

SENSE OF ALIENATION AND DOMINANCE OF POWER IN EMILY BRONTE'S WUTHERING HEIGHTS

Swati Rani Debnath
Lecturer, Department of English
Sylhet International University, Sylhet, Bangladesh

In *Wuthering Heights* Emily Bronte decorates an atmosphere of exquisite and dangerous romantic beauty mobilizing destructive emotions with the multitude of fears and desires. The fusion of depravity and repulsive love enmesh a sense of alienation within the major characters and make an exposure of a disintegrated world with the momentous exploration of vehement power. The extremity and violence that Heathcliff manipulates, spring out from his negative reaction towards the authoritative principles of established classes. An understanding of the accepted social and cultural values perturb the tenderness of mind. Heathcliff's orientation with the civilized society through his inclusion in the Earnshaw family though provides shelter to a nameless orphan, subsequently the grown up boy faces an ideological assault with the loss of his benefactor. Old Mr. Earnshaw brings home with him a 'gipsy brat' who does not have any name, any status, any property or possession, where the birth of a child is welcomed with high acclamation, the gipsy boy's appearance in the world doesn't mark the sign of any festivity, his emergence is from the darkness, who doesn't belong to a tightly-knit family. When a child badly needs proper care and support of it's parents, this most unfortunate boy is left alone on the road of Liverpool. His entrance in the Earnshaw family is that of an outsider and he tests the family by introducing an alien element into a jealousy guarded-system of parental and filial relations, of inheritance and possession. Mr. Earnshaw while introducing him says *'you must e'en take it as a gift from God ; though it's as dark almost as if it came from the devil'.* (Chapter 4)

Mr. Earnshaw sympathized for the poor, fatherless child, named him after his dead son Heathcliff. However, the child psychology of Heathcliff could easily be demonstrated in a positive way with the fulfillment of his single possible demand of love. This alienated living being could hold a integrated bond, but in the course of time being the victim of suppression comes out as a raging spirit, trapped inside the *'Wuthering Heights'*.

The family's reaction towards Heathcliff is that of a immediate and instinctive hostility. In Ellen's narrative the child is referred as 'it' which denotes a kind of disregard to Heathcliff of having any human status. To Hindley, Heathcliff is a rival for his father's affection and his own position as a heir, a potential disrupter of the ancient lineage. Here Heathcliff is the recipient of violence. How Heathcliff was persecuted by Hindley this note we get in Catherine's diary, where she says about Hindley's speech towards them-

" You forget you have a master here, says the tyrant. I'll demolish the first who puts me out of temper! I insist you on perfect sobriety and silence. Oh, boy! Was that you! Fancis darling pull his hair as you go by! I heard him snap his finger."
(Chapter 3)

When old Earnshaw is dead, Catherine and Heathcliff are persecuted together by Hindley. In this respect Arnold Kettle in his *'Introduction to the English Novel'* remarks that Heathcliff and Catherine's love is an emotional bond forged in response of their ill treatment. Heathcliff cause bears the acute indication of

how crucially the tensions, inequalities and injustice of the home or upper class society alienates the individual both mentally, socially. Heathcliff's acceptance of sub-ordination in early age is whether for a positive sense of common interest to the parental society, or because of his inability to conceive of any alternative. According to Ellen's narrative in Chapter V:

He seemed a sullen, patient child; hardened, perhaps to ill treatment. He would stand Hindley's blows without winking or shedding a tear, and my pinches moved him only to draw in a breath and open his eyes as if he had hurt himself by accident and nobody was to blame.

Domination and inequalities of power and wealth are perennial facts of Human society. Even in vague consciousness we can easily perceive the fact and get alarmed how such remorselessly selfish and narrow interest, superiority complex and racial hatreds-can in fact lead to self destructiveness. Under the domination of handful power and misconduct of Hindley the reshuffle state of the orphan was again threatened. The inhuman exercise of power instead of parturition give the rise of a peripheral world full of irredeemable and eccentric callousness. Catherine's love while fosters a kind of consolidation in the tormented soul of powerless sub-ordinate, at the same time the negligence from her, places him to the most despicable assessment about himself. In his word, "*I shall be as dirty as I please, and I like to be dirty and I will be dirty*". (Chapter7)

It is noticeable that Heathcliff can never make an integrative view of human community, his effort of uniting imagination and formulating expressions and emotions always become shattered with anomalies and contradictions. Sense of cultural and social inferiority, economic disparity and state of humiliation deliberately reveal to him his own suppressed instincts projecting him in a world of alienation. Heathcliff and Catherine are the blocked protagonists rudely awakened by the discrepancy between their illusory expectation and social reality.

Catherine's choice of Edgar Linton – the symbol of refined culture and nature – is in effect an act of deceiving her own self, imprisoning her own nature. Heathcliff with his exotic black skin is still a wheeling stranger to her with whom any fruitful relationship can not be developed. When Catherine unifies with Edgar Linton, she paradoxically attempt to apprehend social status. It is she who says, "*Nelly he (Heathcliff) is more myself than I am. Whether our souls are made of his and mine are the same.*" Again she utters "*it would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now*". (Chapter 9). Catherine undergoes a violent conflict of mind when she realizes that Heathcliff can never be hers again in life while she remains the cultivated wife of Edgar Linton, she imprisons herself in her room for three days without food or water. Being separated from own true nature, she gets totally collapsed in her own world. The desire of being a part of refined culture causes a devastating impact on her personality, breaks her alliance with her natural endowment and submerges her in total alienation.

The mysterious attachment of Heathcliff and Catherine has its root in childhood, it came out by a sort of natural chemistry and got flourished without hindrance in the uncivilized world of Wuthering Heights. The relationship grew and deepened in harmony for about ten years but with Catherine's betrayal of the genuine dictates of her heart by selling her soul for material advantages blocks the natural progress of love leaving Heathcliff with bitter frustration who goes off to nurse his wound in isolation. Trapping her soul in the Thushcross Grange Catherine faces the reality of situation, she longs for breaking the jail, but her position as Mrs. Linton stands as an obstacle to get back Heathcliff in her life. In her delirium she cries madly out of the window after Heathcliff.

In her relationship with Edgar, Catherine could not make any fruitful adjustment. Though Edgar's feeling for Catherine was sincere, the element of great passion which so strongly characterizes the central love affair, was missing. In Catherine's outrage, she denoted, "*Is he actually so utterly indifferent for my life?*" (Chapter 12). Her soul undergoes a violent storm, causing a strong emotional breakdown, she is trapped in what is for her an unnatural marriage and she wants desperately to resume her rightful place with Heathcliff. Theme of Alienation lies as a pivotal force and the central characters of '*Wuthering Heights*' Catherine and Heathcliff go through it. How Heathcliff is very much connected with Catherine we get that note in her declaration to Ellen in chapter 9, where she demonstrates that "*If all else perished, and he remained, I shall still continue to be; but if all else remained and he were annihilated, the Universe would turn to a mighty stranger. I should not seem a part of it*". So when she is parted from Heathcliff she becomes an alien in a strange universe. Catherine holds a strong emotional support to Heathcliff who is rejected from his surroundings from early life. Catherine's behavior, attitude and finally her cruel rejection bring the ultimate alienation of his life. The personality that Heathcliff develops in his adulthood has been formed in response to the deprivation of his earlier life. Heathcliff received constant reminder of his lesser status on his first visit to the Grange. Catherine is taken into the Linton household, where as Heathcliff is rejected, made fun of him and alienated. The final sense of alienation and the most damning occurs with Catherine's marriage to Edgar, which he considers a betrayal of his love in favour of social status and civilized existence of Grange.

The rejection hatred and negligence that he got from the others, embittered his soul and lead him to the way of bringing catastrophe in his surrounding world. When the realization dawns on him that Catherine has chosen status, wealth and position in preference to him, he disappears for three years and returns in the guise of a gentleman. Heathcliff's inability to see and cope with the changes in Catherine's personality has a permanent effect on his life. Heathcliff comes out as a fierce, inhuman fellow, it is the ever-suffering soul of a magnate of the infernal world; and by its quenchless and ceaseless ravage effect the execution of the decree which dooms him to carry Hell with him wherever he wanders.

The canvas of the novel, delineates an Universe, which is built up from two-opposing forces- 'storm' and 'calm' when Heathcliff is alienated with which dehumanized exercise of power by Hindley at that time Catherine stands as a goddess of tranquility and calmness beside him, she seeks to reestablish cosmic order which has been disturbed by the faulty external actions but the betrayal of his love engage him in the most inhuman activities and then tormented Heathcliff starts to exercise that power in lack of which he had to go through untold sufferings.

Heathcliff's vengeance starts to grow when isolation and alienation grasp him from every side. Though he was neglected and tormented, if Catherine were with him always, he could have flourish him as a proper human being. Loss of Catherine makes him vindictive and fierce. In the early stage, of his life he lost the benefit of education, continual hardwork begun soon and concluded late had extinguished the curiosity he once possessed in pursuit of knowledge. His childhood sense of superiority instilled into him by the favour of Mr. Earnshaw was faded away. The society that he is forced to take part of, does not allow him to become a better person. Instead he becomes the person who eventually changes the social structure of *Wuthering Heights* and *Thurscross Grange*. Hindley's dominance over him permanently affected his life when Heathcliff himself got that power we find that he uses it as a medium of taking revenge on Hindley by doing injustice to Hindley's son Hereton. Hereton's future at the mercy of Heathcliff is described by Ellen in the following passage:

“In that manner Hareton ,who should now be the first gentleman in the neighborhood was reduced to a state of complete dependence on his father’s innervate enemy and lives in his own house as a servant deprived of the advantage of wages and quite unable to right himself because of his friendlessness” (Chapter 17)

For seventeen years Heathcliff wreaks his vengeance on Hindley, Edgar and Isabella and on their children Hareton, young Cathy and Linton. As a result of increased speculation in to the nature of states of consciousness, Heathcliff becomes dissatisfied with the established order of society. We perceive a psychologically accurate account of how a man can behave when he get the chance to avenge his persecutor. It is in fact reveal those aspects of the personality which can not be viewed as a progression of individual and self existing moment but which are essentially dynamic in nature and are independent of chronological sequence of action.

The quality of experience of a new phenomenon is conditioned by a group of similar experiences scattered up and down through past time and the past experience being associated with present situation mark a fearful atmosphere. Heathcliff’s course of action to the next generation of *Wuthering Heights* and *Thurshcross Grange* is entirely inhuman but though Heathcliff has a natural savagery in him, his deeds are not out of volatility.

However, in many ways the Nietzschean superhuman spirit is prevalent in him. He doesn’t exist for the benefit of society, rather his activities and emotional flourishment denote the fact of his personal fulfillment; but in this case it can be mentioned that while a Nietzschean superman is detached from any kind of nobility, Heathcliff’s power, barbarity, cruelty all kind of inhuman conducts seek submissiveness in front of his love for Catherine. When he possesses the power, he exercises his strongest will and power to dominate others. He becomes completely alone, the assertion of his self will isolates him from everyone, bringing complete solitude in his life. He does not allow minor human actions or morality or law to prevent him from his way of revenge. It is the revenge of a totally broken man. It is the exploration of a deep misery and it is evident when he asserts addressing Catherine;

“ You teach me now, how cruel you have been- cruel and false...why did you despise me? Why did you betray your own heart, Cathy?...I have not broken your heart-You have broken it – and in Breaking it you have broken mine.” (Chapter 15)

If individual’s reaction to any given situation is determined by the sum of his bitter experience then everyone is in some sense is a prisoner of his own individuality. If ‘reality’ itself is a matter of personal impression, rather than public systematization, then real communication between individuals become difficult. How love is possible in a world of lonely, imprisoned consciousness! Modern psychologists think that the private train of association colours the individual mind and constitutes a barrier to effective human intercourse. Here it can be stated that simple affection can speak spark across this gulf and in many ways love can solve the problem posed by psychology. Extreme love for Catherine make Heathcliff violent and selfish to others and it turns into complicated and problematical fact. Heathcliff’s openness to a variety of interpretive motives explains his vulnerability the duration of which is life-long and which will be dispersed only when his alienation will come to an end being reunited with Catherine. With an ambiguous advance, he makes his boundaries futile, approaches to self destructiveness, but long for never to loose the connection with Catherine even after her death-

“ Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest as long as I am living! You said I killed you-haunt me then! ---- drive me mad! Only do not leave me in this abyss where I cannot find you! Oh God! It is unutterable! I can not live without my life! I can not live without my soul!”. (Chapter 16)

The inconsolable quality of his bereavement drive him in to excess of passionate grief. His pathetic outburst is come from his sense of alienation as Catherine’s departure leaves him completely alone in this world. No body is to love him, nobody is to care him, nobody is to lament for him. In young Cathey’s word:

“Mr. Heathcliff, you have nobody to love you; and however miserable you make us, we shall still have the revenge of thinking that your cruelty arises from your greater misery! You are miserable are you not? Lonely, like the devil and envious like him? Nobody loves you- nobody will cry for you when you die.”(Chapter 29)

Heathcliff-Catherine love relationship is an attempt to break the boundaries of self and to fuse with one another to transcend the inherent separateness of the human condition; fusion with one another will, uniting two incomplete individuals to create a whole and to achieve new sense of identity, a complete and unified identity. This need for fusion motivates Heathcliff’s determination ‘absorb’ Catherine’s corpse into his and for them to ‘dissolve’ into each other so thoroughly that Edgar will not be able to distinguish Catherine from him. The desire for transcendence takes the form of crossing boundaries and rejecting conventions. This is the source of torment of being imprisoned in a body and in this life.

From the sense of alienation Heathcliff holds Catherine as a demonstrative force of his life. The loss of her submerges him in the utter level of frustration and suffering. This suffering acts as a pivotal force to provide him materialistic gain in life occupying an enormous power , in lack of which he was tormented in his early boyhood and was deprived of power, education and refinement. Along with his vehement outrage, when the power comes in his custody, it reinforces his spirit to advance towards revenge. When all the sentimental commitments comes to an end, we get a totally remorse and broken Heathcliff who desires Catherine’s company even though she is dead and we note the profound urge of his heart to be reunited with Catherine.

What especially distinguishes Emily Bronte’s novel is her ability to insinuate the fact of power and alienation to the mind of the reader. Moderately imaginative minds accepts the abnormal situation of Heathcliff and Catherine and not reject their causes out of hand as merely as simple love story. It does, however, by its very waywardness and provocative individuality bring home to us the strange environment authenticating it by careful attention to detail and measurements. It is obvious that if a man accepts the power dominance and his isolating environment, it will be a mere acceptance of the attack. Heathcliff exposes himself to all dangers and misunderstanding but he does not want to be mocked by his fate, surroundings and imprisonment when the fact of love has grown preposterous without proper command of social status and power so dangerous and exasperating it appears to most people to be the victims of practical world the drastic method the extremist follows in the novel is to solicit at pacify his outrageous spirit was clearly a commulative one for the past offences done to him. The range from gloom to grave provide the vision of sadness without a moment relaxing of tension, the emotional element leaves a hardening effect upon the sensibilities which is in fact a sickman’s malice, something purely negative and destructive ; its positive effect indirect though, it is, lay in helping towards the establishment

of that attitude of tolerant good sense and human materialism which forms the structure of society and social relationship

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