributes. As I have mentioned above, the Romantic hero, in this case Heathcliff,

often fail to attain or fulfil their love. The inability to see Catherine's ghost even prolongs his deprivation. Although I personally would not entitle it an act of necrophilia, one might call it so, arguing that by digging Catherine's corpse up, Heathcliff mainly desired to satisfy his sexual urges.

5.7.2. Passion

Passion belongs among essential parts of being a Romantic hero. Heathcliff, indeed, possesses a huge amount of passion in himself naturally, moreover, the relationship between Catherine and Heathcliff is apparently partly based on it. The all-consuming passion seems to be the centre of their relationship. As Catherine describes their souls, again contrasting Heathcliff and Edgar: *"Linton's is as different as a moonbeam from lighting or frost from fire"*. (WH, p. 71) Edgar is being portrayed by her as having an ice-cold temperament, moonbeam and frost symbolising calmness and non-proneness to emotional excitement. Heathcliff is, on the other hand, described by a fire-like elements as a wild, unrestrained and passionate person. It seems to me that the moment, where Heathcliff fully exposes his passionate nature, is among others his last meeting with Catherine shortly before her death. In my point of view, that scene is the very first moment, when both of them let the other one know directly that they love one another. Furthermore, I suggest this scene to be their first deep moment of intimacy in a true sense of the word. It is also Heathcliff's first manifestation of empathy and concern of another human's wellbeing. His reaction speaks for itself: *"Oh, Cathy! Oh, my life! How can I bear it?" was the first sentence he uttered, in a tone that did not seek to disguise his despair.*" (WH, p. 139) His state, almost agony, after he learns that Catherine is fated to die, shows how much emotion and passion Heathcliff has been carrying in himself all the long time. Catherine is in my opinion the only person, who is able to arouse some positive emotions in him. The fact that Catherine asks him repeatedly to come close to her makes him even shed a tear as we learn from Nelly's description: *"he turned to her, looking absolutely desperate. His eyes wide and wet at last ..."* (WH, p. 141)

The intensity of Heathcliff's passion for Catherine is carried to the extreme. Several times it reminds rather an addiction or obsession. Unlike passion, which can be beneficial for a human being in some respect, the feelings which Heathcliff has for Catherine, grew into an unhealthy obsession. He in fact lacks any other interests besides the love and the revenge. Moreover, he does not possess a capability of putting the needs of Catherine to the first place as he neither really understands her marriage, nor rejoices in her fondness of Edgar. Such an altruism and generosity he cannot commit. He just knows that Catherine is a necessity for him to soothe his constant need for her and his need for her love. Even if he cannot have her, he still visits her at the Grange, which must frustrate him on the one hand but on the other it satisfies him. It would have saved him an unnecessary pain, if he let her go and focused his interests in somewhat different direction. However, it is not either in his powers or intentions. This self-destructive behaviour, clear actually also from Catherine's escape into illness and hysterical conduct, appears to be a typical sign of being addicted.

Paradoxically, Heathcliff's obsession only intensifies after her death as he loses the essence of his life. The reader is introduced into the problem of his obsession with Catherine right at the beginning of the novel after Lockwood's nightmare happens. Lockwood gets to see a rare view of Heathcliff bursting into tears, which under different circumstances would be quite an overreaction. From Heathcliff's exclamation: "*Come in! Come in! Cathy, do come. Oh, do – once more. Oh! My heart's darling hear me this time – Catherine at last*", (WH, p. 24) it is visible that despite all those years, Catherine still arouses a good dose of passion in him.

The very moment when Catherine decided to marry Edgar, may serve as an example of the situation where reason won over passion. In stark contrast, Heathcliff's passion overcomes everything else and eventually results in his death.

5.8. Heathcliff's death

The circumstances, under which Heathcliff dies, or to be more precise, is found dead, because the main narrator, Nelly, does not know, what exactly happened, are again rather strange and mysterious. When Nelly attempts to close his still opened eyes, she is unable to do it – they resist to be shut. She comments that his eyes: *“seemed to sneer at my attempts, and his parted lips and sharp white teeth sneered too!”* (WH, p. 298) When she describes his corps further, she mentions that: *“no blood trickled from the broken skin”* (WH, p. 298) it seems to me as if she was again questioning his humanity. The strangest about his dead body is, however, his expression. Nelly tries to *“extinguish, if possible, that frightful, life-like gaze of exultation”*, (WH, p. 298) which implies that he embraced death instead of being afraid to die.

His behaviour, prior to his death, was not standard either. It is known that Romantic heroes often suffer from suicidal tendencies, as it can be seen for example in Byron's *Manfred*. Although Heathcliff does not intend to commit suicide, he unintentionally contributes to his death by starving himself to a serious illness, madness and monomania. He rejects food, cannot sleep and he seeks for alienation from people. This is apparent from his wish *“let me beg you to warn Hareton and the other away from me. I wish to be troubled by nobody – I wish to have this place to myself.”* (WH, p. 292) In his last days, he is more or less convinced that he is on the brink of getting into a spirit world. He spends his last night either wandering around at the moors or in solitude *“groaning and murmuring to himself”* (WH, p. 297) and uttering detached words including, according to Nelly, *“the name of Catherine, coupled with some wild term of endearment, or suffering”* (WH, p. 295). Heathcliff himself senses that the end is near and he repeatedly tells Nelly about being *“within sight of my heaven”* (WH, p. 292) and similarly *“I have nearly attained my heaven”* (WH, p. 297) with the emphasis on *“my”*, which indicates that he is expecting his own death and he welcomes it, because it means that he finally joins Catherine. He lived an empty and meaningless life at Wuthering Heights anyway, ever since his *“life”* and *“soul”* died.

6. Heathcliff and Other Romantic Characters of Victorian Literature

The extraordinary story invented by Emily Brontë, full of love and passion, but on the other hand also full of hatred and suffering, undoubtedly stands out among the other Victorian novels. However, thanks to the fact that the Brontë sisters were all extremely gifted regarding their literary production, one cannot avoid comparing and contrasting *Wuthering Heights* with other novels from that era. For the purpose of my thesis, which intends to outline the discrepancies of other Romantic characters in novels of the Victorian period, I have chosen a renowned novel written by Charlotte Brontë called *Jane Eyre* to show some of the parallels and contradictions.

Not only do the two great novels contain many similarities but they also differ in many areas. An important aspect, which they have in common and which plays an essential role in my thesis, is the containment of the character possible to be classified as a Romantic hero, more precisely the Byronic type of a Romantic hero. The man named Edward Fairfax Rochester is Heathcliff's counterpart in *Jane Eyre*. Despite the Byronic hero label both of them share, the men differ in many ways – both in personal qualities and the relationships towards their beloved women. In this chapter I aim to compare and contrast the two Byronic heroes in relation to their overall attitudes, actions and relationships – Heathcliff's with Catherine as opposed to the one of Rochester and Jane.

6.1. Heathcliff and Mr. Rochester

It is important to say that unlike Heathcliff, Rochester does not represent the centre of the novel being replaced by the main female protagonist of Jane. Therefore, the readers are not given the chance to explore his character, his past

and his background as deeply as they are in the case of Heathcliff. However, from what is possible to determine, certain similarities between them may be found.

As I have stated earlier, they are both considered Romantic hero models. The first characteristic they have in common, is their quality of being outcasts to a certain degree. Regarding Rochester, the fact that he is more or less an outcast is associated with the moment of morality. Heathcliff is an outcast by nature, determined to remain one his whole life. Rochester does not manifest himself as savagely and despicably. Quite contrarily to Heathcliff, if it was not for Rochester's mad wife kept in secret, he would seem quite a decent, prosperous man. He proves his twisted morality, when he tries wittingly to commit bigamy and that makes him a moral outcast.

Like Heathcliff, Rochester seems dark concerning his appearance. Jane describes his face she cannot resist as: "*colourless olive face, massive brow, broad black eyebrows, deep eyes, strong features, grim mouth*"⁴⁰. The distinctive facial features contribute to the fact that he is gloomy, stern and mysterious. Whereas Heathcliff's mysteriousness stems from the fact that he is an orphan, gypsy and savage-natured, Rochester's skeleton in a closet turns out to be an exotic mad wife hidden in the attic, which contributes to his mysterious, uncanny past.

As well as Heathcliff, Rochester can be said to be an immensely passionate man. Both heroes are capable of very passionate love. Their perpetual desire to spend their lives with their destined women seems to be in charge of their actions. Both men struggle for their love so hard that they are careless of what price their steps take. In Rochester's case it is breaking the social laws and tricking Jane into the bigamous marriage, in case of Heathcliff it is an entire life filled only with revenging and cruelty. From this, I would judge that both Heathcliff's and Rochester's reason were overpowered with passion. Similarly, Catherine in the

⁴⁰ CHARLOTTE BRONTE AND WAYNE JOSEPHSON. *Jane Eyre*. Charlottesville, VA: Chadwick Pub, 2009., p. 125, All subsequent quotes are from this edition.

moment of choosing Linton and Jane when listening to the advice "*flee temptation*"⁴¹ followed their reason and suppressed passion.

Moreover, Heathcliff and Rochester represent an element of fire. In *Wuthering Heights* I have already mentioned the contrast to Linton. In *Jane Eyre* St. John Rivers mirrors the opposite to Rochester. Jane states about Rivers in one moment that: "*I began to feel he had spoken the truth when he said he was hard and cold*"⁴². To give an example of two contradictory intentions of the two men - Rivers for example forces Jane into a loveless marriage, on the other hand Rochester tries to guide her to a marriage, dishonest indeed, but full of feeling.

Rochester also appears to be more human than Heathcliff. Sure, one might argue that Rochester keeps his ex-wife locked up in the attic, which does not seem very considerate, but on the other hand, she has gone mad and he did not see any other way of getting out of that delicate situation, which may be understandable. Furthermore, he at least ensured that she has been taken care of. Bertha stood in his way of achieving his love. Regardless, he risked his own life in saving her from the burning house wounding his arm and ending up blinded, despite that he more or less despised her. Heathcliff never really did anything similar. Yet he was deliberately cruel, abusive and tyrannical to those who were, in his eyes, preventing him from being with Catherine.

6.2. Heathcliff and Catherine versus Rochester and Jane

The relationship between Heathcliff and Catherine supposedly differs from the one between Rochester and Jane. The very nature of Heathcliff's relationship to Catherine seems different, because they know each other very well since they grew up together as though they were siblings. Their childish bond just develops into romantic love. Jane with Rochester go contrary to this scheme. There is a

⁴¹ *Jane Eyre*, p. 223

⁴² *Jane Eyre*, p. 274

moment of discovery of each other. Rochester is unknown to Jane and she has to gradually find her way to him. Catherine and Heathcliff share a lot of memories together, therefore they function as one unity. On the other hand, both Jane and Rochester keep their past lives and separate existence. Secondly, I suggest that the Wuthering Heights couple are more equal, as they are of about the same age, none of them is more experienced, more intelligent or superior.⁴³ Jane, conversely, is well aware of her social status. Rochester is rich – she is poor, he is a sophisticated middle-aged man – she is young and inexperienced. Knowing that her independence would be endangered had she been Rochester's mistress, she refused to make it happen.

Regarding the motif of marriage, Rochester seems to me as a more husband type of man. Heathcliff unlike him never married his beloved one. It is almost impossible to imagine the unrestrained Heathcliff as a loving and caring husband. Marriage would be too tying to his natural savage-like character. The Romantic aspect of their story lies precisely in the transcendental nature of their love and Heathcliff's suffering till death not in a boring marriage. However, for Jane and Rochester the only proper ending to their longing for each other seems the act of marriage, which they eventually live up to.

Selfishness of the love shared by Catherine and Heathcliff can be taken in as another theme for discussion. I have mentioned above that I consider Catherine's choice of Edgar rather selfish. The same could be said about Heathcliff's unconditional love to her. He wanted to have her just for himself, his fierce temper also drove her crazy in her poor health condition, even on her deathbed, and he was not capable of letting go of his suffering for her own good. Similar act of selfishness can be found in Rochester's behaviour. Irrespective of Jane's values and dignity, he kept her in the dark about his previous marriage, wanting her to marry him, which I regard as very self-centred conduct.

⁴³ I intentionally ignore the fact that Heathcliff's position at Wuthering Heights unlike Catherine's was lessened to the status of a poor servant, because Catherine did not really take advantage of it. Therefore neither of them was superior to the other.

Moreover, I distinguish two completely different ways of loving the other person and dealing with separation. After being abandoned by Jane, Rochester did not punish anyone else for his misfortune. He handled her departure in more humanly way than Heathcliff. Rochester loved Jane but in my opinion, he more thought about his love than he actually felt it. Heathcliff loved Catherine with every cell in his body, the passion completely controlled him and he allowed it. Heathcliff could not figure out, how to live his life without his "soul", but Rochester just continued living without any revenge or malice.

The last point I see comparing the two couples is that the character of Heathcliff develops in an opposite direction than Rochester. At the beginning, Rochester is a moody, dark brooding man with a terrible secret and with a wounded soul. Jane, whom he fell in love with, brightened his dark mind and after she gave him the lesson of leaving him, she helped him to become a better man, capable of admitting his wrong actions in the past. I believe that Jane's presence had a good effect on Rochester, as he transformed from being torn apart to a loving man in the end. Rochester becomes tamed, ultimately redeemed by an ordinary, formal, marital love. Heathcliff, however, underwent a reverse alteration, because of which he may be perceived as far darker hero by the reader. From a wronged child, abused by Hindley, treated worse than a servant and willing to change for Catherine's sake, he transformed into the tyrannical, powerful landlord of Wuthering Heights, abusive husband to Isabella, despotic father to Linton and intriguing man oppressing both Cathy and Hareton in the end. The reader is, however, given a hint of Heathcliff's possible ultimate redemption, when the wandering ghosts of him and Cathy are seen by the little boy in the moors. Both heroes thus find their desired redemption, even though each of a different kind.

7. Conclusion

My bachelor thesis concentrated its main focus on the literary concept of the Romantic hero and its characteristic features. For this purpose, I chose to examine Heathcliff - the main protagonist of the Victorian novel *Wuthering Heights* in the practical part of the thesis.

Primarily, as for the theoretical part of the thesis, I focused on defining the Romantic Movement and describing Romanticism with an effort to give an account of its origin, historical influences and key principles as precisely as possible in the first three chapters. For the next part, I tried to outline the main features specific for this literary period. Particular attention was paid to the style of Romantic writing and the typical characteristics of the Romantic authors as well as to the schemes and motifs often used by the Romantics including the landscape, supernatural motifs or escapist tendencies.

In the last part of the theoretical section I dealt with the Romantic hero topic itself. I suggested some of the definitions suitable for being applied on Heathcliff in the following paragraphs. Particularly, I used Thorslev's typology, which I considered quite convenient.

In the fifth chapter, which forms the core of my work, I tried to apply the theoretic findings on Heathcliff. Summing up the results, it can be concluded that Heathcliff possesses an enormous amount of Romantic hero qualities. More specifically, the thesis has shown that he is a prototype of a Byronic hero. Just as a typical Romantic hero, Heathcliff differs from the other characters by his appearance, as well as by his unconventional behaviour. His origins are unknown, therefore he is unpredictable. Haunted by the past, he strives for the love of his life, despite her death. He loves as strongly as he hates. His sorrow caused by the separation from Catherine leads to his cruelty, incomprehension of the others and alienation from a larger society. Another similarities with a typical Romantic hero I formulated in chapters *Wandering* and *Heathcliff's Character*. His character traits strongly resemble those of a Byronic hero. In addition, Heathcliff's relationship towards nature along with frequent allusions to

nature, while describing his love to Catherine, prove signs of him being true Romantic protagonist. It has also been found, according to my analysis that Heathcliff most resembles the Gothic Villain from Thorslev's typology, also due to the numerous gothic elements contained in the novel.

My task in the last, sixth chapter of my thesis, was to show the discrepancies between Romantic heroes in of the Victorian age. I decided to compare Heathcliff with Mr. Rochester from *Jane Eyre*. I came to the conclusion that despite the fact that both characters are considered Byronic heroes, they are very dissimilar. I mainly tried to show this assumption through relationships to their beloved women, and the way they treated others after losing them. As an illustration, Heathcliff's lifestyle after Catherine's death was deplorable and focused on revenge. Rochester's, on the other hand, was just lonely, without any effort to hurt others consciously. Moreover, both men came to the redemption in different ways – Rochester by means of showing an awareness of his mistakes and the subsequent marriage, Heathcliff through death.

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