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WOMEN'S VOICES IN EMILY BRONTË'S *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*: The Challenging of Moral Standards in The Victorian Age

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“Together, they would brave satan and all his legions”

(Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*, 1847)

Abstract

The aim of this dissertation is to show, through the analysis of the characters Catherine Earnshaw and Catherine Linton, how Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* challenged the moral standards for women in the Victorian age. In order to achieve this goal, I compare the choices of both women during the narrative, based on several approaches on philosophical morality, Christianity, feminism and ideology. I then analyze the consequences of their actions and the ending of the narrative for both characters, considering this the ultimate outcome of their attitudes. I discuss the situation of women in the sexist Victorian England according to Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill and Simone de Beauvoir and the influence of ideology and class struggle as claimed by Karl Marx, Louis Althusser and Terry Eagleton. In addition, I consider the role of Christianity in the characters' lives according to Friedrich Nietzsche and discuss the justification of their choices based on principles by Jean-Paul Sartre. Concerning the end of the narrative for each woman, I examine their level of well-being as conceptualized by Thomas M. Scanlon. Both Catherine Earnshaw and Cathy Linton acted in disagreement to the standards for women in the Victorian age. However, the majority of Cathy's decisions was made in good faith according to Sartre's principles, in opposition to her mother's. Cathy managed to overcome the suffering inflicted on her by the men in the novel, responding with love and charity instead of with revenge. Her level of well-being in the end of the narrative was considerably superior to her mother's. This proves that, even though conforming to a Christian view on virtue to a certain extent, *Wuthering Heights* challenged the moral standards for women in the Victorian Age.

Key-words: Victorian Age, morality, Emily Brontë, feminism, Christianism.

Resumo

O objetivo dessa dissertação é mostrar, por meio da análise das personagens Catherine Earnshaw e Catherine Linton, como *Wuthering Heights*, de Emily Brontë, desafiou os padrões morais para mulheres na Era Vitoriana. Para alcançar esse propósito, eu comparo as escolhas de ambas as mulheres ao longo da narrativa, baseado em várias perspectivas sobre a moral filosófica, Cristianismo, feminismo e ideologia. Então analiso as consequências de suas ações e o final da narrativa para ambas as personagens, considerando este o principal resultado de suas atitudes. Eu discuto a situação das mulheres na sexista Inglaterra Vitoriana conforme Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill e Simone de Beauvoir e a influência da ideologia e do conflito de classes como conceituado por Karl Marx, Louis Althusser e Terry Eagleton. Além disso, considero o papel do Cristianismo na vida das personagens de acordo com Friedrich Nietzsche e discuto a justificativa das suas escolhas baseado em princípios de Jean-Paul Sartre. A respeito do final da narrativa para cada mulher, examino seu nível de bem-estar como conceituado por Thomas M. Scanlon. Ambas Catherine Earnshaw and Cathy Linton agiram em discordância com os padrões para mulheres na Era Vitoriana. Porém, a maioria das decisões de Cathy foi feita com boa fé de acordo com os princípios de Sartre, ao contrário às de sua mãe. Cathy conseguiu superar o sofrimento nela infligido pelos homens do romance, respondendo com amor e caridade ao invés de com vingança. Seu nível de bem-estar no final da narrativa foi consideravelmente superior ao de sua mãe. Isso prova que, apesar de conformar-se até certo ponto a uma visão cristã de virtude, *Wuthering Heights* desafiou os padrões morais para mulheres na Era Vitoriana.

Palavras-chave: Era Vitoriana, moral, Emily Brontë, feminismo, Cristianismo.

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Introduction

> "As in the stellar firmament there are sometimes two suns which determine the path of one planet, and in certain cases suns of different colours shine around a single planet, now with red light, now with green, and then simultaneously illumine and flood it with motley colours: so we modern men, owing to the complicated mechanism of our 'firmament,' are determined by *different* moralities; our actions shine alternately in different colours, and are seldom unequivocal – and there are often cases, also, in which our actions are *motley-coloured*." (Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*)

When we study Victorian literature, it is evident how social image and morality were within the thematic of most of the acclaimed works of the age. Moral conflicts were frequently depicted out of situations in which the characters were divided between doing what their social relations seemed to expect from them and what they were willing to do. The consequences of their decisions were varied, and this opens the possibility for research on the moral value of the characters' actions. Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* portrayed Catherine Earnshaw and her daughter Catherine Linton, who chose opposite directions in relation to the social standards imposed on women in the Victorian Age. The ending that the story presented for each one of the characters challenged those social standards, which could classify the work as amoral. However, my perspective here is similar to the ideas to be found in the quotation from Nietzsche: there is not one single version of what is moral, which we could classify actions as within this group or as opposed to it. There are different points of view through which we can analyze each choice, and some of these choices will be between moral and amoral, motley-colored. Therefore, the aim of this dissertation is to study the

manner in which Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* challenged and criticized Victorian moral standards, based on the choices made by the main women characters in the work and on the ending provided for each of them.

During the most part of the nineteenth century, Great Britain was under the power of Queen Victoria, a period when "the country acquired unprecedented power and wealth" (English Heritage Editors, "An Introduction"). It was an age of significant developments in the field of transportation and communication, but there were also intense negative aspects. "A rising population, rural unemployment, and migration to the towns, together with the horrendous conditions in which many people lived and worked" were an obstacle for the small and conservative state Great Britain was previously ("An Introduction"). In addition, this scenario was aggravated by the changes brought by the Industrial Revolution. The 1840s were known as the Hungry Forties, with its most significant episode being the Irish Famine from the year of 1845 to 1849. Even though there were these difficulties, the empire expanded and British soldiers were fighting wars all over the world during the time of Queen Victoria's reign. Likewise, it was a time of pride for the members of the British Empire. Some positive aspects of the nation were the variety of foods available and the great number of people who traveled across the oceans.

The intense development of the nation was noticed when London, "with its many newspapers, journals, periodicals and circulating libraries", became an inspiration for literature as well as a place where books were highly produced and sold ("An Introduction"). The city was a center of commerce and culture and the Victorian Age witnessed "more extraordinary intellectual progress than any previous age since ancient Greece", with remarkable advances in the fields of science, engineering, technology and medicine ("An Introduction"). That "was an age that changed the way human life was perceived", for the advances in science led to a crisis in religious faith ("An Introduction"). However, the

Victorian Age still saw "the greatest burst of church building and foundation of charitable institutions since the Middle Ages" ("An Introduction").

Despite the innovations in the field of medicine, there was still no cure for most diseases, and life expectancy in the empire was still very low. "Infectious diseases were the greatest cause of Victorian mortality . . . such as smallpox, tuberculosis and influenza", in addition to the first epidemic of cholera in 1831 (English Heritage Editors, "Victorians"). In the 1870s, legislation gave the authorities power to change the insanitary conditions of urban homes. The Victorian Age was also the time of a revolution in nursing, "the identification of microbes as a cause of disease, and the development of antiseptic surgery" ("Victorians"). However, these were innovations with small impact on the life expectancy of British subjects, since most of the diseases did not have a cure yet. The average life expectancy in 1850 was 40 years for men and 42 for women. In 1900, this number was altered to 45 years for men and 50 for women. This difference coincided with the decline in infant mortality, which happened largely because of better sanitary conditions.

In regards to religion, 19th century England was mostly a Christian nation, one of the few non-Christian faiths being Judaism. Notwithstanding, there were disagreements between groups of Christians: "At one extreme were the Evangelicals, who focused on the Gospel teachings rather than ritual, and emphasized preaching and Bible study. At the other, High Churchmen revived rituals, images, incense and vestments not seen in England since the Reformation" (English Heritage Editors, "Religion"). This period was also the first time in Great Britain when a significant amount of public figures declared themselves non-religious. Scientific progress – such as Charles Darwin's theory of the evolution of species – made it difficult for educated people to believe in the dogma of the church. Yet, the 19th century was still under great religious influence: old truths were being questioned, but "new faiths

emerged, such as Spiritualism, established in England by the 1850s, and Theosophy, which drew on Buddhism and Hinduism" ("Religion").

The value of family life was remarkably strong during the Victorian Age and, according to Hermann Aubin et al., it was idealized based on Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and the nine children they had together. In addition, the Victorian period was the first in history to consider childhood a precious phase in the life of a subject. The field of philosophy was reserved for the wealthier and more educated part of the population, but "the dogma of moral responsibility" kept civilization together (Aubin, et al.). This moralist principle had its roots in the 18th century, "in Wesleyan Methodism and the Evangelical movement, in Rousseau, Schiller, and Kant" (Aubin, et al.). Through the acceptance of the idea that all men would be equal in the eyes of God, it was common for the moral man to see slavery as wrong, and this ended up in the abolition act by Parliament in 1833, four years before Queen Victoria was crowned. That was also a time of repressing sexuality, since the Industrial Revolution required "a strict, inhuman discipline" (Aubin, et al.). Not every citizen conformed to this ideal and, from the beginning to the end of the Victorian Age, there were several critiques and riots, including the view that respectability was "mere hypocrisy" (Aubin, et al.). Nothing represented better the repression of the 19th century than the London Metropolitan Police, an institution responsible for controlling riots and crime.

This was the period in which *Wuthering Heights* was written. Emily Jane Brontë was born on July 30th, 1818, in Thornton, Yorkshire. According to Joyce M. S. Tompkins, editor of Encyclopaedia Britannica, the record of Brontë's life is very "meagre", for she was a reserved woman (Tompkins). Siobhan Craft Brownson claimed "[m]uch of what we know about Brontë is seen at a remove, through Charlotte's writings about her or Elizabeth Gaskell's biography of Charlotte. Myths about the family abound, but Brontë seems to be the

most mysterious figure of all of them" (Brownson). She was the daughter of Reverend Patrick Brontë and Maria Branwell Brontë, the fifth of six children. After the death of their mother in 1821, the children were educated at home, except for one year that Brontë and her sister Charlotte spent at the Clergy Daughters' School in Lancashire. She then accompanied Charlotte while she was a teacher at Miss Wooler's school at Roe Head, in 1835. Brontë also taught for six months in Miss Patchett's school at Law Hill, in 1838.

In 1842, she and Charlotte went to Pension Héger in Brussels in order to learn foreign languages and school management. After eight months, their aunt died, which contributed for Brontë's permanent return to Haworth. In 1846, she, Charlotte and Anne published their poetry in one volume, *Poems by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell*, these being pseudonyms for the sisters. The book contained 21 poems by Brontë and, according to Tompkins, "a consensus of later criticism has accepted the fact that Emily's verse alone reveals true poetic genius" (Tompkins). However, these represented only a fraction of C. W. Hatfield's findings, nearly two hundred poems published as *The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë*, in 1941. In 1847, novels from the three sisters were accepted for publication by J. Cautley Newby of London: Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, Anne's *Agnes Grey* and Charlotte's *Jane Eyre,* the latter being the most successful. Critics were hostile to *Wuthering Heights*, "calling it too savage, too animal-like, and clumsy in construction" (Tompkins). Brownson claimed "[t]he first reviewers were mystified and puzzled by the strangeness and savagery of *Wuthering Heights*, although nearly all recognized the seductive power of the novel and the original vision of its author" (Brownson). Soon after the publication, Brontë's health began to deteriorate. She refused medical help and died of tuberculosis in 1848, when she was thirty years old. Only after several years, was her work acknowledged as a masterpiece.

In line with Tompkins, *Wuthering Heights* differed from other novels of the same period by "its dramatic and poetic presentation, its abstention from all comment by the author, and its unusual structure" (Tompkins). Working with a confined space and small group of characters, "she constructs an action, based on profound and primitive energies of love and hate, which proceeds logically and economically, making no use of such coincidences as Charlotte relies on, requiring no rich romantic similes or rhetorical patterns, and confining the superb dialogue to what is immediately relevant to the subject" (Tompkins). The power of the book and the "elements of brutality" in its characters provoked a negative reaction in its nineteenth century audience (Tompkins). This work contributed to the perceiving of Brontë as a mysterious figure. As claimed by Brownson:

> She is alternately the isolated artist striding the Yorkshire moors, the painfully shy girl-woman unable to leave the confines of her home, the heterodox creator capable of conceiving the amoral Heathcliff, the brusque intellect unwilling to deal with normal society, and the ethereal soul too fragile to confront the temporal world. There is probably an element of truth as well as hyperbole in each of these views. . . . The real identity of the poet who created the fierce queens of Gondal and the visionaries of the subjective poetry lies somewhere between the shadowy myths about Brontë and the documented facts. (Brownson)

Thus, the reception of Brontë as an author has always been shaped by these apparent contradictions, which would also influence the interpretation of *Wuthering Heights*.

The novel is set in an isolated moor region of England in 1801. Mr. Lockwood, the main narrator, had rented Thrushcross Grange and decided to visit the home of his landlord, Heathcliff, who lived a few miles away in Wuthering Heights. Lockwood fell ill after leaving the Heights and had to spend several weeks locked in his room in the Grange. During this

time, he asked the servant Nelly Dean to tell the story of the people who lived there, including Heathcliff's.

For Lockwood, the story of the characters began when Mr. Earnshaw, the original owner of Wuthering Heights, brought home an orphan: Heathcliff. The boy was raised with Earnshaw's daughter Catherine and his son Hindley. Catherine and Heathcliff soon developed a very close friendship. One night, when the two had walked all the way to Thrushcross Grange, where Edgar and Isabella Linton lived, they stopped to watch the children through the window. Catherine was suddenly bitten by the Lintons's dog and invited into the house by its owners, Mr. and Mrs. Linton. Heathcliff, on the other hand, was sent away. The girl stayed for some days in Thrushcross Grange and went back home changed, a different Catherine from the one Heathcliff used to know.

Soon after, Edgar started to visit Catherine and she spent more time with him than with Heathcliff, who noticed that and even complained about it to her. Heathcliff then heard a conversation between Nelly and Catherine in which the girl mentioned her intention to marry Edgar, and that it would degrade her to marry Heathcliff because of his lack of properties. He then left Wuthering Heights heartbroken and was gone for three years. When Heathcliff returned, Catherine and Edgar were already married, but his presence destabilized the couple's relationship. Heathcliff then purchased Wuthering Heights and lived there with Hindley and his son, Hareton. After Hindley died, Heathcliff got in the line to inherit Thrushcross Grange through his marriage to Isabella Linton, whom he treated violently.

Catherine died giving birth to her daughter, Cathy[1]. Isabella ran away from Wuthering Heights and ended up living in London, where she gave birth to her son Linton

[1] In this dissertation, I chose to refer to Catherine Earnshaw as Catherine and to her daughter Catherine Linton as Cathy, to avoid misunderstandings due to the repetition of the first name.

and died when he was thirteen. Linton was sent to his father, who used him as a strategy of revenge. He forced Cathy to marry Linton, an attitude that, after Edgar was dead, gave Heathcliff power over both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. Soon after, Linton died from an illness. Heathcliff forced Cathy to live in Wuthering Heights and to work as a common servant with Nelly, while he rented Thrushcross Grange. This was the point when Mr. Lockwood appeared, therefore, ending Nelly's narrative.

Lockwood then travelled to London and, some months after his departure, he came back to visit his landlord in Wuthering Heights. He learned through Nelly that, after Catherine's death, Heathcliff felt her spirit haunting him. His main desire was to reunite with her, which was something he achieved after death, with their tombstones set side by side. After Heathcliff was dead, Cathy and Hareton started plans to get married, which meant the couple would inherit both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. The last chapter then presented Lockwood visiting the graves where Heathcliff, Catherine and Edgar laid alongside each other. Lockwood finished his narrative questioning "how anyone could ever imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers in that quiet earth" (Brontë, 403).

The main objective of this research is to study the manner in which Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* challenged and criticized Victorian moral standards, and the choice of this object of study was based on the representability of Brontë's work as a woman author from the Victorian period. *Wuthering Heights* illustrated people's anxieties in England at that time, especially the want of doing what was morally accepted in their society while being successful in their own personal desires. The work presented the characters Catherine and Cathy, who reacted very differently to the adversities they faced. The ending provided for each one showed then how challenging the book was regarding the social standards of its time, contributing to the studies of Victorian literature and morals.

The methodology of this research was based upon the development of systematic textual investigation. Firstly, it was necessary to define a theoretical framework in order to represent the standard behavior Victorian society projected on women. For this, I studied several approaches on philosophical morality, women's writings and ideological conceptualizations from the Classical Age to contemporaneity. The theorists studied from the 18th century on were Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill, Friedrich Nietzsche, Karl Marx, Louis Althusser, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Terry Eagleton and T. M. Scanlon. After this was done, *Wuthering Heights* was critically read, not only based on this theoretical framework, but also on contemporary scholarly articles, analyzing attitudes of Catherine and her daughter Cathy which would be considered moral or amoral in relation to the standard behavior expected from them, as well as the consequences of these actions. Finally, mother and daughter were compared in the moment the narrative ends for each of them. This way, the differences in the ending given for each character demonstrated how *Wuthering Heights* challenged the moral standards of Victorian England.

Considering approaches from morality since the Classical Age, ancient ethics was mainly about living a virtuous life. Modern morality, on the other hand, changed the focus to other people and the social relations one would have. According to John-Stewart Gordon's "Modern Morality and Ancient Ethics", it is possible to divide the classic and Hellenistic periods in four sections:

> The first part concerns Socrates and his arguments with the Sophists (second half of the fifth century BC); the second part covers the post-Socratian formation of important philosophical schools deeply influenced by Socratic thought for example Antisthenes' [sic] school of the Cynics, Aristippus' [sic] school of the Cyrenaics, and Plato's Academy . . . (second half of the fifth and fourth centuries BC). The third part is characterized, on the one hand, by the formation of one new major philosophical

> school, namely Aristotle's peripatetic school . . . (fourth century BC). The fourth part concerns the formation of . . . first, Epicurus' [sic] school of epicureanism standing in the tradition of the Cyrenaics and, secondly, Zeno's school of the Stoics which partly developed from the Cynics (second half of the fourth and third century BC). (Gordon)

Despite their differences, all those schools had in common their aim at understanding primarily how one achieves a good life and happiness.

Since Christianity was the official religion of the Roman Empire after the year of 325, it was Augustine's synthesis of those doctrines and of Greek Philosophy that survived the destruction of the Empire, making him the major source for studying the history of ancient ethics. Most of Aristotle's texts were lost in the West, but not in the East: "They were translated into Syriac, and Arabic, and eventually (in Muslim Spain) into Latin, and re-entered Christian Europe in the twelfth century" (Hare). With the reentry of those texts, the harmony established in Europe since Augustine – an authority of reason, Greek Philosophy, and an authority of faith, Christian Church – was threatened.

During the period of the Renaissance, Humanism was greatly adopted by princes, until this was challenged by the publication of Niccolò Machiavelli's *Il Principe,* in 1532. Machiavelli deviated from the humanist belief that "a ruler needs to cultivate a number of qualities, such as justice and other moral values, in order to acquire honour, glory, and fame" (Casini). However, it was indeed Humanism which yielded the next break in medieval philosophy: Renaissance Platonism. Then, during the 15th and 16th centuries, Stoicism, Epicureanism and Skepticism were revived through the reading of ancient literature.

This was a brief analysis regarding a historical overview of philosophical morality, for I revisit the topic as well as all of the theoretical background for this research in further detail in Chapter I. I proceed then to the 18th century, with the works of Mary Wollstonecraft.

1792 was the year of the first publication of *A Vindication of the Rights of Women,* in which the author determined her main argument contending for the rights of women as built on the principle that young women should be educated to become the companion of men, and not merely their mistresses. Wollstonecraft made it clear she did not wish women to have power over men, but over themselves. She claimed that, if men would appreciate "rational fellowship, instead of slavish obedience", they would have "more observant daughters, more affectionate sisters, more faithful wives, more reasonable mothers – in a word, better citizens" (Wollstonecraft ch. 9). If women were permitted to share the rights of men, they would then emulate their virtues.

Although Wollstonecraft's text is from 1792 and *Wuthering Heights* was published a little more than fifty years after, in 1847, it is evident that the world Wollstonecraft described had not changed to the point in which her arguments would not apply to the society Emily Brontë lived in and to the one she portrayed in her work. Therefore, I see the possibility of tracing some parallels between the situations exposed by the author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* and passages from Catherine and Cathy's trajectory throughout *Wuthering Heights.* One example would be Catherine Earnshaw's decision to marry Edgar. Considering that the only way of social ascendance a woman had in Victorian England was by marriage, it is comprehensible that Catherine would consider a risky move to marry Heathcliff. He was adopted by her family and did not have any possessions, whereas Edgar Linton was in a position of financial security. In chapter 9, when Nelly asked Catherine her reasons to marry Edgar, the girl replied: "he will be rich, and I shall like to be the greatest woman of the neighbourhood" (Brontë, 108). This could be seen as the fondness for trifles that men had for a long time attributed to women, which Wollstonecraft confirmed. However, she would not be likely to blame Catherine for it, since women would learn from their infancy to value

appearance the most and to preserve their reputation, which once lost, would require so much to be recovered.

Afterward, in 1869, John Stuart Mill published his essay *The Subjection of Women*, in which he problematized the status of women in marriage at his time, proposing a new kind of relationship in matrimony. In his first chapter, entitled "The question can be raised", Mill stated:

> The principle that regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes—the legal subordination of one sex to the other—is wrong itself, and is now one of the chief obstacles to human improvement; and it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality that doesn't allow any power or privilege on one side or disability on the other. (Mill 1)

He described some of the then current rules for married women, which included doing no act without the husband's permission and not being able to acquire any property. Mill strongly objected to this view, saying there was not supposed to be an absolute master in the relationship of marriage. For him, the natural arrangement in marriage would be "a division of powers between the two", according to their capacities, and any change would require the consent of both parts (22). Mill problematized the ideal of marriage of the men who disagreed with him: "What in this case does the man get by marriage except an upper servant, a nurse, or a mistress?" (56) He described this view as "relics of primitive barbarism" (57).

Mill's text reinforced the assumptions I make of *Wuthering Heights* based on Wollstonecraft's arguments. Once more, I can affirm both Catherine Earnshaw and Cathy Linton had their decisions highly influenced by their social context, which included the men in their lives. Catherine had marriage as her most important decision, and she chose the better option considering the values of her time and the possibilities she had as a woman in Victorian England. On the other hand, her daughter Cathy was prevented from choosing,

because Heathcliff kidnapped her so she would marry his son Linton. Later on, Cathy ended up making her choice for Hareton, which was highly unexpected in the society she lived, since she was the heiress to Thrushcross Grange and Hareton was an illiterate boy treated as a servant.

Moreover, in 1886, Friedrich Nietzsche published his book *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*. For him, in the prehistoric period the value of an action was given according to its consequences, and not according to the action itself. The German philosopher called this time the *pre-moral* period of mankind, in opposition to the *moral* one, which would be in the last ten thousand years before the publication of his work. In the moral period of mankind, the origin of an action would determine its value, the origin meaning the intention behind the attitude. Nietzsche considered this period as when the first attempt at self-knowledge was made.

According to him, "[t]he Christian faith from the beginning, is sacrifice: the sacrifice of all freedom, all pride, all self-confidence of spirit; it is at the same time subjection, self-derision, and self-mutilation" (*Beyond Good and Evil* 432). Morals in the Christian dogma are a decisive aspect in the study of *Wuthering Heights*, since it is possible for the reader to notice the several references to this faith in the work. Christianity is especially perceivable during the speeches made by the character Joseph, who often passed judgement on other characters' actions based on passages of the Bible. In addition, some attitudes by the main women characters in the story portray some sort of self-sacrifice, which is an idea that contributes to the present study of morals in *Wuthering Heights*.

On morals, apart from the religious perspective, Nietzsche declared that "[t]here is no such thing as moral phenomena, but only a moral interpretation of phenomena" (459). The German philosopher affirmed morality has been considered as something given, and the

imperative of it would be that one must obey another. He concluded that man invented the concept of good conscience to enjoy his soul as if it were something simple, and morality was the falsification which made this enjoyment possible. In another of his works, *The Genealogy of Morals,* Nietzsche claimed that all men who suffered would try to find a reason for their suffering, and some ended up interpreting it as a "*state of punishment"* for actions they took – here the philosopher introduced in his text the notion of 'sin' (770). Again, these ideas contribute to the present study on *Wuthering Heights*, since the work portrayed sacrifices made by the main women characters, which were justified in the story by a notion that something better would be achieved.

When I work on *Wuthering Heights* basing my analysis on Nietzsche's claims, I should consider the setting of the narrative in the moral period of mankind, when the value of an action depends on its intention. Therefore, the degree of morality in Catherine and Cathy's actions should be judged based on what they expected to attain at the moment of the decision, and this depends on the nature of every action and situation. In the analysis of any action, however, we need to keep in mind that Nietzsche considered that there are no moral phenomena, but just moral interpretations of phenomena. Thus, my aim in this work is to possibly find the best interpretation.

Another important part of the theoretical framework for this project is the concept of ideology. I will discuss it based on the works "The German Ideology", by Karl Marx, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses", by Louis Althusser and "Introduction: Starting With Zero: Basic Marxism", by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan. The definition of ideology was formed by the notion of literature and culture as inseparable from "the politics of class relations" (Rivkin and Ryan 231). Ideology was conceptualized as a process "of cultural signification and personal formation", shaped through "training in certain practices of self-discipline or certain modes of self-identification" (237). Thus, "[l]ife is not determined by

consciousness, but consciousness by life" (Marx 253). Since the social and historical contexts in which one was inserted would frame his mind, Marxist literary criticism in general has been concerned with studying how a work is embedded within its social, historical, and economic contexts, by means of ideological constructs.

Marxist theory contributes to my thesis on *Wuthering Heights* through the importance it gives to class struggle and to the role of ideology in a work of literature. Analyzing the narrative within the context of class struggle in Victorian England, it is possible to understand, for instance, Cathy's attitude in chapter 18. During the first time she visited her cousin Linton at the heights, she was confused after the maid, Minny, said Hareton was also her cousin. She found it absurd, because her cousin should be "a gentleman's son" (Brontë, 243). This statement summed up the huge social difference between Cathy and Hareton, which would make the boy appear unrelatable to her. Their difference was of wealth and education, but more importantly of social background.

Moving now to the year of 1946, the French author Jean-Paul Sartre published his work *Existentialism is a Humanism,* stating some of his thoughts on morality. For Sartre, "existence precedes essence" (*Existentialism* 20), which means we cannot take human kindness for granted, men are not born good or bad, ". . . man first exists: he materializes in the world, encounters himself, and only afterward defines himself" (22). Sartre classified some choices as based on error and some on truth. Then, taking this notion of the background of choices, he conceptualized acting in bad faith and acting in good faith:

> If we define man's situation as one of free choice, in which he has no recourse to excuses or outside aid, then any man who takes refuge behind his passions, any man who fabricates some deterministic theory, is operating in bad faith . . . I do not pass moral judgement against him, but I call his bad faith an error. (47)

According to Sartre, the man of good faith would have as his main desire freedom for himself as well as for others. This way, he would base his decisions on truth, in opposition to the man of bad faith.

The author also developed his thoughts on morals in his work *Being and Nothingness*, in which he described another aspect of human relationships with one another: love and sexual desire. In addition, he continued the study of the human relationships according to moral principles. As in *Existentialism is a Humanism*, Sartre emphasized the absolute responsibility of the individual for what he does. According to him, each person has both the opportunity and the responsibility of choosing his or her attitudes. So, every event is an opportunity. We will always make choices and be responsible for the choices we make.

The concepts discussed by Sartre enhance my perspective of morality in *Wuthering Heights*, establishing that, in the first place, none of the characters can be classified as good or bad in essence. They make themselves through their actions and are entirely responsible for their own choices. However, I can classify the decisions made in bad faith and the ones made in good faith. It is worth to keep in mind that the use of deterministic theories was a feature within Christianity, and Victorian England used to hold on strongly to Christian dogma. It is also important to remember that, although Sartre stated there is no human essence, he considered the relevance of the conditions in which an individual lives when discussing his or her actions. Thus, in the cases of Catherine and Cathy, I need to consider patriarchy and what being a woman in Victorian England meant. The causes and motives they had for their decisions depended on their appreciation of the situation, their views on the world and the projects they had for themselves. However, it would be a fallacy to discard oppression of women under the patriarchy as a facticity.

Additionally, in the first volume of her work *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir described the main reasons women would be considered inferior, based on biology, psychoanalysis and cultural materialism. In addition, she traced the trajectory of women along history, their participation in social context and men's perception towards them. The French philosopher concluded that "the whole of feminine history has been man-made" (Beauvoir 153). She also defined the myths surrounding women, as the dichotomy of their being seen as both Eve, the one who persuaded Adam to sin, and Virgin Mary. She stated there was not a stable concept to define women, "[u]nder whatever aspect we may consider her, it is this ambivalence that strikes us first" (169). These ideas brought consequences to the lives of women, as they were regarded as not feminine when their behavior contradicted the myths created around their figure by men. The myths then justified all the oppression and privileges conceded to men. Beauvoir advocated for the recognition of women as subjects as well as men, stating "the more relationships are concretely lived, the less they are idealized" (284). Men would have nothing to lose treating women equally: on the contrary, they would improve their family relations if they saw in their wives a partner and not a slave.

In relation to Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, the claims made by Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* provided a great amount of evidence for backing up my argument of patriarchy as a facticity, limiting Catherine's and Cathy's freedom. Through the reading of Beauvoir's work, it was possible to notice how Victorian women were born in environments commanded by men, and how possibilities for women were limited. I understood, then, what would have conditioned Catherine to make her decision of marrying Edgar, as long as I comprehended other actions by her and her daughter during the narrative.

Next, on the theory of Terry Eagleton, for this research I studied *After Theory* (2003) and *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (2002). From the latter I highlight the first chapter, entitled "Literature and History", in which Eagleton claimed the aim of Marxist criticism

would be "to *explain* the literary work more fully", with attention to its "forms, styles and meanings" (*Marxism* 3). But it would also regard these elements as products of a specific history. Understanding literature, then, would include the comprehension of the social process that involves it. Eagleton affirmed there would be no easy answer to what relationship art and ideology have. We could consider literature as nothing but ideology, the expression of the ideology of its historical context, but then we would be unable to explain how "so much literature actually *challenges* the ideological assumptions of its time" (16). The English historian then affirmed that a scientific criticism would aim to understand a literary work considering the fact that it is part of an ideological structure. However, it would be necessary to remember that the literary work also transforms this structure. Thus, a scientific criticism would search for the principle which ties ideology to the work as well as it distances one from the other.

Thus, in relation to my analysis of *Wuthering Heights*, I must consider social conditions in any moral evaluation. It is imperative that I regard Victorian England as the product of a history and consider how its superstructure – for instance, politics and religion – may have influenced the decisions made by Catherine Earnshaw and Cathy Linton during the narrative. As Eagleton would consider, the work represents Brontë's perception of Victorian society, and it is embedded in the relations of production of this context. However, I must avoid considering the book nothing but a reflection of its time, in order to attain Eagleton's ideally scientific criticism: to explain *Wuthering Heights* as part of an ideology but also a transformation of it, searching for the principle that ties this work to the ideology at the same time as distancing the two.

Moving now to late 20th century's criticism, the researcher T. M. Scanlon published his first book, *What We Owe to Each Other*, in which he described his thoughts on morals

and our relations to other individuals. Scanlon claimed that any plausible theory of well-being would have to recognize the following three points:

> First, certain experiential states (such as various forms of satisfaction and enjoyment) contribute to well-being, but well-being is not determined solely by the quality of experience. Second, well-being depends on a large extent on a person's degree of success in achieving his or her main ends in life, provided that these are worth pursuing. This component of well-being reflects the fact that the life of a rational creature is something that is to be *lived* in an active sense – that is to say, shaped by his or her choices and reactions – and that well-being is therefore in a large part a matter of how well this is done – of how well the ends are selected and how successfully they are pursued. Third, many goods that contribute to a person's well-being depend on the person's aims but go beyond the good of success in achieving those aims. These include such things as friendship, other valuable personal relations, and the achievement of various forms of excellence, such as in art or science. (Scanlon 124-125)

He then developed the idea of Contractualism, which consisted in "being able to justify your actions to others on grounds that they could not reasonably reject" (154). However, agreement with our fellow ones could not be the basis of morality, since there are cases in which the morally correct attitude is contrary to the others' consensus of what is best. Following this logic, Scanlon declared that ". . . the degree to which there is a conflict between the morality of right and wrong and the goods of personal relations depends greatly on the society in which one lives" (166). What the researcher claimed to be central to moral motivation was not justification to others itself, "but rather the ideal of acting in a way that is justifi*able* to them, on grounds they could not reasonably reject" (168). Thus, from this idea,

he concluded that one would have good reason to want to live with people who share his or her notions of justifiability.

Scanlon's claims make the analysis of *Wuthering Heights* more complete in the proportion as they provide a standard for understanding the degree of Catherine's and Cathy's well-being. This way, I am able to evaluate their choices through the results they have gotten from them. I also have a better understanding of the decisions of both characters considering Scanlon's definition of moral as whatever is justifiable to others. Catherine and Cathy, then, would be oscillating between what they desired and the concern with how their decision would be received. Scanlon's theory, therefore, will be the parameter for us to discuss Catherine's and Cathy's states of well-being during their final moments in the narrative.

As a result, considering this theoretical framework, I will be comparing Catherine's and Cathy's choices throughout *Wuthering Heights* and the consequences thereof. Catherine and Cathy differed a lot in the way they reacted to the adversities they faced, and also in the degree these reactions would be considered moral or amoral. The ending of the story for each character leaves the possibility for the last step of this project, which is to determine the level of well-being of each of the women and how this result represents a challenging to the moral standards of the Victorian Age.

The dissertation is organized in four chapters, besides this Introduction and the Final Considerations. Chapter I is "Morality, women's writing and ideology across the ages", in which I describe the theoretical framework for this research, the main approaches on moral theory since the Classical and the Middle Ages to the present times. Chapter II is entitled "Catherine Earnshaw", and it is when I discuss the choices Catherine made throughout *Wuthering Heights* according to the theoretical framework, as well as the consequences

thereof. Chapter III is “Cathy Linton”, in which I study the choices Cathy made and their consequences, in the same manner as done to her mother’s. Chapter IV, entitled “Mother and Daughter”, is when I compare Catherine and her daughter Cathy considering what was discussed in chapters II and III. I analyze the differences between the actions of both women and discuss the ending of the story for both characters, analyzing their final states of well-being according to the principles posited by Scanlon. Finally, in the Final Considerations, I sum up the differences between the choices of Catherine and Cathy considering the degree of morality of these choices. I also reaffirm the differences between their final states of well-being. After this analysis, I complete the main objective of the project, which is to determine how *Wuthering Heights* challenged and criticized Victorian moral standards through its main women characters.

Chapter I – Morality, women's writing and ideology across the ages

This research project is based upon the development of systematic textual investigation. Therefore, the first necessary attitude for the fulfilling of its aim is to define a theoretical framework in order to represent the standard behavior Victorian society projected on women. For this, I will be studying in this chapter several approaches on philosophical morality, women's writings and ideological conceptualizations from the Classical Age to contemporaneity. After this is done, *Wuthering Heights* will be critically read, not only based on this theoretical framework, but also on contemporary articles, searching for specific attitudes of Catherine and her daughter Cathy which might be considered amoral in relation to the standard behavior expected from them. In addition, the actions of both characters will be analyzed through the consequences they will have brought to them.

In talking about morality in the Classical Age, the first relevant aspect is the frequent use of the word 'ethics' in the theory correspondent to that period. According to John-Stewart Gordon's "Modern Morality and Ancient Ethics", we have at present some possibilities to make the distinction between this term and 'morality': one of them would be to assume 'ethics' as doing what makes one's own happiness possible, and 'morality' as having to do with the actions one takes that affect other people – like it was considered by Jürgen Habermas; and a second possibility would be to regard morality as a part of ethics – such as Bernard Williams's interpretation. Ancient ethics was mainly about living a virtuous life. Modern morality, on the other hand, changed the focus to other people and the social relations one would have.

According to Gordon, it is possible to divide the classic and Hellenistic periods in four sections:

> The first part concerns Socrates and his arguments with the Sophists (second half of the fifth century BC); the second part covers the post-Socratian formation of important philosophical schools deeply influenced by Socratic thought for example Antisthenes' school of the Cynics, Aristippus' school of the Cyrenaics, and Plato's Academy . . . (second half of the fifth and fourth centuries BC). The third part is characterized, on the one hand, by the formation of one new major philosophical school, namely Aristotle's peripatetic school . . . (fourth century BC). The fourth part concerns the formation of . . . first, Epicurus' school of epicureanism standing in the tradition of the Cyrenaics and, secondly, Zeno's school of the Stoics which partly developed from the Cynics (second half of the fourth and third century BC). (Gordon)

Despite their differences, all those schools had in common their aim at understanding primarily how one would achieve a good life and happiness. In relation to the school of the Cynics, we must consider their founder, Antisthenes of Athens, who advocated for practical wisdom as sufficient for living a happy life. He agreed with Socrates in believing "virtue is teachable" and virtues are possessed in unity (Gordon). That is, when one has a virtue, he would have all of them as well. For the Cynics, "things such as death, illness, servitude, poverty, disgrace, and hard labour are only supposed to be bad but are not real evils" and pleasure is not a real 'good' (Gordon). This belief led many men in this school to live as beggars, since they aimed to be "as independent of material goods as possible" (Gordon); for instance, Diogenes and Sinope are documented to have lived in a barrel.

Aristippus of Cyrene was the founder of another famous philosophical school, called the Cyrenaics. The members of this school were devoted to hedonism, a doctrine that was strongly in contrast with the one of the Cynics. Aristippus claimed "all actions should strive for the utmost pleasure since pleasure is the highest good" (Gordon). In opposition to Aristotle, Cyrenaics believed bodily pleasure and the present moment were the main purposes

in life. However, one would be required to limit his wishes if they would cause harm to himself, which was a belief hedonists shared with Socrates.

Aristotle's main work on ethics was the *Nicomachean Ethics.* He considered happiness the main goal in one's life, and something that could only be attested at the end of it. The philosopher also affirmed humans would have a function, similarly to objects. Something had goodness when it performed its function the best way possible and, for him, human function was reasoning. Thus, "an action is good (or right) if a virtuous person would perform that action in a similar situation" and, to determine this, the agent must be aware of the action – it must not be an accident – and must have made the choice for this action as well as perform it without hesitation (Gordon). According to Aristotle, some actions were bad in their nature, and it was up to the person to refrain from doing them. Individuals that knew how to use their practical wisdom would choose correctly their actions.

In addition, the philosopher affirmed "No action is good or just or courageous because of any quality in itself", virtue is something showed through the way a person is while doing something, and a virtuous subject would be in "a stable equilibrium of the soul" (Sachs). Character, according to Aristotle, would be framed by habit. He added that virtue would come from nature, so we should not confuse moral actions with the society custom that was taught from one's childhood. "The sign of what is natural, for Aristotle, is pleasure, but we have to know how to read the signs", what is from nature is not supposed to inflict an opposite effect of pain, the life of virtue is supposed to be pleasant in itself (Sachs). Aristotle claimed that nature demanded work from men, which would be to put their power of reason into action.

A third philosophical school that must be considered here is the Epicureans, developed by Epicurus. The principles of this school can be seen as a "refined and

sophisticated version of hedonism" (Gordon). Its developer shared with the Cyrenaics the belief that humans would be always looking for pleasure and avoiding pain. However, for Epicurus, happiness is not only determined by immediate pleasure, it "lasts a whole life and also contains mental pleasure, which is – according to him – preferable to bodily pleasure" (Gordon). This school valued sober reasoning and the aiming of not only pleasure, but also the absence of pain. In consequence, its founder affirmed one should "master and restrict one's desires" and "live a modest life" (Gordon). For them, "freedom from disturbance of the soul (*ataraxia*) is the key determinant of happiness, more important than freedom from bodily pain (*aponia*)", and *ataraxia* requires "freedom from fear of death, freedom from fear of the gods, and freedom from excessive desire" (Shaw).

Little time after Epicureanism stablished itself, another school, Stoicism, was founded by Zeno of Citium. For the members of this school, the best life would be one that is lived as in accordance to nature as possible. Similarly to the Cynics, "the Stoics argue that honour, property, health and life are not goods and that poverty, disgrace, illness, and death are not evils" (Gordon). They also shared with Aristotle the believe in pleasure as a consequence of one's actions, however, pleasure was not the highest good one could achieve, contrary to the belief held by the Cyrenaics and Epicureans. Happiness, for the Stoics, consisted in freedom from passions. According to the school of Stoicism, "both the virtuous and vicious can perform appropriate actions", but only the wise can justify their actions if asked (Shaw). The ideal life for them would be to practice the correct actions regularly until these actions would provide the individual with a life of harmony. Virtue, according to the Stoics, was psychological coherence, which came in small steps, as did happiness.

It is important to point out that Socrates's thought was the beginning of the reasoning of Cynicism, the Cyrenaics, Aristotelianism, Epicureanism and Stoicism. All of these schools were concerned with pointing out the correct actions one would have to practice

if he or she wanted to achieve happiness. Nevertheless, they did not reach a consensus on how one would achieve this ideal of happiness or which actions would be considered virtuous in comparison to others.

Directing our attention now once again to Aristotle, it is possible to see similarities between his theory and Plato's, since the latter was his professor, even though there are also contrasts between the two. Thus, before addressing Aristotelian thought, I will focus on some key aspects of Plato's principles: "Plato says that happiness is the possession, or the possession and correct use, of goods. Correlatively, misery is the possession of bads, or the possession and *incorrect* use of goods" (Shaw). If an action fitted into a notion of a happy life, then it was justifiable, since human beings would need nothing beyond happiness. According to Plato, Wisdom was the main good man would have, therefore it was the main concern to achieve happiness. However, in the philosopher's reasoning, there were goods and bads that were not either virtue or vice, but were also relevant to a person's happiness, such as wealth:

> These have opposite effects on the virtuous and vicious. Somebody with a certain degree of virtue, but with more conditional goods, is happier than somebody with the same degree of virtue but without those goods, or with correlative conditional bads. Somebody with a certain degree of vice, but with more conditional goods, is more miserable than somebody with the same degree of vice but without those goods, or with correlative conditional bads. (Shaw)

This would happen because Conditional goods would help someone exercise their own character, while conditional bads would prevent such exercise.

Concerning Aristotle, he agreed with his professor in the claim that humans would search for only one thing in life, happiness. He distinguished two types of virtues humans

could have: “intellectual and character virtues”, and the main one was wisdom (Gordon). God represented the highest good possible, and when one sought to exercise the highest intellectual virtues, he would live a life the most similar to God’s as he could. In addition, Aristotle also considered the possibility of one doing what was judged as correct despite his feelings, which would consist in a continent action – although not a virtuous one. If one acted in accordance to his feelings, having judged the action as wrong, Aristotle considered the action incontinent – though not vicious. The philosopher reckoned the intention as a more important aspect in one’s action than the action itself, and for him “continence and incontinence are states of character between virtue and vice” (Gordon). Aristotle’s theories served as a basis for posterior generations, including St. Thomas Aquinas, in the Middle Ages.

Aquinas’s moral philosophy involved two traditions: Aristotelian eudaimonism and Christian theology. This means he believed in the Aristotelian notion that all action was either good or bad in the proportion that it approximated or turned us away from our main goal as humans, which was *eudaimonia*, the Greek term for happiness. On the other hand, Aquinas also believed this happiness could never be achieved in life, for it was the union with God. The saint’s thought was influenced by St. Augustine, who wrote “‘things that exist are good’ (*Confessions* VII.12)”, which explained a basic metaphysical principle that, if something existed, it had a certain amount of goodness in it (Floyd). According to Augustine, this principle also required that we would deny the existence of things without goodness. Following his logic, Aquinas claimed “Goodness and being are really the same” (Floyd). For him, evil was not a thing, it was a deprivation of something, such as blindness was the deprivation of sight.

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the characteristic that defined humans as a species was reason. Following the principle that something would achieve goodness by exercising the characteristic that defined its species, humans would achieve this goodness through the exercise of reason. St. Thomas Aquinas is frequently described as "a natural law theorist" since he saw every law as derived from what was called the 'eternal law' (Floyd). As he understood it, the eternal law referred to our nature and was what guided us towards the aim that was proper for our species. Aquinas did not define what happiness was. He affirmed everyone would desire to complete their perfection, and that would be the main goal in human life. Happiness would be what was perfectly good, which meant God.

In relation to this religious view on morality, I should address the fact that the Pre-Socratic philosophers were sometimes said to have rejected religion in favor of science. However, they did not leave religion totally. The sophists rejected that there would be a tie between human and divine laws, and Socrates did not believe in the immortality of the gods, but he had never affirmed not believing in gods. In relation to justice, Socrates stated our goal as humans was to be as like God as we could, and since God would be just, this meant being as just as we could be.

Evidences of religious belief were also found in Plato. In the *Laws*, it was written "the god can serve for us in the highest degree as a measure of all things", and in the *Nicomachean Ethics,* "the words 'god' and 'divine' occur roughly twice as often as the words 'happiness' and 'happy'" (Hare). Epicureans and Stoics, on the other hand, differed in many ways with respect to following Aristotle's ideas, but they had in common the thinking of morality and religion together. For the Epicureans, their goal was to be as like the gods as possible; and for the Stoics, the best life was also keeping our actions as close to the divine ones as we could.

In the Hebrew Bible, morality and religion were connected primarily by the notion of God's command, mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis. Consequently, a disobedience of God's commands was a "fall into sin" (Hare). In the Patristic period, this orientation towards or away from God's command became one of the first Christian ideas of free will; "There is no such idea in Plato or Aristotle, and no Greek word that the English word 'will' properly translates" (Hare). In 'The New Testament', the idea of God's command was reinterred: "Jesus sums up the commandments under two, the command to love God with all one's heart and soul and mind (see *Deuteronomy* 6:5), and the command to love the neighbor as the self (see *Leviticus* 19:18)" (Hare). In addition, the central theme of these writings was that Jesus had died on behalf of the guilty men.

At this point, it is relevant to mention a main difference between both traditions addressed here, the Greek and the Judeo-Christian:

> The idea of God that is central in Greek philosophy is the idea of God attracting us, like a kind of magnet, so that we desire to become more like God, though there is a minority account by Socrates of receiving divine commands. In the Jewish and Christian scriptures, the notion of God commanding us is central. It is tempting to simplify this contrast by saying that the Greeks favor *the good*, in their account of the relation of morality and religion, and the Judeo-Christian account favors *the right* or obligation. (Hare)

In the Western church, Augustine accepted the Platonists thought that the Word was with God and He was the supreme good. Therefore, he followed Plato's logic that "to be a philosopher is to be a lover of God" (Hare). Since Christianity was the official religion of the Roman Empire after the year of 325, it was Augustine's synthesis of those doctrines and of Greek Philosophy that survived the destruction of the Empire, making him the major source

for studying the history of ancient ethics. Most of Aristotle's texts were lost in the West, but not in the East: "They were translated into Syriac, and Arabic, and eventually (in Muslim Spain) into Latin, and re-entered Christian Europe in the twelfth century" (Hare). With the reentry of those texts, the harmony established in Europe since Augustine between an authority of reason – Greek Philosophy – and an authority of faith – Christian Church – was threatened.

One key aspect to understand Renaissance philosophy is this recuperation of literature from ancient Greece and Rome that was unknown before. Pietro Pomponazzi (1462–1525) was one of the major philosophers of the Renaissance that had Aristotle as an influence, as well as was Jacopo Zabarella (1533–1589). Zabarella's goal was to recuperate concepts of science and scientific method present in the work of Aristotle as "principles of natural beings" (Casini). The Renaissance period was also the time of the humanist movement, which had as one of its main figures Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374), whose main argument against Scholastic Aristotelianism was its supposed inability to provide a good life. Humanism supported the Christian reform, and one of the major Christian humanists was Desiderius Erasmus (1466–1536), who "developed the concept of a *philosophia Christi"* (Casini). Erasmus attacked a central principle in Martin Luther's theology, which was "that the human will is enslaved by sin" (Casini). For him, human will was weak, but it was possible that, receiving the help of divine grace, we would choose to take the right attitudes.

Humanism was greatly adopted by princes, until this was challenged by the publication of Niccolò Machiavelli's *Il Principe,* in 1532. Machiavelli deviated from the humanist belief that "a ruler needs to cultivate a number of qualities, such as justice and other moral values, in order to acquire honour, glory, and fame" (Casini). The author affirmed justice would have no place in politics, "[i]t is the ruler's prerogative to decide when to

dispense violence and practice deception, no matter how wicked or immoral, as long as the peace of the city is maintained and his share of glory maximized" (Casini). However, it was from Humanism that yielded the next break in medieval philosophy, Renaissance Platonism.

Platonism arrived in Italy through the scholar George Gemistos Plethon (c.1360–1454), but the most important Platonist in the Renaissance period was Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499). During the 15th and 16th centuries, Stoicism, Epicureanism and Skepticism were revived through the reading of ancient literature. Petrarca began the revival of Stoicism and Cosma Raimondi adopted the Epicurean perspective that good would be related to pleasure of body and mind. In respect to Skepticism, the most significant figure in its revival was Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), who stated that people should "suspend judgment on all matters" and follow the traditions already stablished (Casini).

After this brief analysis regarding a historical overview of philosophical morality, I proceed to the 18th century, with the works of Mary Wollstonecraft. 1792 was the year of the first publication of her *A Vindication of the Rights of Women.* The work started with a letter from Wollstonecraft to M. Talleyrand Perigord, late bishop of Autun, in which she mentioned having read a pamphlet the bishop had published on national education, dedicating, then, this volume to him. She claimed that:

> Contending for the rights of woman, my main argument is built on this simple principle, that if she be not prepared by education to become the companion of man, she will stop the progress of knowledge, for truth must be common to all, or it will be inefficacious with respect to its influence on general practice. And how can woman be expected to co-operate, unless she know why she ought to be virtuous?
> (Wollstonecraft, letter to M. Talleyrand Perigord)

Wollstonecraft questioned the way children were educated, after seeing the results of the methods then applied. She considered that women in the society in which she lived only aimed to inspire love, instead of developing their virtues. Women were considered frivolous, and their strength of body and mind was sacrificed in favour of beauty. Therefore, they established themselves in society the only way a woman could, which was by marriage:

> Women are told from their infancy, and taught by the example of their mothers, that a little knowledge of human weakness, justly termed cunning, softness of temper, OUTWARD obedience, and a scrupulous attention to a puerile kind of propriety, will obtain for them the protection of man; and should they be beautiful, every thing [*sic*] else is needless, for at least twenty years of their lives. (ch. 2)

According to the author, the best form of education would be one in which the individual would practice her understanding and improve her strength of body and mind, in order to be rendered independent in the future.

The dependent situation in which women were left caused them to concentrate their energies in domestic employments. Consequently, learning was a secondary activity in their lives: "the cultivation of the understanding is always subordinate to the acquirement of some corporeal accomplishment" (ch. 2). The lack of knowledge, by its turn, lead women to submit to an authority, and this was when men were most successful in their manipulation.

Wollstonecraft highlighted that, since both genders were in their infancy, girls would be condemned to a sedentary life, while boys would play in the open air. Thus, the condition in which girls lived "weaken[ed] the muscles and relaxe[d] the nerves" (ch. 3). For her, girls would not have a natural fondness for dolls and dress: they had to sit for hours listening to nurses chatting or attending at their mother's toilet. Thus, they imitated their mothers and aunts, finding amusement in adorning their dolls as their relatives had done to them. Dolls excited girls because confinement left them no other alternative. Adding to the differences in

education, during their teenage years, boys were prepared to a profession and marriage was considered secondary to them, while girls had no other preoccupation than to marry. Women had marriage as the purpose of their existence.

Wollstonecraft then highlighted she did not wish women would have power over men, but rather that they would have power over themselves. She mentioned that necessity never made men resort to prostitution, while it was frequent for women. This, in her perspective, arose from "the state of idleness in which women are educated, who are always taught to look up to man for a maintenance, and to consider their persons as the proper return for his exertions to support them" (ch. 4). Furthermore, the woman who resorted to prostitution would lose her virtue, because virtue in women was related to chastity.

In her eighth chapter, entitled "Morality Undermined by Sexual Notions of the Importance of a Good Reputation", Wollstonecraft questioned the rules made for women on morality. For instance, if a girl became "a prey to love", she was degraded, having violated the duty of respecting herself, while a married woman would be childish and vicious and still be considered better in the eyes of moralists (ch. 8). This, according to the author, was virtue being confounded with reputation. She attributed, then, women's regard for reputation to their impossibility of being respected for cultivation of virtue. "Reputation for chastity" became the only thing needed and, once it was lost, there was no perspective of recovering it (ch. 8). In addition, Wollstonecraft stated that, in the case of a man, the chances of recovering a lost reputation were much higher.

Wollstonecraft then faced the question of what a woman would do in society besides being a mother and wife. She answered:

> Women might certainly study the art of healing, and be physicians as well as nurses. . . . They might, also study politics, and settle their benevolence on the broadest basis; . . . Business of various kinds, they might likewise pursue, if they were educated in a

> more orderly manner, which might save many from common and legal prostitution. Women would not then marry for a support . . . (ch. 9)

She pointed out there were few employments available for women and, when these women had the education necessary to help teaching children, as governesses, they were not treated with the same respect as the tutors of sons. The English author then stated that "[w]ould men but generously snap our chains, and be content with rational fellowship instead of slavish obedience, they would find us more observant daughters, more affectionate sisters, more faithful wives, more reasonable mothers- in a word, better citizens" (ch. 9).

In the eleventh chapter, entitled "Duty to Parents", Wollstonecraft highlighted men frequently placed duties in arbitrary foundation, the rights of a king coming from the first king, and the ones of a parent from our first parent, the Almighty Father: "They demand blind obedience, because they do not merit a reasonable service" (ch. 11). For her, the duty of obeying a parent only because of his position as a parent would prepare the individual for "a slavish submission to any power but reason" (ch. 11). She pointed out that, even if we aimed to follow the Christian perspective, it was not how it was done either. It was the man's interest to obey the Father until he could judge for himself, while his reason was unfolding. However, when his mind would arrive at maturity, he was only expected to respect the opinions of the Father as long as they coincided with his own mind. The English author then claimed that the duty expected from girls while growing up had come more from a sense of propriety than from the idea of encouraging reason. Thus, "taught slavishly to submit to their parents, they are prepared for the slavery of marriage" (ch. 11). For her, until society was greatly changed, parents would insist on being obeyed for the sake of their position.

Although Wollstonecraft's text is from 1792 and *Wuthering Heights* was published a little more than fifty years after, in 1847, it is evident that the world Wollstonecraft described was not changed to the point that her arguments would not apply to the society in which

Emily Brontë lived and to the one she portrayed in her work. Therefore, I see the possibility of tracing some parallels between the situations exposed by the author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* and passages from Catherine's and Cathy's trajectories throughout *Wuthering Heights.*

For instance, considering that the only way of social ascendance a woman had in Victorian England was by marriage, it is comprehensible that Catherine Earnshaw would consider a risky move to marry Heathcliff[2]. He was adopted by her family and did not have any possessions, whereas Edgar Linton was in a position of financial security. In chapter 9, when Nelly asked Catherine her reasons to marry Edgar, the girl replied "he will be rich, and I shall like to be the greatest woman of the neighbourhood" (Brontë, ch. 9). This could be seen as the fondness for trifles that men had for a long time attributed to women, on which Wollstonecraft reflected. However, she would not be likely to blame Catherine for it, since women would learn from their infancy to value appearance the most and to preserve their reputation, which once lost, would require so much to be recovered.

Furthermore, in 1869, John Stuart Mill published his essay *The Subjection of Women*, in which he problematized the status of women in marriage at his time, proposing a new kind of relationship in matrimony. In his first chapter, "The question can be raised", Mill made the aim of his essay clear:

> The principle that regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes—the legal subordination of one sex to the other—is wrong itself, and is now one of the chief obstacles to human improvement; and it ought to be replaced by a principle of

[2] In fact, women's dependence on marriage for social ascendance was characteristic of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but still can be found in the twentieth century and even in present times, as the capitalist economic system in England shapes the way women live. As Beauvoir claimed, woman's history "in large part is involved with that of the patrimony" (106).

> perfect equality that doesn't allow any power or privilege on one side or disability on the other. (Mill, p. 1)

He also noticed there was no argument for refusing to change the existing relations, since no other alternative had been tried.

According to Mill, women had a distinction from other subject classes, which was that they were required more than simply obedience. Their minds were enslaved: "All women are brought up from their earliest years to believe that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men: not self-will and government by self-control, but submission and accepting control by someone else" (9). Because it was only through a man that women could obtain any objects of social ambition, being attractive to the opposite gender became the main goal in women's education and formation of character. And they were told that to be attractive was to be submissive.

In his second chapter, called "The laws governing marriage", Mill exposed the laws to which women were submitted in the social context he lived. They were subordinate to their husbands as slaves, with life-long obedience and no freedom to any act without permission. They did not have the right to acquire property, and what was theirs by inheritance was, after the marriage, in charge of the husbands. Mill affirmed that, under the common law of England, a wife's position was worse than that of a slave in the laws of several countries: "If she leaves her husband, she can't take anything with her—not her children or anything that is rightfully her own. The husband can if he chooses compel her to return, by law or by physical force; or he may settle for merely seizing for his own use anything that she may earn or be given by her relatives" (18). The author went further in his reasoning affirming that the unlimited power conceded to men over their wives encouraged the worst in them, those

aspects of their character that they would find the need to repress in all other social relations, such as violence.

Mill stated "[i]t is not true that in any voluntary association between two people one of them must be absolute master" (22). To exemplify this, he described a partnership in business, in which no partner would have absolute control over the other. The natural arrangement of marriage, according to him, would be "a division of powers between the two, with each being absolute in the executive branch of their own department, and any change of system and principle requiring the consent of both" (22). This division would not be established by law, since it would depend on the capacities of each individual.

For Mill, one way to make marriage a satisfying relationship for both individuals involved would be to state equal rights for them before the law. This attitude would "make the daily life of mankind a school of moral cultivation" (24). According to him, "the only school of genuine moral sentiment is society between equals" (24). We would see the need of some levels of commandment, "[b]ut command and obedience are merely unfortunate necessities of human life; society in equality is its normal state" (25).

The author then began the exposition of his ideal of morality with the statement that "the true virtue of human beings is **fitness to live together as equals;** claiming nothing for themselves except what they freely concede to everyone else" (25, bold in the original). Thus, a family would be a "school of the virtues of freedom" and of "*sympathy in equality*, of living together in love" (25). This equality would be exercised between the parents and set as an example to the children. In addition, Mill believed what was the woman's property while she was single would have to continue to be under her control when married, and the same for the husband's properties. This would prevent the abuses that usually occurred when a man would persuade a woman to marry him only to get access to her inheritance. It is worth to highlight

that this was exactly Heathcliff's revenge strategy in *Wuthering Heights*, when he kidnapped Cathy and obliged her to marry his moribund son, acquiring then the power over Thrushcross Grange.

Similarly to Wollstonecraft, Mill stated that the differences existent in the capacities of each gender were produced by circumstances and not by nature. What was usually believed about women was that they would be disqualified for any activity outside their homes for being changeable "too intensely under the influence of the moment" and for having a nervous behavior (36). The author claimed much of this was in fact waste of energy that had no other place to be applied, and this behavior would cease when women's energy would start being applied to a purpose. He declared:

> Moreover, when people are brought up as. . . .a kind of hot-house plants, shielded from the wholesome ups and downs of air and temperature, and not trained in any of the occupations that make the blood flow and strengthen the muscles, while the emotional part of their nervous system is kept in unnaturally active play, it's no wonder if those of them who don't die of consumption [=grow up with constitutions that are liable to be tuberculosis'] 'upset by slight causes, both internal and external, without the stamina to keep up any physical or mental task requiring continuity of effort. (36)

He then affirmed there was already a visible alternative to this:

> But women brought up to work for their livelihood show none of these morbid characteristics, unless indeed they are chained to sedentary work in small unhealthy rooms. Women who in their early years have shared in the healthy physical upbringing and bodily freedom of their brothers, and who have enough pure air and

> exercise in adult life, rarely have excessively fragile nervous systems that would disqualify them for active pursuits. (36)

Therefore, the view of men about the supposed 'nature of women' was based on generalizations of some experiences they had, with no work of philosophy or analysis. Mill proved the truth of his logic exposing that, when the ideas of the 'nature of women' in different countries were compared, one could notice how the gender was defined differently by the social circumstances of each country.

Mill saw servitude in marriage as a contradiction to the principles that ruled the modern world: "Now that negro slavery has been abolished, marriage is the only institution in which a human whose faculties are all in excellent order is delivered up to the tender mercies of another human being" (47). This way, marriage ended up being the only bondage secured by law. "There are no longer any legal slaves except the mistress of every house" (47). For the author, if marriage would be built upon equality between husband and wife, the domestic environment would be a school for the first principles of social justice.

Mill then exposed a second benefit this independence of women would bring to mankind, which would be "*doubling the supply of abilities available for the higher service of humanity",* combined with the stimulus competition would provide to men's intellects (49). Women would be encouraged to develop the same abilities that were encouraged in men and, therefore, be qualified to the same activities. Mill was aware that some men of his time would prefer a woman that simply manifested no opinion and was ready to do everything as her husband said, but he asked "is *this* the ideal of marriage? What in this case does the man get by marriage except an upper servant, a nurse, or a mistress?" (56). On the other hand, when two people of high intellect would have a relationship in equality, "they can take turns in the pleasure of leading and the pleasure of being led in the path of development" (57). Mill was

convinced that this would be the true ideal of marriage, and all opinions to the contrary were "relics of primitive barbarism" (57). For him, a moral renewal of mankind would not start until marriage, as the most basic of social relations, was based on justice, and human beings learned sympathy towards their equals.

After this analysis, Mill added an explanation of what would be the difference for women between subjection and rational freedom:

> After the basic needs for food and clothing, freedom is the first and strongest want of human nature. While mankind are lawless, they want lawless freedom. When they have learned to understand the meaning of duty and the value of reason, they are increasingly inclined to be guided and restrained by these in the exercise of their freedom; but that doesn't mean that they desire freedom less; (57)

Consequently, a free citizen would seldom change this freedom for any offer of a government. Freedom would present higher objectives to the intellect and broader views on duty, raising the individual to a higher position as a moral and social being. Mill ended his essay with the statement that "among all the lessons that men [here = 'human beings'] need to learn for carrying on the struggle against the inevitable imperfections of their lot on earth, no lesson is more needed than **not to add to the evils that nature inflicts by their jealous and prejudiced restrictions on one another"** (60, bold and brackets from the original).

Mill's text reinforces the assumptions I made of *Wuthering Heights* based on Wollstonecraft's arguments. Once more, I can affirm both Catherine Earnshaw and Cathy Linton had their decisions highly influenced by their social context. Catherine had marriage as her most important decision, and she chose the best option considering the values of her time and the possibilities she had as a woman in Victorian England. On the other hand, her daughter Cathy was prevented to choose, because Heathcliff deprived her of her freedom as a

part of his plan of revenge. After Heathcliff's death, Cathy ended up making her choice, which was highly unexpected in the society in which she lived, since she was the heiress to Thrushcross Grange and Hareton was an illiterate boy treated as a servant.

Moreover, in 1886, Friedrich Nietzsche published his book *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*. In its second chapter, entitled "The Free Spirit", Nietzsche affirmed that, throughout the prehistoric period, "the value or non-value of an action was inferred from its *consequences*; the action in itself was not taken into consideration, any more than its origin;" (*Beyond Good and Evil* 417). He called this period "the *pre-moral* period of mankind" (417). On the other hand, in the ten thousand years previous to the publication of this work, the origin of an action became what decided its worth. For Nietzsche, this is the *moral* period of mankind, when "the first attempt at self-knowledge is thereby made" (417). The origin of an action meant an intention, and "under the influence of this prejudice moral praise and blame have been bestowed, and men have judged and even philosophised almost up to the present day" (418). Nietzsche used here the word 'prejudice' because he believed intention was a sign or a symptom that could have many interpretations and did not have a meaning in itself, so "morality, in the sense in which it has been understood hitherto, as intention-morality, has been a prejudice" (418).

In his third chapter, "The Religious Mood", the German philosopher exposed that the Christian faith has been based on sacrifice since its beginning: "the sacrifice of all freedom, all pride, all self-confidence of spirit; it is at the same time subjection, self-derision, and self-mutilation" (432). This, what he defined as "religious neurosis", would be connected to three prescriptions, "solitude, fasting, and sexual abstinence", and he could not determine if there was a cause and effect relation between these (433). Nietzsche questioned how the figure of the saint in Christian belief would be possible, how possible it would be to

have such a negation of will. He defined then the existence of a "great ladder of religious cruelty" throughout history (440):

> Once on a time men sacrificed human beings to their God, and perhaps just those they loved the best – to this category belong the firstling sacrifices of all primitive religions, and also the sacrifice of the Emperor Tiberius in the Mithra-Grotto on the Island of Capri, that most terrible of all Roman anachronisms. Then, during the moral epoch of mankind, they sacrificed to their God the strongest instincts they possessed, their 'nature' (440)

Then, according to Nietzsche, the ultimate cruelty was reserved for the rising generation, and it was the sacrifice of God for nothingness. To ordinary men, "religion gives invaluable contentedness with their lot and condition, peace of heart, ennoblement of obedience, additional social happiness and sympathy, with something of transfiguration and embellishment, something of justification of all the commonplaceness, all the meanness, all the semi-animal poverty of their souls." (447). Thus, religion would operate giving suffering a purpose.

Furthermore, the author affirmed "fear is the mother of morals", and "everything that elevates the individual above the herd" was regarded as evil (492). On the other hand, the "*mediocrity* of desires" was honoured (492). Thus, "*Morality in Europe at present is herding-animal morality"* and, with the help of religion in praising this herd inclination, Nietzsche found in political and social arrangements a visible expression of this morality (494).

In his seventh chapter, called "Our Virtues", Nietzsche claimed men could be determined by different moralities:

> As in the stellar firmament there are sometimes two suns which determine the path of one planet, and in certain cases suns of different colours shine around a single planet,

> now with red light, now with green, and then simultaneously illumine and flood it with motley colours: so we modern men, owing to the complicated mechanism of our 'firmament,' are determined by *different* moralities; our actions shine alternately in different colours, and are seldom unequivocal – and there are often cases, also, in which our actions are *motley-coloured*. (520)

However, the practice of judging and of condemning someone morally, for Nietzsche, was "the favourite revenge of the intellectually shallow on those who are less so" (522). They would attribute their right to judge to the "'equality of all before God'" and would need the belief in God to do it (522).

Nietzsche defined two types of morality that prevailed on earth, which were 'master-morality' and 'slave-morality'. This meant moral values have been defined either in a ruling caste or among the ruled class. In the first case, the distinction between 'good' and 'bad' meant the opposition between 'noble' and 'despicable', being despicable the individuals who were coward and would let themselves be abused. It is important to highlight, at this point, that "the designations of moral value were at first applied to *men*, and were only derivatively and at a later period applied to *actions*" (579). Therefore, the noble man regarded himself as the creator of values and honored what he was able to recognize in himself: "such morality is self-glorification" (579). Another aspect Nietzsche attributed to master-morality was the "profound reverence for age and for tradition" (580). Therefore, the law was based on this prejudice against what is new.

On the other hand, slave-morality denied the virtues of the noble men. What was honored in this type of morality were the qualities that alleviated suffering, such as "sympathy, the kind, helping hand, the warm heart, patience, diligence, humility, and friendliness" (581). For Nietzsche, slave-morality was "essentially the morality of utility"

(581). This moment was the origin of the antithesis between good and evil, according to which power and dangerousness were on the evil side. The man who aroused fear would be evil, whereas in master-morality, he was the noble one. Nietzsche pointed out that everywhere in which slave-morality started to ascend, there was a tendency in language to associate the words 'good' and 'stupid'. In addition, "the desire for *freedom*, the instinct for happiness and the refinements of the feeling of liberty belong as necessarily to slave-morals and morality", as reverence and devotion were symptoms of an aristocratic mode of thought (582). For Nietzsche, man has invented good conscience to be able to enjoy his soul as if it were something simple, "and the whole of morality is a long, audacious falsification, by virtue of which generally enjoyment at the sight of the soul becomes possible" (606-607).

Another work by the German philosopher, *The Genealogy of Morals,* started with an essay entitled "'Good and Evil,' 'Good and Bad'". He began this essay stating that, when he traced the origin of the concept of 'good', he attributed it to the aristocrats, who would have felt they were good in comparison to the plebeian: "It was out of this pathos of distance that they first arrogated the right to create values for their own profit, and to coin the names of such values" (Nietzsche, *The Genealogy* 634-635). According to Nietzsche, it would be because of this origin of the opposition between dominant and non-dominant that the word 'good' had no explicit connection with altruistic attitudes. It was only on the occasion of a decay in aristocratic values that an antithesis between 'egoistic' and 'altruistic' arose. The noble parcel of the population also used to consider themselves the truthful, in opposition to the lying man of the masses, and the words 'clean' and 'unclean' also confronted each other "as badges of class distinction" (640).

For Nietzsche, it was the Jewish people that reverted the aristocratic equation "good = aristocratic = beautiful = happy = loved by the gods" for the valorization of "… the poor, the weak, the lowly . . . the suffering, the needy, the sick, the loathsome", for whom salvation

would be reserved (643). Consequently, "… it was, in fact, with the Jews that the *revolt of the slaves* begins in the sphere *of morals*;" (644). According to Nietzsche, aristocratic morality grew spontaneously, while slave-morality needed an external world. It was, in essence, a reaction to these external circumstances.

In his second essay, called "'Guilt,' 'Bad Conscience,' and the Like", Nietzsche explained his intention was to expose the history of the concept of 'responsibility'. Firstly, he established that, when man became free and master of his own will, he also became master of nature, circumstances and "creatures with shorter wills" (671). Man then took possession of the "*standard of value*", with which he judged others around him (671). However, with the knowledge of his power over himself and his fate, came responsibility. Following this reasoning, Nietzsche questioned how the notion of 'bad conscience' would have come to the world. As an attempt to find that out, he began an outline of the origins of punishment. The philosopher affirmed that the idea that someone was being punished because he could have acted otherwise, implying a concept of free will, only appeared late in history. During mankind's previous historical period, punishment was not based on the responsibility the person being punished would have for his actions. Punishment was inflicted out of anger from an injury suffered, and it was inflicted "through the idea that every injury has somewhere or other its *equivalent* price, and can really be paid off, even though it be by means of pain to the author" (676).

Nietzsche then gave many reasons to which punishment could be attributed, for instance: leaving the criminal incapable of committing another crime; being a compensation for an injury; being an isolation of something that disturbs the social balance of the community; inspiring fear; punishment as a festival of humiliation of an enemy. However, he eliminated one supposed utility popular opinion would attribute to punishment, which was "exciting in the guilty the consciousness of the guilt" (697). Nietzsche considered this theory

equivocated, given that "[g]enuine remorse is certainly extremely rare among wrong-doers and the victims of punishment" (698). Thus, for him, 'bad conscience' would be an illness man would develop under the stress of the change to a peaceful society. The society protected itself against man's instinct of freedom, and this instinct ended up turning against himself. Nietzsche defined this situation as an "*instinct of freedom* forced into being latent" that would find relief in itself (704). This, for the author, was the beginning of the suffering known as 'bad conscience'.

Nietzsche then explained the 'bad conscience' that would come from the relationship of an existing generation with its ancestors. In the original association of tribes, every generation felt they owed something to the previous one, and even more to the first one, which founded the community. It was the conviction that "it is only thanks to sacrifices and efforts of their ancestors, that the race *persists* at all – and that this has to be *paid back* to them by sacrifices and services" (707). In the proportion that the race would increase, according to Nietzsche, so would the fear of the ancestors. On the contrary, in each step towards the decay of this race, the fear would diminish.

Following the course of history, though, the feeling of owing something to some deity did not end with the ending of clans and tribes. Mankind inherited this notion of an unpaid debt and a desire to pay it: "The feeling of owing a debt to the deity has grown continuously for several centuries, always in the same proportion in which the idea of God and the consciousness of God have grown and become exalted among mankind" (709). With the appearance of the Christian God, for Nietzsche, the guilty consciousness was brought into the world. The German philosopher then related the concepts of 'ought' and 'duty' with principles defended by religion. For him, the idea of owing something to God became a torture, and man began to see his animal instincts as contrary to what he would owe to God, as if it was some sort of rebellion. He "places himself between the horns of the dilemma,

'God' and 'Devil'" (712). Man has regarded his natural instincts as something evil, so these instincts, according to Nietzsche, came to constitute the system of the 'bad conscience'.

In his essay "What Is the Meaning of Ascetic Ideals?", Nietzsche established that the ascetic life was perceived as "a bridge to another existence" (742). Life, from this perspective, was seen as a maze from which the individual would need to find the way out, or as an error that the individual would "refute by action" (742). Everyone that suffered, according to Nietzsche, would search for a reason for his suffering. Thus, with the ascetic ideal, the resentment of sufferers was diverted, once the blame was put on the person himself. At this point in the essay, Nietzsche clarified his hypothesis, which was that "'sinfulness' in man is not an actual fact, but rather merely the interpretation of a fact, of a psychological discomfort,– a discomfort seen through a moral religious perspective which is no longer binding upon us" (756). Consequently, the fact that someone felt guilty would not be proof that he was right in this guilt.

For the German philosopher, if the ascetic ideal were excluded, man would have no meaning, no purpose for his existence. The uprising of this ideal meant that something was lacking in man, "he did not know how to justify himself, to explain himself, to affirm himself, he *suffered* from the problem of his own meaning" (792). However, Nietzsche affirmed the problem was not with suffering, but with the lack of a reason for suffering. The ascetic ideal, then, gave suffering a meaning. The explanation provided brought new suffering, now in the form of guilt, but to have an explanation was still better valued: "man was *saved* thereby, he had a *meaning*, and from henceforth was no more like a leaf in the wind, a shuttle-cock of chance, of nonsense, he could now 'will' something – absolutely immaterial to what end, to what purpose, with what means he wished: *the will itself was saved*" (793). This demonstrated, according to Nietzsche, that a will that was opposed to the

very instincts of life was still better valued than no will: “man will wish *Nothingness* rather than not wish *at all*” (793).

When I work on *Wuthering Heights* basing my analysis on Nietzsche’s claims, I must consider the setting of the narrative in the moral period of mankind, when the value of an action would depend on the person’s intention. Therefore, the degree of morality in Catherine’s and Cathy’s actions should be judged based on what they expected to attain at the moment of the decision, and this depends on the nature of every action and situation. I also need to consider that Victorian England as a society tended to hold on firmly to Christian beliefs, and these ideas surely constituted a basis for the characters’ decisions in the narrative. I am able to notice these beliefs as a constant matter in *Wuthering Heights* through the character of Joseph, who often passed judgement on other characters’ actions based on passages of the Bible. Christianity, as Nietzsche claimed, was built on the grounds of self-sacrifice, attributing a purpose to this suffering. Given that, I can consider, for instance, that some of the actions of the characters in *Wuthering Heights* were grounded in this expectation that something better would be waiting in the afterlife for those who self-sacrificed. In the analysis of any action, however, we need to keep in mind that Nietzsche stated there are no moral phenomena, there are moral interpretations of phenomena. Thus, my aim in this work is to find the best interpretation possible.

Another important part of the theoretical framework for this project is the concept of ideology. I will discuss it based on the works “The German Ideology”, by Karl Marx, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”, by Louis Althusser and “Introduction: Starting With Zero: Basic Marxism”, by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan. Marxist criticism is shaped by the notion of literature and culture as inseparable from “the politics of class relations” (Rivkin and Ryan 231). It shed light on class struggle, which would be the conflict of interests between the different sections in the division of labour that every society has. For

instance, it would be a struggle between industrial or commercial labour and agriculture. According to Marxism, every citizen was framed to think in the same manner as the group and the social and historical contexts in which this citizen was inserted would frame his life. Therefore, it would be equivocated to study the work of literature apart from the social relations, the economic and political situation of the time in which it was written.

At the core of Marxist theory is the concept of Ideology, which would be a process "of cultural signification and personal formation", shaped through "training in certain practices of self-discipline or certain modes of self-identification" (237). For the theorist Louis Althusser, "the individual is produced by nature, the subject by culture . . . we are each of us constituted as a subject in, and subject to, ideology" (qtd. in Rivkin and Ryan 238). In addition to this, ideology would have a material existence, since the subject who believed in certain ideas would act according to them, "the 'ideas' of a human subject exist in his actions" (Althusser 297). Moreover, to be a subject, according to Marx, would be also to accept a subjection to some higher authority.

There are three major strands of Marxist criticism: Reflection Theory and Cultural Materialism; The Frankfurt School; and Structuralist Criticism. Reflection Theory and Cultural Materialism started from the assumption that "literature holds a mirror up to the historical world" (Rivkin and Ryan 239). Therefore, the strand studied the relations between works of literature and the history of society. The Frankfurt School saw mass culture as "a realm of domination" and celebrated what they considered high art, which would be "a realm of social critique" (239). Finally, "Structuralist criticism [was] concerned with how literary texts display the way literature is anchored in social structures and social contradictions that undermine their stated conclusions" (239). This strand aimed to discover the principle of literary production that was unsaid, below the surface of the work. Summing up, according to Marxism, "[l]ife is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life", and we can

see from this outline that Marxist literary criticism in general has been concerned with studying how a work is embedded within its social, historical, and economic contexts, by means of ideological constructs (Marx 253).

Marxist theory contributes to my thesis on *Wuthering Heights* through the importance it gives to class struggle and to the role of ideology in a work of literature. Analyzing the narrative within the context of Victorian England, where it was set, it is possible to regard Catherine Earnshaw's decision to marry Edgar Linton as the safe alternative for her, considering the options she had. Heathcliff was described as a gipsy and, due to his lack of formal education and wealth, it is evident that he was in a much worse social position than Catherine or Edgar. In addition, according to the ideology of the time and place in which they lived, Catherine's decision in relation to her marriage was what would seal her future, meaning her reputation as well as her economic and social status.

Differences of social class, then, were the same reasons for which Cathy Linton had her highly educated cousin as her first perspective for marriage. The first time she visited him at *Wuthering Heights*, in chapter 18, Cathy was confused after the maid, Minny, said Hareton was also her cousin. She found it absurd, because she supposed her cousin to be "a gentleman's son" (Brontë, 243). This statement sums up the huge social difference between Cathy and Hareton, which would be of wealth and education, but more importantly of social background.

Moving now to the year of 1946, the French author Jean-Paul Sartre published his work *Existentialism is a Humanism,* conveying some of his thoughts on morality. For Sartre, "existence precedes essence", which means we cannot take human kindness for granted, men are not born good or bad (*Existentialism* 20). Man firstly exists, "he materializes in the world, encounters himself, and only afterward defines himself", which is done through his actions

(22). According to the philosopher, the first principle of existentialism is that "man is nothing other than what he makes of himself" (22). Therefore, the author also stated that man would have total responsibility for whom he was, which was the first effect of the doctrine of Existentialism.

Existentialists did not regard passion as an excuse for action. For them, "man is responsible for his own passion" (29). It is all about making choices and, ". . . if I decide not to choose, that still constitutes a choice" (44). Sartre also highlighted the impossibility of using signs to justify an action, since Existentialism did not assume the existence of signs: "Neither do existentialists believe that man can find refuge in some given sign that will guide him on earth; they think that man interprets the sign as he pleases and that man is therefore without any support or help, condemned at all times to invent man" (29). As an example of a moral dilemma, he narrated the case of a student of his that sought him out for help in a decision he needed to make. He answered no code of ethics could determine *a priori* what the student was supposed to do. For the French philosopher, principles that were too abstract could not define action. Thus, what was morally correct, for him, would depend strongly on the situation. Sartre added that the act of choosing someone as an adviser would be itself a way of making a commitment. If you consulted a priest, for example, you would already know more or less what sort of advice he would give you. Therefore, in seeking his professor out, it was already possible for the student to foresee the answer he was going to get.

Sartre then mentioned that Catholics would reply that there were indeed signs, but he stated that "[b]e that as it may, it is I who chooses what those signs mean" (33). He exemplified this position with the story of Abraham:

> . . . an angel orders Abraham to sacrifice his son. This would be okay provided it is really an angel who appears to him and says, 'Thou, Abraham, shalt sacrifice thy son.'

> But any sane person may wonder first whether it is truly an angel, and second, whether I am really Abraham. What proof do I have? . . . if a voice speaks to me, it is always I who must decide whether or not this is the voice of an angel; if I regard a certain course of action as good, it is I who will choose to say that it is good, rather than bad. (26)

Therefore, even if we said there was a sign that indicated a certain decision, we must know we were responsible for having interpreted the sign the way we did. At the end, the choice was ultimately ours.

Sartre also mentioned having heard people say "you cannot judge others", to which he responded "In one sense this is true, in another not. It is true in the sense that whenever man chooses his commitment and his project in a totally sincere and lucid way, it is impossible for him to prefer another" (47). However, we could say some choices were based on error and some on truth. Then, taking this notion of the background of choices, Sartre conceptualized acting in bad faith and acting in good faith:

> If we define man's situation as one of free choice, in which he has no recourse to excuses or outside aid, then any man who takes refuge behind his passions, any man who fabricates some deterministic theory, is operating in bad faith. . . . I do not pass moral judgement against him, but I call his bad faith an error. (47)

According to Sartre, the man of good faith would have as his main desire freedom for himself as well as for others. This way, he would be basing his decisions on truth, in opposition to the man of bad faith.

Even though the French philosopher affirmed there is no human essence, he assumed the existence of "a universal human *condition*" (42). For him, human universality would exist, but would not be a given; it would be something in perpetual construction. In

making choices, one would then construct his universality. However, this reasoning did not discard the influence of the time and place in which the individual lived: “The fundamental aim of existentialism is to reveal the link between the absolute character of the free commitment, by which every man realizes himself in realizing a type of humanity – a commitment that is always understandable, by anyone in any era – and the relativity of the cultural ensemble that may result from such a choice” (43).

Sartre also developed his thoughts on morals in his work *Being and Nothingness*, first published in 1943. In one of his chapters, entitled “Concrete Relations with Others”, the author defined one of these relations as love, which he considered not to be about possession: “The total enslavement of the beloved kills the love of the lover” (Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* 343). If the beloved became a sort of automation, the lover would be then alone. However, according to Sartre, the lover wanted to be the world of the beloved, the “objective foundation of all values” (345). This was shown, for instance, in stories of women who wanted to identify themselves as a reason for their beloved to sacrifice traditional morality: “whether the beloved would betray his friends for her, ‘would steal for her,’ ‘would kill for her,’ etc” (345). The basis of the joy of being in love, for the philosopher, would be that “we feel that our existence is justified” (347). He described, then, the process of seduction, in which the lover would present the world to the beloved and would try to constitute himself as “the necessary intermediary between her and the world” (348). This then would be the reason why the lover would manifest examples of his power over the world, such as money and connections.

In his chapter “Being and Doing: Freedom”, Sartre defined freedom as the fundamental condition of an act, and human beings would be condemned to exist beyond the causes and motives of their acts – terms he differentiated later in the chapter. This meant human beings would be “condemned to be free” (415). The limit of our freedom would then

lie in the fact that "we are not free to cease being free" (415). In addition, the French philosopher considered an error to believe in the causes and motives as stable things, because their nature and weight would depend on the meaning that we would give to them, so we should not take these causes and motives as constants. Human reality, for Sartre, is not done, it is in continual changing, because "The being which is what it is cannot be free" (416). We are free in the nothingness that forces us to make ourselves instead of just being ourselves. For Sartre, "to be is to *choose oneself*" (416).

Concentrating now on the origin of causes, Sartre determined a cause as the reason for an act to be done, and this would be the rational consideration that justifies it. The cause is "an objective appreciation of the situation", and this appreciation is based on the aim we have to a certain end (422). On the other hand, the concept of the motive would be the desires, emotions and passions which influence a person to do some act. Sartre explained:

> For example, I can join the Socialist party because I judge that this party serves the interests of justice and of humanity, or because I believe that it will become the principal historical force in the years which will follow my joining: these are causes. And at the same time I can have motives: a feeling of pity or charity for certain classes of the oppressed, a feeling of shame at being on the 'good side of the barricade,' as Gide says, or again an inferiority complex, a desire to shock my relatives, etc. (423)

The latter ones, then, would be the motives. The cause is objective, once it is "the state of contemporary things as it is revealed to a consciousness" (423). Therefore, the cause would not determine the action; it would rather appear through the project of this action. The consciousness that perceives something as a cause has its own structure and would have

already made projects related to its possibilities, “in so far as this being is a pure project toward an end” (425).

Sartre stated that commonsense would classify a choice as free when it could have been other than what it was, whereas, for him, an act is not limited to itself. He agreed with Sigmund Freud’s perspective of the act as referring to more profound structures, the act as something symbolic. However, for the French philosopher, Freud ended up “constituting a vertical determinism”, because his conclusion was always going to refer to the patient’s past (434). Sartre’s critique to this logic is the lack of the notion of a future, human reality was only being interpreted through a regression to the past from the perspective of the present. Psychoanalysis explained reactions by means of a previous reaction, which would have introduced a causal mechanism. Sartre applied the method of psychoanalysis in a reversed sense, conceiving phenomena “as a turning back of the future toward the present” (435). Thus, if he chose to rest during a long day of hiking, for example, it was because he has constituted the remaining path as too difficult to be traversed. And the difficulty was perceived this specific way according to his aims and the image he projected of himself. The decision made is “placed within the compass of a certain view of the world in which difficulties can appear ‘not worth the trouble of being tolerated’” (440). The possibility to continue despite being tired has always existed, but it would demand another view on the problem and another choice. Here Sartre reminded the reader that an individual’s choices would not be determined by some essence, since essence would come only after existence. We are defined by the choices we make and we determine our essence by our existence. In human reality, according to the philosopher, “being is reduced to doing” (452). Therefore, we should apprehend ourselves as “a choice in the making” and “freedom is simply the fact that this choice is always unconditioned” (455). He also highlighted that we have freedom to

choose but we do not have the freedom of not choosing, once not choosing anything would still be a choice.

The author pointed out that he would probably meet some objections to his theory, one of them being the existence of limitations to a person's free choice, such as his or her conditions in society. He then dedicated some pages to this analysis of the relation between freedom and facticity. For him, a "coefficient of adversity" in things could not be used as an argument, since we create the coefficient of adversity. He explained:

> A particular crag, which manifests a profound resistance if I wish to displace it, will be on the contrary a valuable aid if I want to climb upon it in order to look over the countryside. In itself – if one can even imagine what the crag can be in itself – it is neutral; that is, it waits to be illuminated by an end in order to manifest itself as adverse or helpful. (458)

Although something could at first limit our freedom, our freedom would dictate the ends that we wanted to attain. Thus, this thing would be an obstacle only in relation to these ends: "Man encounters an obstacle only within the field of his freedom" (464). Following this logic, what is an obstacle for a person would not necessarily be so for another, "[t]here is no obstacle in an absolute sense, but the obstacle reveals its coefficient of adversity across freely invented and freely acquired techniques" (464). The facticity of freedom would be the given conditions that have to be as they are, such as "*my place, my body, my past, my position . . .* finally my *fundamental relation to the Other"* (465).

In relation to the limits provided by someone's past, Sartre asserted our freedom cannot modify our past, and we must take our new decisions in terms of this past. However, we are the beings through whom the past would come to ourselves and to the world. He clarified: "There is an unchangeable element in the past, (e.g., I had whooping cough when I

was five years old) and an element which is eminently variable (the meaning of the brute fact in relation to the totality of my being)" (473). Thus, the meaning of one's past would be in accordance to one's present project for himself. For example, it would be the person, after spending some time in prison, who would decide if this time was fruitful or deplorable. For the French philosopher, "the only force of the past comes to it from the future; no matter how I live or evaluate my past, I can do so only in the light of a project of myself toward the future" (475).

The concepts discussed by Sartre enhance our perspective of morality in *Wuthering Heights*, stating that, in the first place, none of the characters can be classified as good or bad in essence. They make themselves through their actions and are entirely responsible for their own choices. One possible analysis of their decisions would be the distinction between the ones made in bad faith and in good faith, since Catherine or Cathy may have used their passions as excuses, as well as deterministic views of the world – for we know this is a feature within Christianity, and Victorian England used to hold on strongly to Christian dogma. It is also important to keep in mind that, although for Sartre there is no human essence, there are the conditions in which an individual lives. In the cases of Catherine and Cathy, I then need to consider patriarchy and what it meant to be a woman in Victorian England. It would be a fallacy to discard oppression of women under this system as a facticity. The causes and motives they had for their decisions depended on their appreciation of the situation, their views on the world and the projects they had for themselves.

In the same fashion, I will now address *The Second Sex*, by Simone de Beauvoir. However, considering the scope of this research, the explanation will be attained to the first volume of the series, especially its Parts 2 and 3. In Part 1, Beauvoir described the main reasons women would be considered inferior, based on biology, psychoanalysis and cultural materialism. She ended this part concluding none of the explanations was enough to justify

this treatment of women. The second Part of Beauvoir's work was entitled "History", and this is when she traced the trajectory of the gender along history, their participation in social context and men's perception towards them.

In chapter 3, entitled "Patriarchal Times and Classical Antiquity", Beauvoir made it even clearer that women's history "in large part is involved with that of the patrimony" (106). She was bought like private property and was not an inheritor of her family's goods: they belonged to her husband as well as her children did. A woman always had to be under the guardianship of a man and, if she happened to be a widow, custom stated she would marry a brother of her husband. The passing of property from man to man only confirmed the French writer's theory that relationships were planned to allow the completion of man's objective "to acquire beyond his own death an immortality on earth and in the underworld" (110). And this is a logic that lead to another of her conclusions: that "abstract rights are not enough to define the actual concrete situation of woman; this depends in large part on her economic role" (117).

In "Since the French Revolution: The Job and The Vote", Simone de Beauvoir mentioned that "Olympe de Gouges proposed in 1789 a 'Declaration of the Rights of Woman', equivalent to the 'Declaration of the Rights of Man', in which she asked that all masculine privilege be abolished" (134). However, the reception was not satisfactory. In 1790 daughters and sons started to be recognized as equal in the laws regarding inheritance. Women seemed to be one step closer to equality, but the reality was that "[d]uring the Revolution woman enjoyed a liberty that was anarchic" and, when the society was reorganized, they were back to being slaves; ". . . the Code Napoléon, fixing her lot for a century, greatly retarded her emancipation" and this Code was reinforced by the law during the nineteenth century (134). Women were regarded as made for the home, not for public life or politics.

In opposition to the direction the law was taking, the new form of production in industries provided women with an economic importance. With the advance of machines, the difference of strength between men and women was not as determinant as it had been before. The factories had a high demand of workers, and women became necessary to keep the production going. Women were getting some space in the public life. However, another event still held them behind: the low wages that were payed for women workers in relation to the men. This was justified by the supposition that women never were the ones in charge of the family, so they needed less payment. According to Beauvoir, "[t]he truth is, rather, that women, as we have seen, were unable to defend themselves against their exploiters"; also, "[i]f employers warmly welcomed women because of the low wages they would accept, this same fact gave rise to opposition from the male workers" (140). With the advance of contraceptive methods, "[t]he evolution of woman's condition is to be explained by the concurrent action of these two factors: sharing in productive labour and being freed from slavery to reproduction" (145). There was a feminist movement – Condorcet in France, Mary Wollstonecraft in England, and the Saint-Simonists – but it did not attain satisfactory results in virtue of its weak basis. In 1867, the first speech in favor of women voting was made by John Stuart Mill and:

> Léon Richier, who was the true founder of feminism, produced in 1869 The Rights of Woman' and organized the international congress on the subject, held in 1878. The question of the right to vote was not yet raised, the women limiting themselves to claiming civil rights. (146-147)

Beauvoir stated that in 1945 French women obtained full rights, which was determined in New Zealand in 1893 and in Australia in 1908. However, "Victorian England isolated woman in the home; Jane Austen hid herself in order to write" (152). In 1912, feminist activists took more violent moves: "they burned houses, slashed pictures, trampled flowerbeds, threw

stones at the police, overwhelmed Asquith and Sir Edward Grey with repeated deputations, interrupted public speeches" (152). English women got the right to vote without restrictions in 1928, mostly due to services they rendered in the times of war.

The Feminist philosopher ended her chapter with the conclusion that "the whole of feminine history has been man-made" (153). The feminist movement was a tool for politicians and all women got was in fact due to social changes that affected men. And, even after having her place in the working environment, the woman still had the responsibility to take care of the house and children, so "[e]verything still encourages the young girl to expect fortune and happiness from some Prince Charming rather than to attempt by herself their difficult and uncertain conquest" (161). The parents continued to raise their daughters to marriage, keeping them less dedicated to their professions. Finally, their inferiority in the workplace forced them to depend upon a husband and a vicious circle was formed.

Simone de Beauvoir then started the third part of her work, entitled "Myths", in which she discussed the mythology around the feminine gender. Chapter 1, "Dreams, Fears, Idols", began with the dichotomy of women being seen as both Eve, the one who persuaded Adam to sin, and Virgin Mary. There is not a stable concept to define women, "through her is made unceasingly the passage from hope to frustration, from hate to love, from good to evil, from evil to good. Under whatever aspect we may consider her, it is this ambivalence that strikes us first" (169). A woman is regarded by men as a prize they can win and, as the owner of an object, they expect her subjection to them: "for in order to awaken the Sleeping Beauty, she must have been put to sleep; ogres and dragons must be if there are to be captive princesses" (209). We can see the ancient fear of the unknown manifested in the cases when men would burn women they considered witches simply for being attractive.

After this description of the mythical view men would hold on women, it was time to discuss the consequences of this in real life, in Beauvoir's third chapter, entitled "Myth and

Reality". The central claim of this chapter was that women were regarded as not feminine when their behavior contradicted the myths created around their figure by men. The myths surrounding women gave men several advantages in social context, including the possibility to decide which notion would be accepted according to their needs at the time: "Thus the paternalism that claims woman for hearth and home defines her as sentiment, inwardness, immanence" (279). The myths justified all the oppression and privileges conceded to men, and the most important of these false concepts was the feminine mystery. It provided an excuse for not understanding women, "instead of admitting his ignorance, he perceives the presence of a 'mystery' outside himself" (281). According to Beauvoir, there is mystery from both sides in relation to the other. However, the definitions considered absolute always came from a male point of view, thus "woman is considered to be mysterious in essence" (281). Here Beauvoir adopted Sartre's perspective on the lack of an essence to human beings. For her, there is no truth to be discovered about women, they are their actions, "[d]iscrimination between the imaginary and the real can be made only through behaviour" (282). She finalized Book 1 of her series *The Second Sex* advocating for the recognition of women as subjects as well as men, stating "the more relationships are concretely lived, the less they are idealized" (284). Men would have nothing to lose treating women equally: on the contrary, they would improve their family relations if they would see in their wives a partner and not a slave.

In relation to Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, the claims made by Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* provide a great amount of evidence for backing up my argument of patriarchy as a facticity, limiting Catherine's and Cathy's freedom. Through the reading of Beauvoir, it is possible to notice how women are born in environments commanded by men, and how possibilities for women are limited. I understand, then, what may have conditioned Catherine to make her decision of marrying Edgar, as well as other actions by her and her daughter during the narrative.

Furthermore, in 2003, Terry Eagleton published his work *After Theory*, from which I can highlight the sixth chapter, entitled "Morality". Eagleton started the chapter problematizing some ways of defining morality. He stated "To define morality in purely individual terms is to believe, say, that a history of abuse and emotional deprivation has nothing whatsoever to do with a teenager becoming a petty criminal. . . . This does not refute the relation between the two" and "[a]ppeals to morality, like appeals to psychology, have often enough been a way of avoiding political argument" (Eagleton, *After Theory* 142). Eagleton agreed with a perspective that would not ignore political discussion, like Marx, who believed moral inquiry had to consider all the factors that could generate a specific action, and these would not be just personal ones. The English historian added that moral language is not just approving or disapproving actions. It has to do with "the description of the actions themselves" (149). We cannot describe an action without recurring to the motivations involved.

For Eagleton, it is because of our bodies that we can speak of morality as a universal concept, since we share this material body with the rest of our species:

> Of course it is true that our needs, desires and sufferings are always culturally specific. But our material bodies are such that they are, indeed must be, in principle capable of feeling compassion for any others of their kind. It is on this capacity for fellow-feeling that moral values are founded; (155-156)

Following this logic, the critic began to discuss difference, affirming it presupposes affinity. To encounter another human being would be to face sameness as well as difference, and "[i]t is exactly the fact that we can relate to it which highlights its otherness" (161). According to Eagleton, Marx "wanted an ethics and politics based on our species-being or shared material nature", and this leads to the idea of co-operation (171). We can survive as long as we co-

operate with each other. However, we have to remember "a fascist society is also a co-operative one", so "[t]here is no virtue in human co-operation in itself" (172). For Eagleton, Marx saw class society as an environment where some people would take advantage of the social capacities of others. "In class society, even those powers and capabilities which belong to us as a species – labour, for example, or communication – are degraded into means to an end. They become instrumentalized for the advantage of others" (172). The text ended with the idea that this logic can also be applied to sexual life. Patriarchal society, according to the historian, made sexuality a means of power and domination, as well as selfish satisfaction.

An earlier and also very important work by Eagleton is *Marxism and Literary Criticism*, first published in 1976 and republished in 2002, the latter being the version I will address here. In its first chapter, Eagleton discussed literary criticism by Marx and Engels. From some fragmentary comments they left, Marxist criticism developed the idea that became known as "sociology of literature" (Eagleton, *Marxism* 2). This concerned the "means of literary production, distribution and exchange in a particular society", which would be aspects such as how the publications are made and the social status of their authors and of the audiences (2). The sociology of literature would examine literary texts for "their 'sociological' relevance", taking from the work themes of social history (2). However, Eagleton considered Marxist criticism not to be only sociology of literature, merely concerned with whether novels mention the working class: "Its aim is to *explain* the literary work more fully; and this means a sensitive attention to its forms, styles and meanings. But it also means grasping those forms, styles and meanings as the products of a particular history" (3).

The author acknowledged that Georg W. F. Hegel had a profound influence on Marx's thought in relation to analyzing literary works through the history that produced them. However, Marx would have a revolutionary understanding of history itself. Eagleton

highlighted a passage of Marx and Engels's *The German Ideology* (1845-6), in which they asserted that the thought of a man would appear in his material behavior, since consciousness would not determine life, but life would determine consciousness. This idea was then more fully explained in an extract from *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859), in which the authors claimed man would enter, regardless of his will, in "*relations of production* which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive *forces*" (qtd. in *Marxism* 4). The group of these relations would then constitute the economic structure in the society in which he lived, the foundation to what they called a superstructure. Thus, "[t]he mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general" (qtd. in *Marxism* 4). The social relations a man had with the others inside his society would be bounded by the way material life was produced there and, later on, new alternatives of productive organization would emerge based on other social relations.

Taking together these forces and relations of production, Marx formed the concept of "the economic structure of society", which became known in Marxist criticism as the "'base' or 'infrastructure'" (5). From this base, the superstructure would emerge, which would be the conjunct of "certain forms of law and politics, a certain kind of state, whose essential function is to legitimate the power of the social class which owns the means of economic production", in addition to "certain 'definite forms of social consciousness'", which Marxism denominated ideology (5). The function of this ideology would also be of legitimizing the power of the ruling class, since the dominant ideas in a society were always the ones of the ruling class.

Art, for Marxism, would be part of the superstructure of a society and, consequently, part of its ideology. To understand literature, then, would imply an understanding of the social processes of which literature is a part. Marxist criticism considered literary works as

"forms of perception, particular ways of seeing the world" that would have a relation to the dominant perspective, the ideology of the society in which they are inserted (5-6). For Marxism, men were not able to choose their social relations. These were determined by material necessity, "by the nature and stage of development of their mode of economic production" (6).

According to Eagleton, we will not be able to understand ideology unless we understand its role in society as a whole. We must, then, analyze the relations between different classes and the relation of these classes to the modes of production. Eagleton claimed "[i]t would be a mistake to imply that Marxist criticism moves mechanically from 'text' to 'ideology' to 'social relations' to 'productive forces'. It is concerned, rather, with the *unity* of these 'levels' of society" (8). Literature would be part of the superstructure, but not simply "the passive reflection of the economic base" (8). Art would not by itself change the course of history, but it would be an active element in this change. Eagleton pointed out that it is necessary to think of history in wider terms than it is commonly thought: "To ask how Dickens relates to history is not just to ask how he relates to Victorian England, for that society was itself the product of a long history which includes men like Shakespeare and Milton" (12). He also highlighted that every element of a superstructure – for example, art, politics and religion – is in their own development and internal evolution, which we should not reduce to simply class struggle or economy.

The author explained, then, that the concept of ideology for Marxism was not defined in a set of doctrines: "it signifies the way men live out their roles in class-society, the values, ideas and images which tie them to their social functions and so prevent them from a true knowledge of society as a whole" (15). From this reasoning, the next question would be what the relation between art and ideology is. Eagleton claimed that there are two possible answers to this question. One of them would be to consider that a work of literature is merely

the expression of the ideology of the time in which it was written. This, according to the author, would be a position adopted by "'vulgar Marxist' criticism", which would be then unable to explain "why so much literature actually *challenges* the ideological assumptions of its time" (16). The other possibility of answer would be precisely to consider that literature confronts ideology, giving an insight into the reality that ideology usually hides. However, both answers seemed far too simplistic for Eagleton. He mentioned, then, the claims made by Louis Althusser, that art would have a relation to ideology, but could not be reduced to it. Art would be held within ideology at the same time as it would distance itself from such ideology, permitting us to feel the existence of it. Eagleton concluded it would be necessary to attain a scientific criticism of the situation. This criticism would have as its aim to explain the literary work in terms of being part of an ideology but also of transforming it. It would seek for a principle that ties the work to the ideology at the same time as it distances them.

In his chapter entitled "The writer and commitment", Eagleton discussed the question of how the literary work would relate to the real world. Socialist realism would claim that literature reflects social reality, as opposed to formalist theories, which would look at the literary work isolated from its context. Marxist criticism resorted to the theory first described. However, Eagleton pointed out its inadequate position in affirming a passive and mechanistic relationship between literature and social reality, as if the literary work was merely a mirror of what happened in the world. Eagleton mentioned more sophisticated versions of this concept, such as Lenin's and György Lukács's views on true knowledge, which would be a more profound reflection of reality than its mere appearance. It would be "a perception of the categories which underlie those appearances" (47). In this perspective, then, art would be active, transforming the experience of reality, as opposed to the passivity of a reflection. Marxist criticism, for Eagleton, is more than an alternative manner of interpreting texts, "[i]t is part of our liberation from oppression" (70).

With the claims Eagleton expressed in these two works of his, it is explicit that, in relation to my analysis of *Wuthering Heights*, I must consider social conditions in any moral evaluation. It is imperative that I regard Victorian England as the product of a history and consider how its superstructure – for instance, politics and religion – may have influenced the decisions made by Catherine Earnshaw and Cathy Linton during the narrative. In addition to this, the information provided by Eagleton makes it possible for us to attest how *Wuthering Heights* challenged the standards of its time. As the Marxist critic would consider, the work represents Brontë's perception of Victorian society, and it is embedded in the relations of production of this context. I can then attain Eagleton's ideally scientific criticism: to explain *Wuthering Heights* as part of an ideology but also as a transformation of it, searching for the principle that ties this work to the ideology at the same time as distances the two.

Moving now to late 20th century's criticism, the researcher T. M. Scanlon published his first book, *What We Owe to Each Other*, in which he described his thoughts on morals and our relations to other individuals. In the third chapter of the work, entitled "Well-Being", he defined that there is not a single notion of what this term is. One person can live a much happier and successful life than another, even though they have similar material and social conditions. From this premise, Scanlon described three main theories on quality of life:

> Experiential theories hold that the quality of a life for the person who lives it is determined completely by what I called above its experiential quality. Desire theories hold that the quality of a person's life is a matter of the extent to which that person's desires are satisfied. . . . Substantive-good theories are just those that deny this claim, and hold that there are standards for assessing the quality of a life that are not entirely dependent on the desires of the person whose life it is. . . .

> Experiential theories provide a clear boundary for the concept of well-being: something contributes to well-being if, but only if, it affects the quality of one's experience. . . . the problem, however, is that these boundaries are implausibly narrow. (Scanlon 113)

In addition to these, he mentioned the informed desire theory, which would claim that the quality of life of a person is based on the degree to which this person's informed desires were satisfied. Informed desires would be the ones that were not based on errors of reasoning.

However, success in one's aims would not guarantee well-being. Scanlon called attention to Henry Sidgwick's definition of "desirable consciousness", which is exemplified by "pleasure, avoidance of pain and suffering", a state that contributes to one's well-being whether they have aimed at that or not (123). Then, Scanlon concluded that any plausible theory of well-being would have to recognize the following three points:

> First, certain experiential states (such as various forms of satisfaction and enjoyment) contribute to well-being, but well-being is not determined solely by the quality of experience. Second, well-being depends on a large extent on a person's degree of success in achieving his or her main ends in life, provided that these are worth pursuing. This component of well-being reflects the fact that the life of a rational creature is something that is to be *lived* in an active sense – that is to say, shaped by his or her choices and reactions – and that well-being is therefore in a large part a matter of how well this is done – of how well the ends are selected and how successfully they are pursued. Third, many goods that contribute to a person's well-being depend on the person's aims but go beyond the good of success in achieving those aims. These include such things as friendship, other valuable personal relations,

> and the achievement of various forms of excellence, such as in art or science. (124-125)

Further on, Scanlon emphasized the importance of the relationships an individual has with others for his or her well-being. Treating others fairly makes it possible to live in harmony with our neighbors, and "it is worthwhile because it is required by the more general value of treating others in ways that could be justified to them" (142-143). However, in relation to values, Scanlon claimed that not all of them are reducible to well-being. For him, the values that guide us as humans remain plural.

In his chapter "Wrongness and Reasons", Scanlon developed the idea present in John Stuart Mill's *Utilitarianism*, in which the latter described moral motivation as caused by a desire to be in unity with one's fellow creatures. Scanlon defined then an idea similar to Mill's concept of 'unity': Contractualism, which would consist in "being able to justify your actions to others on grounds that they could not reasonably reject" (154). The main difference between this idea and Mill's is that, in Contractualism, there is no psychological element that would explain what makes a person avoid an action thinking the principle that allows it would be rejected by others. According to Contractualism, "people have reason to want to act in ways that could be justified to others, together with the fact that when a rational person recognizes something as a reason we do not need a further explanation of how he or she could be moved to act on it" (154). For Scanlon, it is pleasant to live in harmony with others and it would be unpleasant to suffer their disapproval. However, agreement with our fellow ones cannot be the basis of morality, since there are cases in which the morally correct attitude would be contrary to the others' consensus of what is the best.

Following this logic, Scanlon declared that ". . . the degree to which there is a conflict between the morality of right and wrong and the goods of personal relations depends

greatly on the society in which one lives" (166). What the researcher claimed to be central to moral motivation was not justification to others itself, "but rather the ideal of acting in a way that is justifi*able* to them, on grounds they could not reasonably reject" (168). From this idea, he concluded that one would have good reason to want to live with people who share his or her notions of justifiability.

Scanlon's claims make the analysis of *Wuthering Heights* more complete in the proportion as they provide a standard for understanding the degree of Catherine's and Cathy's well-being. This way, I will be able to evaluate the choices through their results in the end of the narrative for each character. I will also have a better understanding of the decisions of both characters considering Scanlon's definition of moral as whatever is justifiable to others. Catherine and Cathy, then, would be oscillating between what they desired and the concern with how their decision would be received. However, Scanlon also considered agreement with others would not always be the better base for morality. Therefore, it is always necessary to examine each situation closely, as I intend to do in the next chapters of this research.

Chapter II – Catherine Earnshaw

I will now be analyzing Catherine Earnshaw's attitudes and decisions since her childhood, to be found in the third chapter of *Wuthering Heights.* In this part of the novel, we see Lockwood reading Catherine's diary, in which she wrote about her decision to rebel with Heathcliff against her brother Hindley: "I wish my father were back again. Hindley is a detestable substitute – his conduct to Heathcliff is atrocious – H. and I are going to rebel – we took our initiatory step this evening" (Brontë 43). Catherine told in her diary what she was rebelling against, being it the cruelty from her brother and the servant Joseph, who was calling the kids out for not reading their Bibles. He said "T' maister nobbut just buried, and Sabbath nut oe'red, und t' sahnd uh't gospel still i' yer lugs, and yah darr be laicking! shame on ye! sit ye dahn, ill childer! they's good books eneugh if ye'll read 'em: sit ye dahn, and think uh yer sowls!" (44)[3]. From this line uttered by Joseph, we can begin to acknowledge the strong influence Christianity had in the lives of Catherine and her family. As claimed by Janet Crosier in her article "The Number Three and Its Significance in *Wuthering Heights*", the book contains many allusions to God, "the importance of God in an individual's life, blessings from God, punishment from God, birth, life, death, and the afterlife" (Crosier). This, besides influencing decisions of some of the characters, is always present as a judgement through Joseph's discourses: "Joseph remains a constant in the story from its beginning until its end, marking an ever present religious influence upon Brontë's characters" (Crosier).

[3] According to Irene Wiltshire, in her article "Speech in *Wuthering Heights*: Joseph's Dialect and Charlotte's Emendations", Joseph's regional speech contributed to the amount of realism in the novel. For her, "[t]he creation of Joseph is a complete cameo, for he has all the attributes of a dialect speaker: male, manual, non-conformist religious background, and, in spite of his Bible knowledge, resistant to book-learning" (Wiltshire 27). Then, Brontë's intention in including dialect speech would be to characterize the social scene she created.

However, references to Christianity were not a feature limited to *Wuthering Heights*. As we can understand from Timothy T. Larsen's article "Literacy and Biblical Knowledge: The Victorian Age and Our Own", Biblical references were common background in Victorian literature, since The Scriptures were significantly present in people's lives. According to Larsen, children would read the *Authorized (King James) Version* as the primary text in schools and, before universal state education was enacted in 1870, poor children would receive all the formal education they had from church. Therefore, "it would be hard to set any limit on the extent to which Victorian culture was shaped by a shared knowledge of the Bible" (Larsen 519). Even in the independent schools for the working-class, the Bible was used for reading practice and, after 1870, it retained its place in the core curriculum of the state education throughout the whole nineteenth century. According to Larsen:

> Moving up the social scale, learning the Bible was also a prominent and essential part of elite education. If one went to Eton, Harrow, Rugby, or the like, then one studied the Bible with a master who was also an ordained clergyman in the Church of England. And going to university did not mean leaving scriptural education behind. For example, one could not gain a bachelor's degree in any subject from the University of Oxford without first passing an examination on Holy Scripture, the Gospels portion of which was on the original Greek text. (519-520)

So, this systematic study of the Bible would represent the normal course of education of a child in Victorian England. The sermon was powerfully present in Victorian culture, and "fashionable people" would go to hear celebrated preachers, besides reading the sermons in newspapers (521). It was a widespread practice to read the Bible daily in the home circle as well as individually.

Larsen also claimed that Evangelicalism had dominated Victorian culture, and evangelicals insisted that, to be a good Christian, it was necessary to read the Bible every day: “The Methodist minister, William Cooke, in the Juvenile Instructor, for example, insisted that youths must never shirk this duty. He helpfully recommended that on particularly busy days, although they could not cut their Bible reading, they were free to decide to spend less time eating or sleeping” (522). Thus, Joseph’s statement in this third chapter of *Wuthering Heights* would be the common belief among Victorians. Being brought up in this highly Christian culture, he perceived teaching the children to read their Bibles as part of his duty as an adult, and they should fear what would happen to their souls if they did not obey.

The Scriptures were referenced in most acclaimed works of the Victorian Age, as if it was common sense and every reader would understand. Today, if we take any annotated edition of a Victorian novel, “the notes will include biblical allusions that it never occurred to the author would ever need elucidating” (Larsen 524). Their allusions to the Bible were made assuming their audience would have a scriptural knowledge base, and this was true of religious as well as anti-religious texts, as well as of “the purely secular in the sense of given over exclusively to the practical issues of life” (525). Therefore, I must consider this as a common background for the actions and discourses of the characters in *Wuthering Heights,* as well as part of the ideology in which they lived.

According to Mill’s claims on domestic life, the family would be the first version of a school to the children, being where virtues, but also vices, were nourished. Therefore, what Catherine and Heathcliff were taught as children would stick to their moral character when adults. And, according to Wollstonecraft, it would make perfect sense for Catherine to be raised in Christianity. Among the claims on women’s education she attributed to Rousseau, there was the idea that a woman’s faith should be subject to authority. Daughters should be of

the same religion as their mothers and wives should be of the same religion as their husbands. Women were not considered capable of making judgements for themselves. Thus, they would have to trust the religion their fathers and husbands had chosen. However, Wollstonecraft questioned "[a]bsolute, uncontroverted authority, it seems, must subsist somewhere: but is not this a direct and exclusive appropriation of reason?" (sec. 5.1). The use of reason was reserved exclusively to men. It was not necessary for women to know the reasons for their belief in a certain religion, since it came from a position of authority. This would have an additional feature in the education of women if we consider Mill's affirmation that "*the practical feeling of the equality of human beings*" was the theory in Christianity, but it was not always the practice (24). According to him, Christianity would support institutions "based on an arbitrary preference for one human being over another" (24). Therefore, girls would grow up in a religion that defended their inferiority to men.

Furthermore, Joseph's remarks would make sense according to Marxist criticism. Eagleton affirmed that literature was part of the ideology of the society in which it was produced, part of its superstructure. Thus, to understand literature meant "understanding the total social process of which it is part" (*Marxism* 5). Literary works, according to this reasoning, represented particular ways of seeing the world, which were influenced by an ideology. As part of the ideology of the Victorian Age, Christianity would then be evident in *Wuthering Heights.* This is even highlighted by the characterization of Catherine and Heathcliff as protagonists who mock Christian dogma, as rebels against the moral system of Victorian England.

The kids acted their revenge throwing books in the dog cannel and ended up being separated, which made Catherine cry. According to the ideas Wollstonecraft attributed to Rousseau, women grew up being taught obedience and to be agreeable to men. This is also what we can conclude from Dr. Fordyce's sermons and Dr. Gregory's legacy to his

daughters, both quoted by Wollstonecraft, since they stated young women were supposed to be gentle and delicate, the opposite from Catherine's behavior in this chapter. Wollstonecraft also quoted Madame Genlis's *Letters on Education*, which would advocate for a submission of children to their parents as well as to public opinion. Catherine, according to these claims, was supposed to fear the interpretation to which her actions would lead.

Mill reinforced the assumptions made by Wollstonecraft, once he also stated that women grew up in an ideal of submission and of accepting the control of someone else. In addition, as we can understand from what was stated by Beauvoir, Eagleton and Sartre, it would be a fallacy to discard conditions such as politics and religion from the analysis of Catherine's actions. As Beauvoir sustained, "since the earliest days of the patriarchate they have thought best to keep woman in a state of dependence" (165). Thus, in what Marxist criticism is concerned, *Wuthering Heights* would be a mirror to the Victorian society, as any literary work was embedded in the relations of production of its context. This means Catherine would be manifesting the same difficulties women would have faced in that context, their relation to the standards Wollstonecraft and Mill defined.

Furthermore, according to the claims made by Nietzsche in both of his works I have analyzed here, in order to interpret phenomena in *Wuthering Heights* as moral or immoral, I have to consider the narrative is set at what the German philosopher classified as the moral period of mankind. This means that the value of an action would depend on the intention of the person in that moment. Considering what Catherine had written in her diary, it is possible to say that her intention was to revenge against her older brother, which would be something immoral according to the usual Victorian standards of obedience.

In chapter 5, Nelly affirmed Catherine was beginning to feel less threatened by the adults in the family, since "being repulsed continually hardened her" (Brontë 68). The girl would laugh when Nelly demanded her to apologize for her faults. The servant narrated:

> Certainly, she had ways with her such as I never saw a child take up before; and she put all of us past our patience fifty times and oftener in a day: from the hour she came downstairs till the hour she went to bed, we had not a minute's security that she wouldn't be in mischief. . . . she was never so happy as when we were all scolding her at once, and she defying us with her bold, saucy look, and her ready words; (67)

According to the claims made by Wollstonecraft and Mill, and also by Marxist theory, this action would be seen in the same way as the previous one in chapter III, that is, immoral in Victorian standards. However, we cannot justify this decision with Nietzsche's claims because what we know is Nelly's point of view, and we have no access to Catherine's intentions. In line with Nietzsche, morality has been frequently approached as "something 'given'", while it was actually created by each culture (*Beyond Good and Evil* 474). The philosopher considered "[t]here is no such thing as moral phenomena, but only a moral interpretation of phenomena." (459). Therefore, we have to be careful not to reproduce an interpretation that would be in fact the biased perspective of a character.

Before Mr. Earnshaw's death, Nelly mentioned Cathy was leaned against his knee, when he said "Why canst thou not always be a good lass, Cathy?", to which the daughter answered, laughing "Why cannot you always be a good man, father?" (Brontë 68). In this passage, we can see the main evidence of Catherine's disrespect towards her father, which was in absolute disagreement with the Victorian Age standards. According to Kathleen Rodems in her masters theses *Home Invasions: Victorian Domestic Space and The Figure of The Outsider*, the ideal Victorian home would be "a domestic space that is designed both

architecturally and psychologically to protect its residents from the external harsh and hostile world", and this would include relationships between family members and between the family and the servants (Rodems 1). The structure was also hierarchical, with the father as the head of the family. Catherine did not respect this hierarchy, an attitude that we may perceive as a foreshadowing of her future relationship with Edgar and of her reactions to what would be expected of her as a wife.

In chapter 6, Heathcliff came home without Catherine, and Nelly asked for the girl. Heathcliff then recounted they had rambled around the moors until they got to Thrushcross Grange, where they had stopped at a window, observing Isabella and Edgar Linton:

> Isabella – I believe she is eleven, a year younger than Cathy – lay screaming at the farther end of the room, shrieking as if witches were running red-hot needles into her. Edgar stood on the hearth weeping silently, and in the middle of the table sat a little dog, shaking its paw and yelping; which, from their mutual accusations, we understood they had nearly pulled in two between them. The idiots! That was their pleasure! to quarrel who should hold a heap of warm hair, and each begin to cry because both, after struggling to get it, refused to take it. We laughed outright at the petted things; we did despise them! (Brontë 74)

Another dog, which was outside, bit Catherine. Mr. and Mrs. Linton then recognized her, though they were surprised in seeing the girl in that situation:

> 'Miss Earnshaw? Nonsense!' cried the dame; 'Miss Earnshaw scouring the country with a gipsy! And yet, my dear, the child is in mourning – surely it is – and she may be lamed for life!' 'What culpable carelessness in her brother!' exclaimed Mr Linton, turning from me to Catherine. 'I've understood from Shielders' (that was the curate, sir) 'that he lets her grow up in absolute heathenism. But who is this? Where did she

> pick up this companion? Oho! I declare he is that strange acquisition my late neighbour made, in his journey to Liverpool – a little Lascar, or an American or Spanish castaway. (Brontë 76)

In this passage, the Lintons voiced the standard behavior for women in the Victorian Age. According to Wollstonecraft's considerations on the raising of girls, they were perceived to be naturally inclined to play with dolls in confined spaces. She mentioned Rousseau's claim in his *Emilius and Sophia: Or, a New System of Education vol. 3* that boys would love sports of noise and activity, while girls would be fond of ornament, playing with mirrors and dolls. However, according to Wollstonecraft, girls were "forced to sit still, play with dolls, and listen to foolish conversations; the effect of habit is insisted upon as an undoubted indication of nature" (sec. 5.1). Therefore, the Lintons were alarmed to see Catherine running in the moors with a boy and, besides that, a boy who was below her social class. Wollstonecraft affirmed this would be an error of judgement, since "[g]irls and boys, in short, would play harmlessly together, if the distinction of sex was not inculcated long before nature makes any difference" (ch. 3). Mill would reinforce this idea, since he stated that what was seen as natural for women was in fact artificially inflicted on them, "the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others" (12).

Furthermore, as we can conclude from Beauvoir's claims, men have created myths around the image of women. If women behaved differently from what they had imagined, they would be regarded as not feminine. The French Feminist added that "[t]he women who have accomplished works comparable to those of men are those exalted by the power of social institutions above all sexual differentiation. Queen Isabella, Queen Elizabeth, Catherine the Great were neither male nor female—they were sovereigns" (Beauvoir 154). This reasoning of the patriarch disagreed with Sartre's claim that "existence precedes

essence" (*Existentialism* 20). Catherine demonstrated here that she did not have the essence the Lintons expected, she was defining herself then through her actions.

In this definition of herself outside the expectations of others, Catherine subverted the ideology of the society in which she lived. This is in agreement with the relationship between art and ideology in Marxist theory. According to Eagleton, "[i]t would be a mistake to imply that Marxist criticism moves mechanically form 'text' to 'ideology' to 'social relations' to 'productive forces'. It is concerned, rather, with the unity of these 'levels' of society. Literature may be part of the superstructure, but it is not merely the passive reflection of the economic base" (*Marxism* 8). Therefore, literature would not be merely an expression of an ideology, "so much literature actually *challenges* the ideological assumptions of its time" (16). According to Eagleton, elements of the superstructure, such as art, could influence the base. Art would not by itself change the course of history, but it would be an active element in this change. The Marxist critic points out how it would be inadequate to affirm a passive and mechanistic relationship between literature and social reality, as if the literary work was simply a mirror for what happens in the world. Eagleton defended a more sophisticated perspective on this concept, in which art would be active, transforming the experience of reality, as opposed to passively reflecting it. This is what we can see in *Wuthering Heights*, as Catherine's attitudes contradicted the ideology by which this character lived.

After being welcomed in Thrushcross Grange, Catherine's decision to stay would be the correct one according to the Victorian standards. Following the ideology the Earnshaws and the Linton's lived by, she was supposed to be agreeable, to accept the help without objection. In relation to Heathcliff, Marxist theory would explain the different treatment he suffered through the class struggle present in the narrative, which would make the Lintons

regard the boy as a servant. Catherine, according to the Victorian ideal of a woman who fears public opinion, should also agree to leave him behind.

Here, I will approach her reasoning from Scanlon's point of view, which would be that Catherine's decision was made in consideration of what the other people around her would be thinking. According to Scanlon's Contractualism, Catherine would choose to act in a way the other people she knew would not reject. Scanlon stated that "[i]t would be pleasant to live in actual harmony with others and to have them approve of the way we behave toward them, and it is unpleasant to be in conflict with those around us and to suffer their disapproval" (154). However, one's image to other people could not be the basis for morality, for there would be situations in which acting morally would require being disapproved by others. The author added that "the degree to which there is a conflict between the morality of right and wrong and the goods of personal relations depends greatly on the society in which one lives" (166). In this situation, Catherine chose to act as it would be approved by the Lintons, as members of the gentry in the Victorian Age.

In chapter 7, Catherine was back to Wuthering Heights after five weeks spent with the Lintons. Nelly recounted that her manners were "much improved" (Brontë 78). The servant added: ". . . instead of a wild, hatless little savage jumping into the house, and rushing to squeeze us all breathless, there lighted from a handsome black pony a very dignified person, with brown ringlets falling from the cover of a feathered beaver, and a long cloth habit, which she was obliged to hold up with both hands that she might sail in" (78). In this passage, we can see Nelly reinforcing the customs of her social context one more time, once she described Catherine as a dignified person now, as opposed to how she was before.

According to the ideology of the Victorian Age, women must be delicate, as opposed to Catherine's habit of running in the moors with Heathcliff and messing up her attire[4].

Catherine, seeing Heathcliff, laughed at him and exclaimed "[w]hy, how very black and cross you look! and how – how funny and grim!" (80). The boy was upset at hearing this, but she could not comprehend: "Heathcliff, shake hands, at least! What are you sulky for? It was only that you looked odd. If you wash your face, and brush your hair, it will be all right: but you are so dirty!" (80). Catherine ended up crying over Heathcliff's intentional separation from her during the next few days.

According to Nietzsche's claims, uncleanness would be a badge for class distinction. He explained "[t]he 'clean man' is originally only a man who washes himself, who abstains from certain foods which are conductive to skin diseases, who does not sleep with the unclean women of the lower classes, who has a horror of blood . . ." (*The Genealogy* 641). Then, the clean men would be the good, the aristocratic, the ones that were loved by the gods, contrary to the poor. In this passage of *Wuthering Heights*, we see the reflection of this part of the ideology of the Victorian Age, once a difference was stated between Catherine and the Lintons – as the clean – and Heathcliff – as the dirty. In addition, making fun of Heathcliff was a way Catherine distanced herself from him, and the distance the higher classes maintained from the poorer ones was indeed standard in Victorian England. However, the attitude of offending and laughing at him would be immoral if we consider the Christian dogma, which praised charity towards the less privileged.

In chapter 8, Catherine started being more obedient and delicate when in the Lintons's presence. Nelly attributed that to ambition, and said the girl would "adopt a double

[4] After he was back from the Grange, Heathcliff recounted: "We ran from the top of the Heights to the park, without stopping – Catherine completely beaten in the race, because she was barefoot. You'll have to seek for her shoes in the bog tomorrow" (Brontë 73).

character without exactly intending to deceive anyone" (95). According to Nelly, Catherine would not have the intention to pretend anything, though we do not have access to her intentions to discuss this. If I consider, then, the consequences of the action instead of its intention, Catherine's will to be agreeable to the Lintons would be the Victorian social standard for women. Besides that, she also would be valuing a relationship with people of her own social class more than with Heathcliff, which is in agreement with the ideology of the time.

If I consider both what Wollstonecraft and Scanlon have claimed on morals, Catherine would be acting based on how she thought others would perceive her, in a way that was justifiable to them. Wollstonecraft, however, did not consider this the best approach, for she stated that each person I would be thinking of would have their own perspective based on prejudices. Therefore, "[w]e should rather endeavour to view ourselves as we suppose that Being views us who seeth each thought ripen into action, and whose judgment never swerves from the eternal rule of right" (Wollstonecraft ch. 8). For the author, one who sought to act according to the Christian God's commands would seldom make errors. This argument would agree with the Christian beliefs that were overwhelmingly present in the context of *Wuthering Heights*.

In addition, I have to consider that the image we have of Catherine during these passages is a judgement made by Nelly. In his article "The Incompetent Narrator in *Wuthering Heights"*, Terence McCarthy exposed the biased narratives both Lockwood and Nelly Dean made up and how they shed a light into some central issues in the book. Catherine Earnshaw was rarely presented in a favorable light in Nelly's narrative, while she sympathized with both Heathcliff and Edgar in different moments. According to McCarthy, "[u]ltimately it is because of Nelly that we are able to accept both Edgar and Heathcliff, and unable ever to accept what the one says of the other. Significantly, it is she who puts the two

strands of hair together in the dead Catherine's locket" (58). This reminds the reader that *Wuthering Heights* does not work with simple moral extremes of good and bad. Through these opposite narrators, we can get to "the heart of the matter", which would be, for McCarthy, this impossibility of classifying the inhabitants of both the Heights and the Grange as simply heroines or villains (59). Eagleton made a similar claim in his *Myths of Power: A Marxist Study of the Brontës*, when he opposed the explicit heroes and villains in Charlotte Brontë's works to the ambiguous characters of *Wuthering Heights*: "No mere critical hair-splitting can account for the protracted debate over whether Heathcliff is hero or demon, Catherine tragic heroine or spoilt brat, Nelly Dean shrewd or stupid. The narrative techniques of the novel are deliberately framed to preserve these ambivalences" (100). Due to these conclusions, the supposed double character of Catherine will not be labelled here as moral or immoral.

Still in the same chapter, Heathcliff showed Catherine a calendar in which he had marked and counted the time she had spent with him, opposing to that spent with Edgar. He explained "The crosses are for the evenings you have spent with the Lintons, the dots for those spent with me. Do you see? I've marked every day" (Brontë 98). Catherine regarded this as foolish and questioned "And should I always be sitting with you? . . . What good do I get? What do you talk about? You might be dumb, or a baby, for anything you say to amuse me, or for anything you do, either!" (98). Again, she would be in agreement with the prevalent ideology in Victorian society, once higher class girls were not supposed to spend their time talking to servants and cultivating friendships with them instead of with people within their own social group. However, according to Christian ethics, she would have lacked empathy towards people around her. Therefore, I conclude she acted immorally.

Catherine also acted violently towards Nelly in front of Edgar. On being confronted about it, she accused Nelly of being a "lying creature" and slapped her again (100). Nelly

affirmed Catherine shook Hareton and slapped Edgar's ear: "she sized [Hareton's] shoulders, and shook him till the poor child waxed livid, and Edgar thoughtlessly laid hold of her hands to deliver him. In an instant one was wrung free, and the astonished young man felt it applied over his own ear in a way that could not be mistaken for jest" (100). Edgar, at this moment, was frightened and approached the door, preparing to leave. Catherine cried and ended up convincing him to stay.

Again, due to our lack of access to Catherine's intentions, we cannot affirm she had aimed to fool Edgar by crying or to hurt Nelly. However, she was violent to Nelly and lied when the servant confronted her, attitudes that are not in agreement with the Victorian standards for women. When crying, we could consider she was truly regretting what she had done and trying to be agreeable to Edgar, but the situation itself is a cause of Catherine's immoral decision of lying and slapping her maid.

In chapter 9, Catherine talked to Nelly about her decision to accept Edgar's proposal to marry her. Although the maidservant said she was not supposed to be involved, Catherine insisted on hearing her opinion – "I accepted him, Nelly. Be quick, and say whether I was wrong!" (107). Nelly, then, asked the girl if she loved Edgar, and what reasons she had for that. Catherine answered with a series of statements Nelly judged as frivolous, such as "because he is handsome, and pleasant to be with", "because he is young and cheerful", "because he loves me" and "he will be rich, and I shall like to be the greatest woman of the neighbourhood" (108). The maid reminded her mistress that Edgar might not be always rich, young and cheerful, to which she answered "He is now; and I have only to do with the present" (109).

This sentence uttered by Catherine exemplifies Wollstonecraft's claim that women were conditioned to think about only the present, while men would be encouraged to prepare

themselves for the future – ". . . the tenor of life seems to prove that man is prepared by various circumstances for a future state, they constantly concur in advising woman only to provide for the present" (Wollstonecraft ch. 2). Mill would reinforce this view with his claim that women's minds are "drawn to the present, to the real, to actual fact", which would provide them with an objective perception of facts.

Facing that, Nelly did not see a reason for Catherine to seek out her opinion, but the girl demanded to know if she was right. Nelly then answered "Perfectly right; if people be right to marry only for the present. And now, let us hear what you are unhappy about. Your brother will be pleased . . . The old lady and gentleman will not object, I think; you will escape from a disorderly comfortless home into a wealthy, respectable one;" (Brontë 109). Here, Nelly has voiced the Victorian ideals that would make Edgar the more suitable husband for Catherine, the social and ideological reasons that would base a decision in his favour.

This advice, according to Sartre's claims, was something that Catherine could have foreseen. The French philosopher affirmed that "to choose one's adviser is only another way to commit oneself" (*Existentialism* 33). If you consult a priest, for example, you already know more or less what sort of advice he would give you. Therefore, in positing the question to Nelly, Catherine would get the reinforcement of the standards of the Victorian Age, since the servant was subservient to those customs. According to the statements made by Sartre, I could sustain that Catherine was looking for someone that would approve her decision, which would say Edgar was the right option. The right attitude in this situation would be to accept the fact that her decision is her responsibility, and she must face whatever consequences it might generate.

Considering the theoretical framework of this research, Catherine's decision would be considered moral according to the Victorian social standards for women. As

Wollstonecraft has argued, which Mill and Beauvoir would reinforce, the only way of social ascendance for a woman was through marriage, so it is logical that Catherine would consider marrying Heathcliff as a risky move in relation to her future. According to Beauvoir, even when women started working in factories, marriage would still be their "most honourable career" (160). Parents would still bring up their daughters "with a view to marriage rather than to furthering her personal development", so the girls would not be trained in some profession, and this would constitute a vicious circle: "this professional inferiority reinforces her desire to find a husband" (161). According to Mill, this situation would not happen if women were provided any other way of "filling a conventionally honourable place in life" (16). She chose the option that would give her financial security as well as preserve her reputation, the option that would be justifiable to the people she knew. As a young Victorian woman, she had grown up giving a great value to her appearance and public opinion.

However, Abbie L. Cory offered another point of view on this attitude, which would be as an act of revolution. In her article "'Out of My Brother's Power': Gender, Class and Rebellion in *Wuthering Heights*", she affirmed that, when Catherine manifested her desire to marry Edgar for his economic stability, she acted subversively in relation to the standards of the marriage system of her time. According to Cory:

> Like ideas about working-class suffrage and the repeal of the Union between Ireland and Britain, conversations about alternative forms of marriage were part of the social milieu of the 1830s and 1840s, and in Cathy's attempt to resist conventional concepts of marriage we can see once again the microcosm of the Wuthering Heights community mirroring the macrocosm of mid-century British radicalism. (Cory 20)

I may conclude, then, that Catherine was actively choosing a partner for herself, instead of remaining submissive to men. She was taking a revolutionary move, although her choice was

in agreement with the moral standards of the Victorian Age. In this action of one of its female characters, *Wuthering Heights* would once more be challenging the ideology of its time.

When asked where the obstacle to her decision was, Catherine declared: “In my soul and in my heart, I’m convinced I’m wrong!” (109). The girl then recounted a dream she had, in which she was in Heaven. She was unhappy in her dream, because she believed she was not supposed to be there, as she was not supposed to marry Edgar. This passage illustrates how Catherine’s actions were embedded in the Christian beliefs that were part of the ideology of the Victorian Age. Nietzsche defined that “[t]he Christian faith from the beginning, is sacrifice: the sacrifice of all freedom, all pride, all self-confidence of spirit; it is at the same time subjection, self-derision, and self-mutilation” (*Beyond Good and Evil* 432). He added that this ideal of self-sacrifice was connected mainly with solitude, fasting and sexual abstinence. Therefore, I can affirm Catherine, as a Christian, felt that marrying Edgar would be similar to deserving to be in Heaven. Moreover, the condition for going to Heaven would be the sacrifice of her desire for Heathcliff, something that she must repress. However, Nietzsche asked “[h]ow is the negation of will *possible*? How is the saint possible?” (434). He questioned what chances of success a person in Catherine’s situation would have, because of the difficulty she would have at repressing her will that far.

Catherine confessed she was not that inclined to abandon her love for Heathcliff. She declared “It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now; so he shall never know how I love him: and that, not because he’s handsome, Nelly, but because he’s more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same” (Brontë 111). This would mean Catherine accepted sacrificing her feelings for the possibility of a better future financially. However, we must consider her time spent in Thrushcross Grange, being dressed and educated as a young lady, in relation to this inclination to self-sacrifice. According to Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar in their work *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman*

Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination, "Catherine's education in ladylike self-denial causes her dutifully to deny her self and decide to marry Edgar" (276). So, when she said he was more herself than she was, she would mean that Heathcliff preserved more of her original being than she retained.

Through Nelly's perspective, we see Catherine saying she did not expect to be separated from Heathcliff after marrying Edgar: "I shouldn't be Mrs. Linton were such a price demanded! [Heathcliff]'ll be as much to me as he has been all his lifetime. Edgar must shake off his antipathy, and tolerate him, at least. He will, when he learns my true feelings towards him" (112). She believed that, instead of her being a beggar married to Heathcliff, she could even aid him to rise with Edgar's money. According to Victorian standards, her assumption that Edgar was supposed to tolerate her friendship with another man would be immoral, since women were expected to make an effort to be agreeable to their husbands, and not the contrary. Her interlocutor, implying the customs of the age, affirmed her plan suggested "that you are ignorant of the duties you undertake in marrying; or else that you are a wicked, unprincipled girl" (113).

Catherine justified her position affirming this would be the best reason for her to marry Edgar, for she did not see the use of her existence, if it would be only contained in her present life – ". . . surely you and everybody have a notion that there is or should be an existence of yours beyond you" (113). This demonstrates Catherine's belief in the Christian perception of attaining something bigger in the afterlife[5]. She added:

> My great miseries in this world have been Heathcliff's miseries, and I watched and felt each from the beginning: my great thought in living is himself. If all else perished,

[5] "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (*Authorized (King James) Version* John 18:36).

> and *he* remained, I should still continue to be; and if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn to a mighty stranger: I should not seem a part of it. My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods: time will change it, I'm well aware, as winter changes the trees. My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath: a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, 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. So don't talk of our separation again: it is impracticable; (113)

Here we can see the bond between Catherine and Heathcliff as a feeling of oneness. According to Thormählen, "they are not aware of the other as an 'other'" (642). And this lack of a perception of themselves as separate beings lead to the negative consequences I will analyze in the next chapters of the narrative. Nelly predicted the fact that it would not be easy for Catherine to persuade her husband to tolerate Heathcliff as her friend, voicing the standards of the Victorian Age.

In her essay "Impossible Love and Commodity Culture in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*", Daniela Garofalo argued that this attitude taken by Catherine represented the opposition to capitalist culture. She affirmed that, for many critics of Brontë's work, the transformation Catherine suffered in order to enter the world of the Lintons meant either her attachment to status and property or her inability to escape the patriarchy. However, the author saw another alternative to those views, which would be Catherine as a rebel against the economic system that determined gender roles, such as the duty of the wife in marriage, and the differences of race and class.

Catherine threatened the boundaries of the family, which would "keep out lower classes and people of other races and ethnicities" (Garofalo 833). She aimed to share the

money that was her husband's property with other people she loved, such as Heathcliff: "Edgar will have no more right to it than she does herself. Because a husband's entitlement to his wife's fidelity and love, not to mention her body, does not apply to her, Edgar will not own her;" (833). Naturally, we could not expect a standard citizen of Victorian England to understand and accept Catherine's act. It surely would be considered immoral according to the dominant ideology of this social context. As Beauvoir's claims demonstrated, the ideal woman for the patriarchal system would be as dependent on men as possible.

According to Wollstonecraft's claims on marriage, Catherine would be very much conditioned to choose Edgar. The author states that "men, in their youth, are prepared for professions, and marriage is not considered as the grand feature in their lives; whilst women, on the contrary, have no other scheme to sharpen their faculties" (Wollstonecraft ch. 4). To rise in their society, the only option for women was to marry advantageously. For Wollstonecraft, this was a sacrifice of a woman's virtues, for girls would marry "merely to better themselves", and would "have such perfect power over their hearts as not to permit themselves to fall in love till a man with a superiour fortune offers" (ch. 4). This is the power we see Catherine exercising over her love for Heathcliff, persuading herself that Edgar would be the best option. She would be "actually marrying the young man of her own choice, without feeling any emotions of passion, because that a well educated [sic] girl had not time to be in love" (sec. 5.4). When girls began to think a little for themselves instead of obeying their fathers' authority, they discovered that "it is only through their address to excite emotions in men, that pleasure and power are to be obtained" (ch. 6). The books written for the instruction of girls would perpetuate these patriarchal opinions and make the first impression that would last a lifetime in the minds of women.

According to Wollstonecraft, these associations an individual makes in his or her first years of life have great effect on moral character, and this would be how the wrong

notions about the difference between men and women would be so rooted in women's minds: "Every thing that they see or hear serves to fix impressions, call forth emotions, and associate ideas, that give a sexual character to the mind. False notions of beauty and delicacy stop the growth of their limbs and produce a sickly soreness . . ." (ch. 6). She added that "[w]omen, in particular, all want to be ladies. Which is simply to have nothing to do, but listlessly to go they scarcely care where, for they cannot tell what" (ch. 9). Thus, women would aim at raising to a standard life they were conditioned to perceive as the best, but which they did not even know. In the author's opinion, this system insulted reason and nature and, in consequence, it prevented happiness. Someone's capability of happiness, for Wollstonecraft, would be "estimated by the degree of reason, virtue, and knowledge, that distinguish the individual" (ch. 1). Therefore, Catherine would be distancing from her possibility of happiness while she was inserted in a system that insulted reason.

Later on in the same chapter, Nelly informs Catherine had tried hard to persuade her to come to Thrushcross Grange after she and Edgar were married. Nelly resisted, because she had begun to be attached to Hindley's son, Hareton, whom she was nourishing. According to Nelly, Catherine then cried to her husband and brother until they forced the servant to go. From what we can take from Wollstonecraft and Mill's claims, it is not surprising that Catherine would consider her desires as more important than nourishing Hareton during his childhood, because women in the Victorian Age were not used to act with reason, but with their feelings. In addition, Catherine would be experiencing what Mill has defined as the lack of liberty that would be transformed in a desire to power:

> An active and energetic mind, if denied liberty, will seek power; refused the command of itself, it will assert its personality by trying to control others. To allow to any human beings no existence of their own except what depends on others is motivating

> them to bend others to their purposes. Where liberty can't be hoped for, and power can, power becomes the grand object of human desire. (Mill 58).

Following this reasoning, Catherine would be trying to exercise some power in the areas she could, such as requesting her maidservant from the Heights, for she lacked real freedom to govern her own life. Mill stated that, apart from food and clothing, "freedom is the first and strongest want of human nature" (57). Catherine would, like any person, aim to govern her conduct "by [her] own feelings of duty, and by such laws and social restraints as [her] own conscience can subscribe to" (58). However, even if she gained the power she wanted, she would still feel lacking, for "in families, as in states, power is not a compensation for the loss of freedom. Her power often gives her what she has no right to, but doesn't enable her to assert her own rights" (Mill 21). Also, all of these claims do not prevent Catherine's actions from being considered immoral. If I analyze it through Nietzsche's perspective, Catherine's intentions, as far as I can infer, would appear egoistical. Therefore, immoral in the Christian ideal of self-sacrifice.

As affirmed by Sarah Gilead in her article "Liminality, Anti-Liminality, and The Victorian Novel", Christianity in the Western tradition had self-sacrifice as its central paradigm, considering that "[s]elf-sacrifice or martyrdom is a willed abandonment of structural privileges and categories in favor of 'universal' values such as justice, truth, altruism" (Gilead 184). Therefore, Catherine's attitude would be opposed to the ideal of a Christian, since she showed no altruism towards Hareton.

Marianne Thormählen's article, entitled "Christian Ethics in *Wuthering Heights*", reinforced this idea, affirming "[w]hat the consequences are to the poor little boy does not interest his pathologically egotistical aunt, who wants his nurse to wait on her instead . . ." (647). Catherine did not choose to do this because she found enjoyment in the pain of others,

but because, according to the author, “she is completely devoid of empathy” (647). She lacked the compassion that was consistent with the moral teachings of Christianity.

In chapter 10, Nelly manifested she believed Catherine was more delicate and agreeable when with the Lintons because she faced no opposition to her desires – “and who *can* be ill-natured and bad-tempered when they encounter neither opposition nor indifference?” (Brontë 124). She then backed up her statement with her recounting of the day when Heathcliff came to Thrushcross Grange, after three years in which no one had seen or heard of him. Catherine demanded Edgar to accept Heathcliff as a friend and to receive him for dinner in the parlour. For Edgar, Heathcliff was a runaway servant, so “[h]e looked vexed, and suggested the kitchen as a more suitable place for him” (127). Catherine refused to sit there and told Nelly to have a table set in the parlour for Heathcliff and her, separated from another one, in which Edgar and his sister Isabella would be seated.

Catherine’s actions here would be considered immoral according to the ideology of Victorian England, since she was not supposed to dissent from her husband’s will, neither to bring a servant to her dinner table. Edgar manifested the standard behavior of his time when he refused to welcome a runaway servant the way he would welcome someone from his own social class. Furthermore, as Rodems has claimed, Heathcliff and Catherine “embody outsider identity and primitiveness in contrast to the cultured and presumably more socially sophisticated residents of Thrushcross Grange” (Rodems i). Departing from the principle of the hierarchical structure of the Victorian home, with the man as the head of the family, we can see Catherine was not able to conform to these social regulations. Her will to be near Heathcliff would break the conventions Edgar valued in a marriage, and her attempt to bring her friend into the house defied the standards for wives in the Victorian Age.

Later the same night Catherine complained to Nelly about Edgar's behavior while Heathcliff was there. She affirmed he and his sister were spoiled children and they would "fancy the world was made for their accommodation" (Brontë 131). Nelly reminded Catherine that this would be the only time when she was crossed by someone in the house, as they would always do what she wanted: "You can well afford to indulge their passing whims as long as their business is to anticipate all your desires" (131). Catherine claimed she had faced lots of bitterness being left by Heathcliff and, after that, she was trying to be in peaceful terms with her husband, therefore she considered herself "an angel" (133).

Again, Catherine's actions would be considered immoral according to the Victorian ideal that women should be submissive to their husbands. Wollstonecraft exposed this fact, showing she had an opinion contrary to the system: "The behaviour of many newly married women has often disgusted me. They seem anxious never to let their husbands forget the privilege of marriage; and to find no pleasure in his society unless he is acting the lover. Short, indeed, must be the reign of love, when the flame is thus constantly blown up, without its receiving any solid fewel!" (Wollstonecraft ch. 7). Considering the Marxist approach to *Wuthering Heights* as a reflection of Victorian social context, the English author's claims show how Catherine and Edgar's marriage did not have the best chances at happiness, for there was no solid love. There was compliance when one's wishes were attended, and quarrel when they were not.

Mill would reinforce this idea, for he claimed that "unlikeness may attract, but likeness is what retains" (55). Catherine may have been attracted to Edgar because he represented what she wished to have or to be. As spoke by Nelly, she would "escape from a disorderly comfortless home into a wealthy, respectable one" (Brontë 109). However, a happy marriage would arise from the similarities between the spouses. Mill added that, "[i]f the married pair are well-bred and well-behaved, they tolerate each other's tastes; but is

mutual toleration what people look forward to when they enter into marriage?" (55). We can see that this was the case with Catherine and Edgar, since the latter has demonstrated to be well-educated enough to tolerate the subversive behavior of his wife, but we will see his patience did not last long. In addition, Catherine's actions in the particular situation described were selfish, which would be opposite to the Christian value of self-sacrifice as well. One more time, we see her lacking empathy, not showing any attempt to put herself in her husband's place and understand his perspective.

According to Scanlon, one of the factors that contribute for a fulfilling life is to have a harmonious relation with the people we know. This harmony would be present in a relationship of "mutual recognition", in which both people share similar moral thought (Scanlon 162). For Scanlon, justifiability to others underlies a central part of all moral thinking. Then, each person would be acting in a way the other could not reasonably reject, because they share "notions of justifiability" (176). Catherine and Edgar did not share these notions, as we can see through the different views they manifested on marriage and on the separation of social classes. Therefore, this discrepancy would explain their lack of harmony in the marriage.

During the days succeeding this episode, Edgar allowed Catherine to visit Wuthering Heights, taking Isabella with her. Nelly affirmed that, after this, Catherine made the house a paradise for some days, in retribution to her husband's favor: "rewarded him with such a summer of sweetness and affection" (Brontë 134). Soon Heathcliff started to be received at Thrushcross Grange as well. During one of the moments Heathcliff was not in the house, Isabella told Catherine she loved him, to what her sister in law replied with the assumption that he was "an unreclaimed creature, without refinement, without cultivation: an arid wilderness of furze and whinstone" (136). She also defined Heathcliff as "not a rough diamond", and declared he was "a fierce, pitiless, wolfish man" (137). Catherine stated he

could never love someone from the Linton family, and that he would crush Isabella "like a sparrow's egg" if she bothered him (137). He would marry her, but it would be for her fortune. Although Catherine's attitude here was controversial in relation to her friendship with Heathcliff, she would be acting morally according to the Victorian standards, not encouraging Isabella to marry a servant and to risk the preservation of the upper class as well as her own security.

The next time Heathcliff and Catherine saw each other, she mentioned Isabella's confessions in front of both Heathcliff and herself, embarrassing her sister in law. Catherine proceeded making fun of Isabella's feelings and laughing at her – "Heathcliff, why don't you evince satisfaction at my pleasant news? Isabella swears that the love Edgar has for me is nothing to that she entertains for you. I'm sure she made some speech of the kind; did she not, Ellen?" (140) – until Isabella left, crying. Heathcliff, when alone with Catherine, asked about the inheritance he would get marrying Isabella and declared explicitly that he would be violent to her: "You'd hear of odd things if I lived alone with that mawkish, waxen face: the most ordinary would be painting on its white the colours of the rainbow, and turning the blue eyes black, every day or two: they detestably resemble Linton's" (141-142). After hearing this, Catherine only addressed the inheritance, saying Heathcliff should abstract himself from wanting his neighbour's goods, "remember *this* neighbour's goods are mine" (142).

Here, Catherine's actions would be considered immoral according to Victorian standards, since she facilitated for Heathcliff to take advantage of Isabella, which would be contrary to the ideology she lived by and the relations of production of her time. In addition, it would also be immoral according to Christian beliefs, since she overlooked the violence that was about to happen, again showing her lack of empathy. This would also be an act of bad faith according to Sartre's claims, since he stated that "the ultimate significance of the actions of men of good faith is the quest of freedom in itself" and "in thus willing freedom,

we discover that it depends entirely on the freedom of others, and that the freedom of others depends on our own . . . I cannot set my own freedom as a goal without also setting the freedom of others as a goal" (*Existentialism* 48-49). Catherine apparently wished freedom for Isabella, not prohibiting her from seeing Heathcliff, but later she made the choice not to tell the girl about Heathcliff's violent declaration. Catherine chose to omit information that would probably be of extreme importance for Isabella to make an informed decision towards Heathcliff.

Furthermore, Catherine even made fun of a Christian precept when she declared she had taken her neighbour's goods[6]. According to Wollstonecraft's claims on virtue, I could attribute this behavior to the lack of freedom Catherine had. The only way for her to rise in the society in which she lived was by marriage, by taking her neighbour's goods. Wollstonecraft affirmed "[l]iberty is the mother of virtue", and "[w]ould men but generously snap [women's] chains, and be content with rational fellowship instead of slavish obedience, they would find [them] more observant daughters, more affectionate sisters, more faithful wives, more reasonable mothers – in a word, better citizens" (ch. 2; ch. 9). Therefore, attitudes like the one Catherine had in this passage would be prevented. However, even though Sartre admitted the existence of "a universal human *condition*", which means he would acknowledge the influence of the facts exposed by Wollstonecraft in Catherine's decision, her choice would still be her own responsibility (*Existentialism* 42). In the moment she had to decide who she would marry, she chose to go after her neighbour's goods.

In chapter 11, Edgar manifested his anger at Heathcliff's crescent presence in the family. He entered the kitchen, where Catherine was talking to her friend, and confronted her.

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[6] "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's" (*Authorized (King James) Version,* Exodus. 20. 17).

Catherine sarcastically asked her husband “Have you been listening at the door, Edgar?”, to which Heathcliff laughed (Brontë 150). He threatened to knock Edgar down, saying “Cathy, this lamb of yours threatens like a bull! . . . It is in danger of splitting its skull against my knuckles” (150). When Edgar attempted to leave, Catherine locked the door and threw the key on the fire, preventing him from requesting any help. She stated “If you have not the courage to attack him, make an apology, or allow yourself to be beaten” and, after seeing the fear she had awaken in her husband, declared “Heathcliff would as soon lift a finger at you as the king would march his army against a colony of mice” (151). Edgar ended up punching Heathcliff on the throat and running away through the back door, and Catherine sent her friend away knowing Edgar would get at least half a dozen servants to go after him.

This whole passage constitutes strictly immoral behavior according to Victorian standards, since Catherine has disrespected and humiliated her husband in favor of another man. According to Sartre’s claims on the background of actions, she has acted in bad faith, since she justified her attitude of taking the key saying she wanted to see her husband either humiliated or in a fight with Heathcliff. Therefore, Catherine’s aim in throwing the key on the fire limited the freedom of her husband, constituting an act of bad faith.

Before entering the kitchen, Edgar had commented on Heathcliff’s visit to Nelly: “It is disgraceful that she should own him for a friend, and force his company on me!” (149). From this speech I can infer that Catherine disrupted the hierarchical and patriarchal order of the ideal Victorian home, in which the authority of the husband would not be questioned. On the other hand, Edgar’s perception of the situation also indicates that he regarded Catherine as his possession and, considering the way marriage was seen in the law of the nineteenth century, she was. As Mill has exposed, “the wife is the actual bond servant of her husband: so far as the law is concerned, she is as subordinate to him as slaves, commonly so called, are to their masters. She promises life-long obedience to him at the altar, and is legally held to that

all through her life . . .” (17). This dependence was in the law as well as part of the myth men created of women. According to Beauvoir, woman was regarded by men as a prize they could win and, as the owner of an object, they expected her subjection to them: “for in order to awaken the Sleeping Beauty, she must have been put to sleep; ogres and dragons must be if there are to be captive princesses” (209). Therefore, Edgar perceived Catherine as his possession and expected her obedience, and had the law on his side to reinforce it. As stated by Pike, “[i]n *Wuthering Heights* Brontë offers a profound critique of the middle-class cult of domesticity by demonstrating how homes—like their occupants, women and children—can turn into property to be controlled and acquired” (381). Catherine refused to adapt to those expectations, she followed her own wishes without any regard for her husband’s demands. According to Rodems, she “refuses Edgar's efforts to limit her behavior, and with her lack of either knowledge or compliance to social decorum, she cannot understand why she must choose” between him and Heathcliff (Rodems 30).

Later that night, Catherine manifested to Nelly her disturbed state of mind after quarreling with Edgar:

> ‘I’m nearly distracted, Nelly!’ she exclaimed, throwing herself on the sofa. ‘A thousand smiths’ hammers are beating in my head! Tell Isabella to shun me; this uproar is owing to her; and should she or anyone else aggravate my anger at present, I shall get wild. And, Nelly, say to Edgar, if you see him again tonight, that I’m in danger of being seriously ill. I wish it may prove true. He has startled and distressed me shockingly! I want to frighten him. . . . Well, if I cannot keep Heathcliff for my friend – if Edgar will be mean and jealous, I’ll try to break their hearts by breaking my own. . . . To this point he has been discreet in dreading to provoke me; you must represent the peril of quitting that policy, and remind him of my passionate temper,

> verging, when kindled, on frenzy. I wish you could dismiss that apathy out of your countenance, and look rather more anxious about me! (Brontë 153-154)

Soon after this, Edgar entered the room demanding that Catherine would take a side: "It is impossible for you to be *my* friend and *his* at the same time; and I absolutely *require* to know which you choose" (155). Catherine claimed she was not well enough to even stand. She used a bell to call Nelly while dashing her head against the sofa and grinding her teeth. Edgar was terrified at the scene, but Nelly revealed Catherine's plan to pretend she was sick. She narrated: "And I told him how she had resolved, previous to his coming, on exhibiting a fit of frenzy. I incautiously gave the account aloud, and she heard me" (155). Catherine then fled to her room. From the information we have as readers, we cannot say Catherine pretended to have the symptoms she was showing right before she isolated herself in her room. However, her attempt to lie to her husband would be considered immoral according to the ideology by which her family lived.

We should keep in mind, though, that there was a conflict set between Nelly and Catherine. According to Jamie McBride's claims in her article entitled "The Identity of Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Gothic Literature", the mistress and the servant embodied the two archetypal women in early Gothic literature: "the submissive woman who accepts her role in the established patriarchy, and thrives in it (Nelly); and the woman who attempts to fight this established order, never hiding her 'passionate' nature, eventually being destroyed for this rebellion (Catherine)" (McBride 49). Thus, Catherine was disruptive of the conventions of the society in which she lived when she challenged the "patriarchal ownership of women and control over their affections" (McBride 51). Nelly, as a representative of the patriarchy, shed a negative light in Catherine's character during the whole narrative, her strength as a woman being used against her.

It does not seem possible, since we have no access to Catherine's mind, to conclude if she refused to take responsibility for choosing to marry Edgar or if she did not understand the need to abandon Heathcliff. However, according to Sartre, we have a choice to make in every situation: "I can always choose, but I must also realize that, if I decide not to choose, that still constitutes a choice" (*Existentialism* 44). Therefore, Catherine chose not to choose between Heathcliff and Edgar, and now she faced the consequences of this choice.

In chapter 12, we know from Nelly's narration that it was the third day Catherine had spent isolated in her room. She opened the door for the first time, requesting water and some gruel, for she felt she was dying: "'Oh, I will die,' she exclaimed, 'since no one cares anything about me" (Brontë 157). Nelly did not believe her mistress, and Catherine asked about her husband: "What is that apathetic being doing? . . . Has he fallen into a lethargy, or is he dead?" (157). Nelly informed that Edgar was occupied with his studies, to which Catherine replied, confounded:

> My God! does he know how I'm altered? . . . He imagines me in a pet – in play, perhaps. Cannot you inform him that it is frightful earnest? Nelly, if it be not too late, as soon as I learn how he feels, I'll choose between these two; either to starve at once – that would be no punishment unless he had a heart – or to recover, and leave the country. . . . Is he actually so utterly indifferent for my life? (157-158)

Nelly claimed Edgar was not demonstrating enough worry because he probably doubted his wife would willingly die of hunger, this would be illogical. Catherine demanded that Nelly would tell him she would in fact starve herself to death – "You think not? Cannot you tell him I will?" (158).

Here, Catherine's actions would be immoral if seen through simplistic lens, basing ourselves on the Victorian custom that the wife should be agreeable to her husband and

should not abstain from society. However, I have to consider her communication with Edgar was being intercepted by Nelly, who was not providing the husband all the information he needed. Due to this omission, Edgar did not know the true health state of his wife and the urge for him to seek her out. I cannot overlook the influence of Nelly in some of the events of the novel. She was present in the majority of the situations described in the novel; she heard conversations, gave advices and judged, as well as took some small attitudes that triggered significant changes in the plot. For instance, in chapter 9, Nelly chose to omit from Catherine that she had seen Heathcliff listening at the door:

> Ere this speech ended, I became sensible of Heathcliff's presence. Having noticed a slight movement, I turned my head, and saw him rise from the bench, and steal out noiselessly. He had listened till he heard Catherine say it would degrade her to marry him, and then he staid, [sic] to hear no farther. My companion, sitting on the ground, was prevented by the back of the settle from remarking his presence or departure; but I started, and bade her hush! 'Why?' she asked, gazing nervously round. 'Joseph is here,' I answered, catching opportunely the roll of his cartwheels up the road; 'and Heathcliff will come in with him. I'm not sure whether he were not at the door this moment.' (Brontë 111)

Nelly said explicitly that she saw Heathcliff there and knew what he heard before leaving. However, she made the choice to omit this from her mistress. According to Sartre's claims, her decision was done in bad faith, for, if she wished freedom for Catherine, she would have provided all the information she knew for the girl to make an informed decision. On the contrary, Nelly omitted information and, consciously or not, manipulated Catherine's decision.

Nelly was a witness to the plot of *Wuthering Heights* but also took part in many of the events. After her mistress opened the door saying she was dying, Nelly recounted: "That I set down as a speech meant for Edgar's ears; I believed no such thing, so I kept it to myself" (Brontë 157). Whether or not Catherine was telling the truth – which later on we discover she was – Nelly deliberately chose to omit important information from her master based on a judgement she made. Again, if her decision was made in good faith, she would have provided all the information she could to both spouses, and given them the opportunity to make informed choices on what they would do. Instead of it, she said Edgar was occupied with his studies, and confessed to Lockwood "I should not have spoken so, if I had known her true condition, but I could not get rid of the notion that she acted a part of her disorder" (157). At least, years after the facts happened, Nelly was able to admit she was wrong.

Chapter 12 is when we see Catherine apparently losing her sanity. She manifested being haunted and began to consider everyone as her enemy – "And they have all turned to enemies in a few hours: *they* have, I'm positive; the people *here*" (158) –, tore a pillow with her teeth and arranged its contents on her sheets. According to Nelly, Catherine was not paying attention to the conversation anymore, "her mind had strayed to other associations" (159). She digressed about the feathers and events of her childhood:

> 'That's a turkey's,' she murmured to herself; 'and this is a wild duck's; and this is a pigeon's. Ah, they put pigeons' feathers in the pillows – no wonder I couldn't die! Let me take care to throw it on the floor when I lie down. And here is a moorcock's; and this – I should know it among a thousand – it's a lapwing's. Bonny bird; wheeling over our heads in the middle of the moor. It wanted to get to its nest, for the clouds had touched the swells, and it felt rain coming. This feather was picked up from the heath, the bird was not shot: we saw its nest in the winter, full of little skeletons. Heathcliff set a trap over it, and the old ones there not come. I made him promise he'd

> never shoot a lapwing after that, and he didn't. Yes, here are more! Did he shoot my lapwings, Nelly? Are they red, any of them? Let me look.' (159)

Suddenly, Catherine looked in the mirror and did not recognize herself: "'Don't *you* see that face?' she inquired, gazing earnestly at the mirror. And say what I could, I was incapable of making her comprehend it to be her own; so I rose and covered it with a shawl" (160). The mistress still insisted the room was haunted.

According to Gilbert and Gubar, the mirror motif in this passage would represent the imprisonment of Catherine by herself and by society. It is then important to notice that she tore her pillow with her teeth, asked Nelly to open the window and plays with the feathers as a child, talking about the birds she had seen in the past: "Liberating feathers from the prison where they had been reduced to objects of social utility, she imagines them reborn as the birds they once were, whole and free" as she once was (Gilbert and Gubar 284).

In her delirium, Catherine thought for an instant she was in her chamber in Wuthering Heights: "'Oh, dear! I thought I was at home,' she sighed. 'I thought I was lying in my chamber at Wuthering Heights. Because I'm weak, my brain got confused, and I screamed unconsciously" (Brontë 161). She demanded Nelly to open the window in order to feel the wind that came from the moors, the air from her home. Nelly left the window ajar for a feel seconds and saw Catherine crying in her bed, claiming that, in the night she locked herself in her room, "the whole last seven years of my life grew a blank! I did not recall that they had been at all. I was a child; my father was just buried, and my misery arose from the separation that Hindley had ordered between me and Heathcliff" (162). Catherine felt she was converted at a stroke to Mrs. Linton, "the lady of Thrushcross Grange, and the wife of a stranger: an exile, and outcast, thenceforth, from what had been my world" (163).

At this moment, Catherine confessed to Nelly she wished she could have the freedom she had when she was a child, and did not understand how she had changed so much from the person she had been before:

> I wish I were out of doors! I wish I were a girl again, half savage and hardy, and free . . . and laughing at injuries, not maddening under them! Why am I so changed? why does my blood rush into a hell of tumult at a few words? I'm sure I should be myself were I once among the heather on those hills. Open the window again wide: fasten it open! (163)

Catherine manifested here her desire for freedom, which Mill has sustained would be behind her will to have power over matters in the household. Nelly was convinced Catherine was delirious, since she believed she could see the window of her chamber in Wuthering Heights, even though it was impossible from where Thrushcross Grange was located. As if talking to Heathcliff, she claimed: "I'll not lie there by myself: they may bury me twelve feet deep, and throw the church down over me, but I won't rest till you are with me. I never will!" (164).

Catherine's behavior in this passage can be perceived as the representation of hysteria, a condition frequently attributed to women in the nineteenth century. As claimed by Elaine Showalter in her article "Representing Ophelia: Women, Madness, and The Responsibilities of Feminist Criticism", the illustrations of the Shakespearean character Ophelia had a major role as representation of insanity in women. She claimed that the figure of the madwoman permeated Romantic literature, "from the gothic novelists to Wordsworth and Scott…" (Showalter 83). The Romantic approach to this figure consisted of a young girl that was driven to madness through passion. Showalter added:

> If we turn from American to French feminist theory, Ophelia might confirm the impossibility of representing the feminine in patriarchal discourse as other than

> madness, incoherence, fluidity, or silence. In French theoretical criticism, the feminine or "Woman" is that which escapes representation in patriarchal language and symbolism; it remains on the side of negativity, absence, and lack. (78)

This is in fact what I can conclude from Beauvoir's claims on the dichotomy of woman, who was seen as both Eve – the one who led Adam to sin – and Virgin Mary. There was not a stable concept to define woman, "through her is made unceasingly the passage from hope to frustration, from hate to love, from good to evil, from evil to good. Under whatever aspect we may consider her, it is this ambivalence that strikes us first" (Beauvoir 169).

The myths justified all the oppression and privileges conceded to men, and the most important one was the feminine mystery. It provided an excuse for not understanding women, "instead of admitting his ignorance, he perceives the presence of a 'mystery' outside himself:" (281). According to Beauvoir, there was mystery from both sides in relation to one another. However, the definitions considered absolute always have come from a male point of view, thus "woman is considered to be mysterious in essence." (281). Here the Feminist author adopted Sartre's perspective on the lack of an essence to human beings. For her, there was no truth to be discovered about women, they were their actions, "[d]iscrimination between the imaginary and the real can be made only through behaviour." (282).

Beauvoir admitted there was a lack of stability in women's emotions, which would make them "subject to such displays of agitation as tears, hysterical laughter, and nervous crises" (54). She attributed this to "an enslavement of the organism to reproduction", that would affect women in the form of crises during puberty and menopause, monthly periods, pregnancy, childbirth, illnesses and "unexpected symptoms and complications" (54). On the one hand, a man's sexual life was not "in opposition to his existence as a person" and would run an even course biologically, without the crises women faced (55). The reason why

Beauvoir attained herself to these physical features to explain women's behavior was that she considered the body as the lens through which women perceived the world: "the body being the instrument of our grasp upon the world, the world is bound to seem a very different thing when apprehended in one manner or another" (55). Thus, women's grasp on the world would be more restricted, in consequence of the lack of control they would have on their bodies and emotions. This would then be why women were frequently represented as mad in the imaginary of men.

On the other hand, a real neurosis might have its source in a "madness for the forbidden", which, according to Beauvoir, would appear in consequence of the taboos previously established (220). For her, "social prohibitions are not simply conventions; they have—among other meanings—a developmental significance that each person experiences for himself (220). Thus, in *Wuthering Heights*, it would be possible that Catherine would experience the reprobation of her friendship with Heathcliff as a turning point regarding her sanity. However, Beauvoir stated "the more relationships are concretely lived, the less they are idealized" (284). For men to build a real emotional bond with women, they would have to give up the myths and live the relationship in a concrete form.

Mill's claims would add to this argument, as he exposed that women were considered disqualified for any activity except domestic ones because they were changeable, influenced too intensely by what happened to them and "uneven and uncertain in their command of their faculties" (36). The author stated this type of exaggerated reaction to daily situations would be an overflow of energy that has not been spent to a better purpose. He explained:

> . . . when people are brought up as. . . .a kind of hot-house plants, shielded from the wholesome ups and downs of air and temperature, and not trained in any of the

> occupations that make the blood flow and strengthen the muscles, while the emotional part of their nervous system is kept in unnaturally active play, it's no wonder if those of them who don't die of consumption . . . 'upset by slight causes, both internal and external, without the stamina to keep up any physical or mental task requiring continuity of effort. But women brought up to work for their livelihood show none of these morbid characteristics, unless indeed they are chained to sedentary work in small unhealthy rooms. Women who in their early years have shared in the healthy physical upbringing and bodily freedom of their brothers, and who have enough pure air and exercise in adult life, rarely have excessively fragile nervous systems that would disqualify them for active pursuits. (36)

Therefore, following Mill's reasoning, Catherine would be susceptible to the type of symptoms she was showing because of the restrictive life she had as a woman. In addition, she was a woman from the upper classes of her society, which was something that, for Mill, would aggravate her mental illness. He claimed the life of a woman in the "easy classes" was always self-sacrifice (54). She was forced to restrain her natural inclinations to fit in an ideal of modesty, and her social acceptance was tied to her husband's. So, "after paying the full price for it she finds that she is threatened with losing it for no reason that she can feel to be valid" (54). This continual pressure then could make a woman lose her sanity, as happened to Catherine.

While Catherine looked through the open window, Nelly recounted "I heard the rattle of the door-handle, and Mr Linton entered. He had only then come from the library; and, in passing through the lobby, had noticed our talking and being attracted by curiosity, or fear, to examine what it signified, at that late hour" (164-165). In this passage we can see that, although Nelly has affirmed before that she wanted to call her master, she kept talking to Catherine and watching her going mad, without making any real effort for her condition to be

acknowledged by her husband [7]. She then tried to explain herself with euphemisms, and Edgar's reaction to it was of severe anger:

> . . . the haggardness of Mrs Linton's appearance smote him speechless, and he could only glance from her to me in horrified astonishment. 'She's been fretting here,' I continued, 'and eating scarcely anything, and never complaining: she would admit none of us to this evening, and so we couldn't inform you of her state, as we were not aware of it ourselves; but it is nothing.' I felt I uttered my explanations awkwardly; the master frowned. 'It is nothing, is it, Ellen Dean?' he said sternly. 'You shall account more clearly for keeping me ignorant of this!' (165)

At no moment do we see Nelly apologizing for her behavior. Instead, her discourse showed an attempt to underestimate the situation and to put the blame of Catherine's disorder on her. She continued with the same behavior, but Edgar would not be fooled:

> 'Her mind wanders, sir,' I interposed. 'She has been talking nonsense the whole evening; but, let her have quiet, and proper attendance, and she'll rally . . . 'I desire no further advice from you,' answered Mr Linton. 'You knew your mistress's nature, and you encouraged me to harass her. And not to give me one hint of how she has been these three days! It was heartless! Months of sickness could not cause such a change!' (166)

Nelly then defended herself with arguments that did not apply to the situation, such as "I didn't know that, to humour her, I should wink at Mr Heathcliff. I performed the duty of a faithfull servant in telling you . . . Heathcliff has your permission to come a-courting to Miss, and to drop in at every opportunity your absence offers, on purpose to poison the mistress

[7] "I attempted to steal to the door with an intention of calling her husband; but I was summoned back by a piercing shriek – the shawl had dropped from the frame" (161).

against you?" (166-167). Edgar has reprehended Nelly for not informing him of Catherine's health state, nor from telling on Heathcliff when he visited. As we can infer from this passage, Edgar and Nelly did not share the same notions of justifiability. Therefore, they differed morally, building a disharmonious relationship. Later on, she even saw Isabella's dog hanged and her room empty, discovering the girl had run away. She chose not to tell her master any of these situations, demonstrating she did not change her behavior after Edgar confronted her for it.

The way the narrators portrayed the actions of the protagonists encourages us, as readers, to perceive them in certain ways, which may be erroneous. As Gideon Shunami has stated in his article "The Unreliable Narrator in *Wuthering Heights*", Nelly presented to Lockwood an account of the events that framed Catherine's actions as examples of "a deluded and sick woman's impulsive outbursts" (456). Shunami did not believe Nelly did this out of villainy, but because of a simple ignorance: "Nelly describes incidents of rowdy outbursts and noisy quarrels as an index to the characters, with no understanding of what motivates the characters or of their general outlook on life" (465). She described Catherine as tempestuous and impulsive, and did not show any great sympathy towards her mistress, except during the most difficult moments of Catherine's life.

For Shunami, Nelly's narration was based on her own emotions, rather than on "a direct and profound attempt at analysis of the pattern of relationships among the protagonists and the events which thereby result" (463). Thus, it is up to the reader to perceive her unreliability as a narrator if he wants to understand what lies below the surface of the novel. Perhaps, he claimed, "then it will become clear that the romantic, passionate heroes are merely realistic, silently suffering figures whose apparent external aggressiveness only testifies to their inner lack of confidence" (466). Furthermore, as claimed by Nietzsche, ". . . we fabricate the greater part of the experience, and can hardly be made to contemplate any

event, except as "inventors" thereof" (*Beyond Good and Evil* 482). Nelly's memories would be full of parts that were invented, intentionally or not. I must consider she would not remember exactly everything that happened and her brain would fill in the blanks with what she guessed, besides the possibility that she would intentionally omit facts or lie to Lockwood.

The theme of unreliable narration was deeply explored in Wayne Booth's *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, in which he claimed the story itself changes depending on how the author uses modes of narration. He called the reader to a reflection: "Is *The Great Gatsby* the same novel it would have been if, in place of the deeply involved Nick, it were narrated by an omniscient narrator? As it stands it can be described as either Nick's experience of Gatsby or as Gatsby's life seen by Nick" (Booth 346). The complexities of narration can leave the readers unsure of how to make a moral judgement of the characters, and this is surely what happens in *Wuthering Heights*. We have to keep in mind that what we know of Catherine and Cathy are all observations of either Nelly or Lockwood – and, during a brief moment, of Zillah – and the recounting of Nelly's observations by Lockwood.

Back to my analysis of the quarrel between Nelly and Edgar in chapter 12, I still have to acknowledge that Nelly was not the one to blame for the entire situation. Edgar was severely angry with the servant for not telling him about the health state of his wife. However, right before Nelly recounted that Catherine had opened the door, she made an important claim regarding her behavior towards the family in Thrushcross Grange: "I wasted no condolences on miss, nor any expostulations on my mistress; nor did I pay attention to the sighs of my master, who yearned to hear his lady's name, since he might not hear her voice. I determined they should come about as they pleased for me;" (Brontë 157). Although Nelly's speech demonstrated a total lack of empathy with the people around her, it also exposed Edgar's negligent attitude to his wife. He could have tried knocking on the door, insisting on

talking to Catherine, or asking Nelly if she knew anything, but he chose to study and wait in silence. According to Sartre, Edgar had no way of resigning his freedom of choice: "man is free, man is freedom. . . . We are left alone and without excuse. This is what I mean when I say that man is condemned to be free: condemned, because he did not create himself, yet nonetheless free, because once cast into the world, he is responsible for everything he does" (*Existentialism* 29). Things would be as Edgar chose them to be, but he opted for quietism, for waiting for someone to do what he did not do.

Edgar attributed the blame for his problems to Nelly, as if circumstances were against him. Sartre disagreed with this argument, affirming that "[i]n life, man commits himself and draws his on portrait, outside of which there is nothing" (37). Therefore, "[w]hatever he does, he cannot avoid bearing full responsibility for his situation." (45). Although Edgar did not acknowledge it, he was responsible for the situation in which he was. According to Sartre, he would be negating his freedom, which would make him a coward:

> . . . in the name of this will to freedom, implied by freedom itself, I can pass judgement on those who seek to conceal from themselves the complete arbitrariness of their existence, and their total freedom. Those who conceal from themselves this total freedom, under the guise of solemnity, or by making determinist excuses, I will call cowards. (49)

Therefore, although Nelly had influence in some of the situations in *Wuthering Heights*, we have to keep in mind that, in this crucial moment of the novel, Edgar had a huge amount of blame for his choice to neglect Catherine's health state.

Talking to her husband, Catherine declared:

> 'Ah! You are come, are you, Edgar Linton?' she said with angry animation . . . 'You are one of those things that are ever found when least wanted, and when you are

> wanted, never! I suppose we shall have plenty of lamentations now . . . I see we shall. . . but they can't keep me from my narrow home out yonder: my resting-place, where I'm bound before spring is over! There it is: not among the Lintons, mind, under the chapel-roof, but in the open air, with a headstone; and you may please yourself, whether you go to them or come to me! (165-166)

Edgar was confused with Catherine's statement, and she confirmed she did not want him anymore: "What you touch at present you may have; but my soul will be on that hilltop before you lay hands on me again" (166). Later the same night, a doctor was called to see Catherine and, from Nelly's interpretation of what he said, we understand that Catherine would not die, but rather have a permanent alienation of intellect.

It is important to acknowledge that, as Rodems claimed in her thesis, Catherine has not been able to conform either to the social regulations of Thrushcross Grange, nor to the patriarchal system of Wuthering Heights. As the only Earnshaw daughter, she was supposed to take her mother's place as the lady of the house, but she never acted as such, for "[s]he prefers to spend the afternoon running through the moors with Heathcliff" (Rodems 25). Catherine's life with Heathcliff represented her identity as an outsider like him and, after her marriage, "she is in the home but not contained by it" (28). Therefore, the moment Edgar has begun to enforce his standards of a proper wife on her, her health deteriorated. Rodems thus defined the passage in which Catherine was not able to recognize herself in the mirror as an acknowledgement of this identity: "She may appear in the mirror as the lady of the house, but her spirit and mind tell her she is still the woman wandering the moors with Heathcliff. She wishes to return to the only place that she considers home, and where she has the freedom to follow her passions" (14). Catherine was forced into a role to which she had not foreseen she would be assigned. Her way of thinking would be considered immoral according to Victorian

standards for women, once these gender roles were already expected from the people living by this ideology.

In chapter 13, we are informed that Catherine was suffering from "the worst shock of what was denominated a brain fever" (Brontë 172). According to Showalter, this was also what Victorians would attribute to Ophelia, as it was "a staple mental illness in Victorian fiction" (Showalter 88). The author added that this image of a woman with brain fever was common in the imaginary of the superintendents of Victorian lunatic asylums: "The case study of Ophelia was one that seemed particularly useful as an account of hysteria or mental breakdown in adolescence, a period of sexual instability which the Victorians regarded as risky for women's mental health." (85). During one of the days in which Catherine was slightly better, Nelly described her as such:

> Mrs Linton sat in a loose, white dress, with a light shawl over her shoulders, in the recess of the open window, as usual. Her thick, long hair had been partly removed at the beginning of her illness, and now she wore it simply combed in its natural tresses over her temples and neck. Her appearance was altered, as I had told Heathcliff; but when she was calm, there seemed unearthly beauty in the change. The flash of her eyes had been succeded by a dreamy and melancholy softness; they no longer gave the impression of looking at the objects around her: they appeared always to gaze beyond, and far beyond – you would have said out of this world. Then, the paleness of her face – its haggard aspect having vanished as she recovered flesh – and the peculiar expression arising from her mental state, though painfully suggestive of their causes, added to the touching interest which she awakened; and – invariably to me, I know, and to any person who saw her, I should think – refuted more tangible proofs of convalescence, and stamped her as one doomed to decay. (Brontë 198-199)

The way we see Catherine in this scene is very similar to the representations of Ophelia from the Elizabethan stage onwards. According to Showalter:

> Ophelia dresses in white, decks herself with 'fantastical garlands' of wild flowers, and enters, according to the stage directions of the 'Bad' Quarto, 'distracted' playing on a lute with her 'hair down singing.' Her speeches are marked by extravagant metaphors, lyrical free associations, and 'explosive sexual imagery.' She sings wistful and bawdy ballads, and ends her life by drowning. (Showalter 80)

Although Catherine did not drown nor adorn herself with flowers, she wore a white dress and her hair down. In addition, the lyrical free associations Showalter exposed very much resemble the way Catherine talked to Nelly that first day she opened the door. Showalter affirmed that, in Victorian asylums, even casual visitors could recognize "an Ophelia in the wards", as they were always young and showed a faded beauty, dressed in fantastic dresses and sang interrupted songs (86). For Showalter, these illustrations of madness in women have reflected the ideology of each period of time, "[t]he representation of Ophelia changes independently of theories of meaning of the play or the Prince, for it depends on attitudes towards women and madness" (91-92).

These images would then be part of the myth of women, described by Beauvoir. Women were considered to incarnate the mysteries of nature: "She is the earth, and man the seed; she is Water and he is Fire. Creation has often been imagined as the marriage of fire and water; it is warmth and moisture that give rise to living things; the Sun is the husband of the Sea; the Sun, fire, are male divinities; and the Sea is one of the most nearly universal of maternal symbols" (Beauvoir 170). As Adam's companion, Eve was given to him to fertilize as he would own and fertilize the soil, and "through her he makes all nature his realm" (177). When old, woman was said to be "withered, faded", as it would be said of a plant (186).

Women who were considered sinners were traditionally stoned, buried alive, drowned or burned. According to the French Feminist, "[t]he meaning of these tortures is that she was in this way given back to Nature after being deprived of her social dignity ; by her sin she had let loose natural emanations of evil" (215). Thus, woman was related to nature: "vale of blood, open rose, siren, the curve of a hill, she represents to man the fertile soil, the sap, the material beauty and the soul of the world" (272).

On the stage, Ophelia has been presented with symbolic meanings that were specifically related to femininity and sexuality:

> Ophelia's virginal and vacant white is contrasted with Hamlet's scholar's garb, his 'suits of solemn black.' Her flowers suggest the discordant double images of female sexuality as both innocent blossoming and whorish contamination; she is the 'green girl' of pastoral, the virginal 'Rose of May' and the sexually explicit madwoman who, in giving away her wild flowers and herbs, is symbolically deflowering herself. (Showalter 80-81)

Furthermore, in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, a woman character that would enter the stage with "disheveled hair" would indicate that she was either mad or the victim of a rape: "the disordered hair, her offence against decorum, suggests sensuality in each case" (81). Ophelia's death by drowning was also associated with the feminine, with the fluidity that would be opposed to the aridity of men. Water, according to Showalter, was the organic symbol of woman as liquid, "whose eyes are so easily drowned in tears, as her body is the repository of blood, amniotic fluid, and milk" (81).

Ophelia's appearance and behavior were characteristic of what Elizabethans would diagnose as "female love-melancholy" or "erotomania" (81). Showalter pointed out that, from 1580, melancholy was frequent among young men, and Hamlet was "a prototype of the

melancholy hero" (81). However, the association of melancholy with intellectual and imaginative genius was attributed to men only. In women, melancholy was seen as biological, with emotional origins. Therefore, "[w]hereas for Hamlet madness is metaphysical, linked with culture, for Ophelia it is a product of the female body and female nature, perhaps that nature's purest form" (81). As we can see from chapters 12 and 15 of *Wuthering Heights*, Catherine was represented with the key characteristics of the stereotype of a hysterical woman. Furthermore, we must remember that she inflicted a punishment on herself during this period of illness, demonstrating suicidal attitudes. According to Gilbert and Gubar, "taken together, self-starvation or anorexia nervosa, masochism, and suicide form a complex of psychoneurotic symptoms that is almost classically associated with female feelings of powerlessness and rage" (284). This makes perfect sense considering Catherine's life after her marriage to Edgar, when she lost all autonomy and freedom to run in the moors with Heathcliff, something she manifested to miss.

Edgar nursed his wife with all his care, until her life was declared out of danger. As soon as she got better, she started to spend some time in other rooms of the house, instead of her chamber. However, she still told her husband she aimed to go back to Wuthering Heights and remain there, never living with him anymore: "Next spring you'll long again to have me under this roof, and you'll look back and think you were happy today" (173). In chapter 14, paying a visit to Wuthering Heights, Nelly even claimed to Heathcliff that, after the disease, Catherine had changed from what she used to be when he first met her, both in appearance and in character: "the person who is compelled, of necessity, to be her companion, will only sustain his affection hereafter by the remembrance of what she once was, by common humanity, and a sense of duty!" (189). Nelly agreed to help Heathcliff carrying a letter from him to Catherine, hiding it from her master. She justified her act to Lockwood saying it was

in order to avoid a new crisis in Catherine's mental illness. However, we may still notice the influence Nelly insisted in exercising over what happened in her master and mistress's house.

In chapter 15, the reader is informed that Edgar would spend hours trying to entice Catherine's attention to some subject that had formerly been her amusement, which she would thank with "the saddest of smiles and kisses" when in a good mood (199). Nelly narrated "she had the vague, distant look I mentioned before, which expressed no recognition of material things either by ear or eye" (199). When alone with her mistress, Nelly then gave her the letter from Heathcliff: "She drew away her, [sic] hand, and let it fall. I replaced it in her lap, and stood waiting till it should please her to glance down" (200). Catherine attempted to read the letter, but seemed to be struggling to organize her ideas, and Nelly observed she was apathetic.

At this moment, Heathcliff entered Catherine's room willing to talk to her. She claimed "You and Edgar have broken my heart, Heathcliff! And you both come to bewail the deed to me, as if you were the people to be pitied!" (201). Catherine then asked Heathcliff for forgiveness for what had happened to their friendship, but he was resisting it. Heathcliff questioned:

> *Why* did you betray your own heart, Cathy? I have not one word of comfort. You deserve this. You have killed yourself. . . . You loved me – then what *right* had you to leave me? What right – answer me – for the poor fancy you felt for Linton? Because misery, and degradation, and death, and nothing that God or satan could inflict would have parted us, *you*, of your own will, did it. I have not broken your heart – *you* have broken it; and in breaking it, you have broken mine. (204)

Under more supplications of forgiveness from his childhood friend, he then concluded "I forgive what you have done to me. I love *my* murderer – but *yours*! How can I?" (205).

Suddenly, they heard steps approaching the room and Heathcliff attempted to leave. Catherine begged him to stay – "Oh, don't, don't go. It is the last time! Edgar will not hurt us. Heathcliff, I shall die! I shall die!" (206). However, he ended up leaving.

As claimed by Garofalo, both Edgar and Heathcliff betrayed Catherine's vision of "an ethic of love that does not perpetuate the desire necessary for consumption and production" (Garofalo 835). Edgar closed his doors to Heathcliff, who treated Catherine as a lost love and focused his attention on a revenge – which I will analyze during chapter IV of the present work. According to Garofalo, the destruction of Catherine's perspective of love led to her death. Wollstonecraft would reinforce this view on the patriarchy as a cause for Catherine's decay, after she was not able to cope with the standard behavior the Victorian society would impose on her. For the author, "[m]odesty, temperance, and self-denial, are the sober offspring of reason; but when sensibility is nurtured at the expence of the understanding, such weak beings must be restrained by arbitrary means, and be subjected to continual conflicts;" (Wollstonecraft sec. 5.1). Catherine experienced this eternal conflict with her feelings and her marriage, and ended up losing her connection with rationality.

Furthermore, according to Steven Vine in his article "The Wuther of the Other in *Wuthering Heights*", Heathcliff's position as an outsider to the world of the Heights mirrored Catherine's disempowered relation to her family: "As a legally and economically disinherited daughter, Cathy finds in the powerless Heathcliff a figure of her own dispossession. As an outsider, Heathcliff metaphorizes Cathy's otherness to the patriarchal world of the Heights . . ." (Vine 345). Thus, her separation from Heathcliff would be "less a fall into division than a reconfiguration of the split that already constitutes her" (347). For Vine, Catherine's identity was defined as "a movement of *othering* in which she is eccentric both to the patriarchal structures of Wuthering Heights and to the conjugal gentility of Thrushcross Grange" (347). Therefore, the author claimed that Brontë's work politicized Cathy's illness, as well as her

death, by showing how she was sacrificed for the desires of the men around her, Heathcliff and Edgar. Ultimately, she was also sacrificed "to the oppositions that structure the novel itself – for these two male figures wrestle over her with all the violence of narcissism and proprietorship" (353).

Edgar and Heathcliff's contribution to Catherine's decay also illustrated Beauvoir's claim on men's will to self-fulfillment. She stated that "therein lies the wondrous hope that man has often put in women: he hopes to fulfil himself as a being by carnally possessing a being . . . it is in seeking to be made whole through her that man hopes to attain selfrealization" (Beauvoir 167-168). Therefore, Edgar and Heathcliff would perceive Catherine as both their possession and way to self-fulfillment.

On the other hand, there are arguments that could support Heathcliff's claim that Catherine would have inflicted this decay on herself. As Eagleton exposed in *Myths of Power*, Catherine tried to live two lives at the same time: "she hope[d] to square authenticity with social convention, running in harness an ontological commitment to Heathcliff with a phenomenal relationship to Linton" (101). Back in the day she decided to marry Edgar, when she said "I *am* Heathcliff", she evaded the challenge of choosing, treating Heathcliff as part of her own identity. Eagleton explained: "If Catherine is Heathcliff – if identity rather than relationship is in question - then their estrangement is inconceivable, and Catherine can therefore turn to others without violating the timeless metaphysical idea Heathcliff embodies" (101-102).

This analysis is in agreement with Sartre's ideas on responsibility, according to which Catherine would be refusing to face the consequences of the decision she has made. When she did not choose one of the man wholly, that still constituted a choice. She blamed Edgar and Heathcliff for not having behaved the way she wanted them to. However, this was

out of her control, since both men had their own power of choosing what they would make of their own lives. For Sartre, the relationship of Heathcliff and Catherine would never be healthy, for "[t]he total enslavement of the beloved kills the love of the lover. The end is surpassed; if the beloved is transformed into an automation, the lover finds himself alone" (*Being and Nothingness* 343). Therefore, if each of them would fulfill their aim that the other would behave the way they wanted, love would be killed. The right attitude would be to accept otherness, to acknowledge the freedom the other has to make his or her own decisions.

Considering Thormählen's proposition that lasting happiness in *Wuthering Heights* would be experienced only by characters who showed love and forgiving, we may understand the reason Catherine – and then Heathcliff – die unhappy. They were incapable of such feelings, for they had always followed their own inclinations regardless of other people's wishes. Catherine and Heathcliff's devotion for each other was classified by the author as a manifestation of self-love, since they believed in their oneness – for instance, when Catherine declared "Nelly, I *am* Heathcliff!" and when Heathcliff asked "Would you like to live with your soul on the grave?" (Brontë 113; 204). Thormählen added:

> After she has blamed Heathcliff for having—together with Edgar—broken her heart and killed her, Catherine fruitlessly implores him to forgive her, only to be upbraided for her 'infernal selfishness', cruelty and falsehood and to have her accusation thrown back at her, 'You have killed yourself.' Neither party expresses even a passing sense of compassion for the other; in fact, the possibility of pity is explicitly rejected by them both. (Thormählen 639)

Therefore, their lack of empathy for each other even in the most desperate situation they had to face prevented them from attaining happiness. McCarthy reinforced this view when he affirmed that "Catherine, in choosing Edgar, did not make the sort of emotional error that

could be rectified by an elopement or a divorce; rather, she betrayed her own essential nature, betrayed Heathcliff himself in a much deeper way than on a purely romantic level, because she feels herself to be Heathcliff" (McCarthy 58).

According to Scanlon's claims on well-being, it is logical that Catherine would be severely dissatisfied. He claimed well-being included experiential states such as satisfaction and enjoyment; success on one's main aims in life; and "valuable personal relations", such as friendship (Scanlon 125). Catherine chose Edgar over Heathcliff according to her aim to be the wife of an educated and wealthy man and to help Heathcliff with the money she expected to get. She did not consider the possibility of ever ending her friendship with Heathcliff. Catherine then had access to the material goods of the Lintons, but was distanced from her friend, a separation she considered "impracticable" (Brontë 113). The predominant experiential state of her life was suffering, and she found herself alone, without anyone she could really trust and lean on. Catherine lived in disharmony with her fellow ones, since she did not share notions of justifiability with either Edgar, Nelly, Heathcliff or the Victorian society, as represented by its customs and standards. She did not share the same expectations in marriage as her husband, her maidservant doubted she was being sincere about her own death, and her best friend from childhood would not understand her. Catherine presented all the aspects that would be necessary to classify a person's life as unhappy, according to Scanlon's concept of well-being.

In chapter 16, Catherine's baby was born and, two hours after, the mother died, "having never recovered sufficient consciousness to miss Heathcliff, or know Edgar" (207). Nelly affirmed the little girl came as an unwelcomed baby – "It might have wailed out of life, and nobody cared a morsel, during those first hours of existence" (208). Her mother was buried in the open air, as she wanted to be, neither with the Lintons nor with the Earnshaws.

Considering McBride's claim that both Lockwood and Nelly, as narrators, represented the Victorian standards, in opposition to the rebellious Catherine, Catherine's death demonstrated the power of the patriarchy. McBride mentioned that the majority of the critics of *Wuthering Heights* would classify Catherine as self-centered and controlling, while she believed the character created conflict by "challenging the submissive female role" and "patriarchal ownership of women and control over their affections" (McBride 51). In the third chapter of the narrative, Lockwood was confused at all those names he saw scratched on the paint of Catherine's ledge – Catherine Earnshaw, Heathcliff, Linton. According to McBride, Catherine was not just one of these women, but all of them: "She is never tied to one patriarch, and her refusal to have an identity cemented by a man is what creates so much conflict and gains her so much criticism" (52). Catherine positioned herself regardless of the wishes of the men around her, going against the generally accepted male dominance. Thus, the conflict this character raised highlights the constant oppression of women in patriarchal society.

This analysis, then, would consist in the scientific criticism Eagleton advocated for, since it explains *Wuthering Heights* as part of an ideological structure, but also as an agent of transformation. The work was dialectically both tied to the ideology of its time and distanced from it. Through Catherine's decay, *Wuthering Heights* confronted the ideology of the Victorian Age, giving an insight into the social fabric that would have been hidden. It allowed the readers the possibility of feeling the existence of the ideology and freeing themselves from its illusion. In the following chapter, I will be analyzing Catherine's daughter, Cathy, for the morality or immorality of her actions, as well as their consequences.

Chapter III – Cathy Linton

I will start my analysis of Cathy's attitudes with chapter 18, when she would be seen making her first decisions by herself. However, her presentation as a character took place during chapter 2, and it was crucial as a first impression both of her and of Lockwood's biased narration. Cathy was first described as someone who would not care about the formalities of receiving a guest, nor hosting Lockwood the way he has expected – "I bowed and waited, thinking she would bid me take a seat. She looked at me, leaning back in her chair, and remained motionless and mute" (Brontë 31). He then described her appearance:

> She was slender, and apparently scarcely past girlhood: an admirable form, and the most exquisite little face that I have ever held the pleasure of beholding: small features, very fair; flaxen ringlets, or rather golden, hanging loose on her delicate neck; and eyes, had they been agreeable in expression, they would have been irresistible: fortunately for my susceptible heart, the only sentiment they evinced hovered between scorn and a kind of desperation, singularly unnatural to be detected there. (32).

Here we must pay attention to Lockwood's choice of 'unnatural' as an appropriate description for the scorn and desperation he found in Cathy, and how this voices the ideology and customs of the Victorian Age. As both Wollstonecraft and Mill have stated, women were expected to be agreeable.

Mill affirmed, in his text *The Subjection of Women*, that, among the regular domestic tasks a woman would have, she would be "expected to have her time and abilities always at the disposal of everybody" (44). No one would be offended if a man would devote his time to some activity of his choice, as Lockwood does not complain or wonder what Heathcliff

would be doing while he was waiting. However, "[a]re a *woman's* occupations, especially the ones she chooses, ever regarded as excusing her from any of the demands of society?" (44). Mill claims they are not, as we can also conclude from the passage when Lockwood defines Cathy's aim to continue her own tasks in the presence of a visitor as unnatural.

In the fourth chapter of her *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Wollstonecraft informs that, when any virtues were expected from women, these were "patience, docility, goodhumour, and flexibility" (ch. 4). She also affirms that a young woman's library in her time would frequently contain books on the appropriate behavior for women, like Dr. Fordyce's sermons. The sermons would present ideas such as that women "are only like angels when they are young and beautiful", and "[a] virtuous man may have a choleric or a sanguine constitution, be gay or grave, unreproved; be firm till be [sic] is almost over-bearing, or, weakly submissive, have no will or opinion of his own; but all women are to be levelled, by meekness and docility, into one character of yielding softness and gentle compliance" (sec. 5.2). Women were considered to exist to please men and to be subjected to them, so it would be their duty to be agreeable, an attitude which would be considered the natural, the moral one. As stated by Wollstonecraft, "men of sensibility desire in every woman soft features, and a flowing voice, a form, not robust, and demeanour delicate and gentle", and this was why Lockwood's impression of Cathy took a negative turn when he noticed her expression.

Furthermore, I might as well point out that, according to Nietzsche's claims in his *Beyond Good and Evil*, the moral attitude would be the one that does not represent some sort of danger to the community: "How much or how little dangerousness to the community or to equality is contained in an opinion, a condition, an emotion, a disposition, or an endowment – that is now the moral perspective; here again fear is the mother of morals" (*Beyond Good and Evil* 492). Therefore, Lockwood would not accept Cathy's behavior as moral, since it would

represent a danger to men's control over women. We should keep in mind that, according to Marxist criticism, *Wuthering Heights* was anchored in the superstructure of its time, the relations of production that dictated the accepted behavior for each citizen. In the case of women in Victorian England, it was required for them to be submissive.

Eagleton has explained that, to understand a certain ideology, we must analyze the relations between the different classes of a society, with a special attention to where each class stands in relation to the modes of production. He claimed "[i]deology is not in the first place a set of doctrines; it signifies the way men live out their roles in class-society, the values, ideas and images which tie them to their social functions and so prevent them from a true knowledge of society as a whole" (Eagleton, *Marxism* 15). Therefore, if we would describe a situation in only physiological terms – such as Cathy not acting the host and Lockwood being crossed by it –, we would not grasp what had actually happened. For Eagleton, we are able to understand a situation correctly when we acknowledge the beliefs and motivations behind each action. Lockwood has acted in agreement to an ideology, which would legitimize the power of the ruling class by keeping women in a state of subordination.

After being treated with hostility by every person he has encountered in Wuthering Heights, Lockwood still insisted on supposing they were a happy family – "They could not every day sit so grim and taciturn; and it was *impossible*, however ill-tempered they might be, that the universal scowl they wore was their everyday countenance" (34, my italics). Due to the ideology he lived by, as a man in England during the Victorian Age, he could not see any other alternative. He referred to Cathy as Heathcliff's "amiable lady" and, after acknowledging they were not married, pitied Cathy for the prospect of her being married to Hareton instead of a man like himself:

> The clown at my elbow, who is drinking his tea out of a basin and eating his bread with unwashed hands, may be her husband. Heathcliff, junior, of course. Here is the consequence of being buried alive: she has thrown herself away upon that boor, from sheer ignorance that better individuals existed! A sad pity – I must beware how I cause her to regret her choice. (34; 35)

In a subsequent scene, he even tried a judgement based on Cathy's appearance, inferring, ". . . with that face, I am sure you cannot help being good-hearted" (38). He expected, by her looks, that she would help him find his way back home, which she did not.

We may notice here how Lockwood's suppositions were based on the idea that the physical appearance of a person would give hints of her character, which was a common feature in Victorian England culture. As Graeme Tytler has stated in his article "The Presentation of The Second Catherine in *Wuthering Heights*", "*Wuthering Heights* is in many ways an expression of the influence exerted by physiognomic theory on British life and culture, particularly during the last decade of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century" ("The Presentation" 33). Lockwood's judgement in this passage is then significant for foreshadowing our perception of Cathy as 'good-hearted', although we are about to see some erroneous attitudes of hers as a child and teenager. Lockwood refers to Cathy's beauty several times during the narrative, as does Nelly. This, according to Tytler, relates to the idea that beauty would be a sign of moral virtue. This perspective on appearance was part of the ideology by which the Victorian England population lived, and we will see that Cathy was much more remarked for her beauty by other characters than her mother had been.

As Nietzsche has affirmed, moral value has first been applied to men themselves and only in a later period applied to actions – "The noble type of man regards *himself* as a

determiner of values" (*Beyond Good and Evil* 579). Therefore, among the noble caste of the society, there was the beginning of the idea that they were the good people and their actions were good, in opposition to the low-minded, the plebeian. Being good was synonym of aristocrat, of having "a privileged soul", of being beautiful, happy, and loved by the gods (*The Genealogy of Morals* 637). Through this analysis, we can notice the influence of physiognomic theory in this beginning of the antithesis between good and evil, which would contribute to Lockwood's judgement of Cathy as good-hearted because of her attractiveness. According to Sartre, Lockwood's perspective would be wrong, once "existence precedes essence" (*Existentialism* 20). According to the French philosopher's ideas, Cathy was supposed to define herself through her actions, which is what she did in this passage, contradicting the perception the visitor first had of her.

In addition, in her article "'Out of my brother's power: Gender, Class, and Rebellion in *Wuthering Heights*", Abbie L. Cory has stated the character of Lockwood would represent middle-class values, while both Catherine Earnshaw and her daughter would be disruptive of gender roles and bourgeois marriage. According to the author, the narrative "depicts a community – the locality of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange and many of its people – that is a microcosm of rebellion, a realm in which uprisings against figures in positions of power regularly occur, where the subordinate do not remain in their places, and where dominant modes of power are disparaged", which would be an interpretation in agreement with Marxist criticism (Cory 6). The apprehension in the text was demonstrated through the way Lockwood was repelled by Cathy Linton's gaze. He was threatened by the woman's refusal to be treated as an object. As the dominant classes, who would fear Heathcliff's economic ascendance, he felt threatened about losing his position of control.

This view was reinforced by Beth Newman in her analysis of the power of the female gaze, in her article "'The Situation of the Looker-On': Gender, Narration, and Gaze in

Wuthering Heights". Newman has claimed Western culture had the gaze constructed as a male privilege, "a means of relegating women (or 'Woman') to the status of object" (Newman 1031). Therefore, in attracting the attention of Lockwood as well as responding to his gaze, Cathy has disturbed the man's pleasure in gazing: "Through Catherine, the text parodically inscribes the dynamics involved in the gaze and articulates the psychological fact that when a woman looks back she asserts her 'existence' as a subject, her place outside the position of object to which the male gaze relegates her and by which it defines her as 'woman'" (1032). Cathy has asserted her existence and did not let Lockwood perceive her as his object of delight, and this was what essentially made him uneasy, for an assertive woman was not expected in the ideology in which he lived.

According to Beauvoir, the ideal of beauty men would look for in a woman was variable, but what persisted was their demand that women would "present the inert and passive qualities of an object", for they were destined to be possessions (183). Even fashion has dictated for women a state of immobility: "Chinese women with bound feet could scarcely walk, the polished fingernails of the Hollywood star deprive her of her hands; high heels, corsets, panniers, farthingales, crinolines were intended less to accentuate the curves of the feminine body than to augment its incapacity" (183). Lockwood, as the majority of men in Victorian England, would then expect to gaze at Cathy without being gazed in return, as if he was appreciating a work of art. For these reasons, the importance of this first moment of the narrative is undeniable. As affirmed by Tytler, "the presentation of Cathy is one of the signal aspects of Emily Brontë's art as a novelist", thus essential for my analysis of her characters ("The Presentation" 26).

After Lockwood was served some tea at the Heights, he waited irritably for someone to solve his problem of the necessity of a guide to go back to the Grange. Cathy was leaning over the fire, distracted in burning some matches. Joseph looked at the scene and exclaimed

“Aw woonder hagn yah can faishion tuh stand thear i’idleness un war, when all on ’em’s goan aght! Bud yah ’re a nowt, and it’s noa use talking – yah’ll niver mend uh yer ill ways; bud, goa raight tuh t’ divil, like yer mother afore ye!” (Brontë 37). Cathy then answered him:

> ‘You scandalous old hypocrite! . . . Are you not afraid of being carried away bodily, whenever you mention the devil’s name? I warn you to refrain from provoking me, or I’ll ask your adbuction as a special favour. Stop, look here, Joseph,’ she continued, taking a long, dark book from a shelf. ‘I’ll show you how far I’ve progressed in the Black Art: I shall soon be competent to make a clear house of it. The red cow didn’t die by chance; and your rheumatism can hardly be reckoned among providential visitations!’ (37).

Joseph then called Cathy wicked and supplicated “may the Lord deliver us from evil!”, to which the girl replied “No, reprobate! you are a castaway – be off, or I’ll hurt you seriously! I’ll have you all modelled in wax and clay; and the first who passes the limits I fix, shall – I’ll not say what he shall be done to – but, you’ll see! Go, I’m looking at you!” (37). Lockwood claimed that Cathy, in this moment, “put a mock malignity into her beautiful eyes” and Joseph left praying and calling her wicked again.

According to Albert Myburgh, in his article “Cathy’s Subversive ‘Black Art’ in Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*”, the witch motif here was used “to explore the novel’s depiction of nineteenth-century anxieties surrounding threats to patriarchy, and of expectations around women’s domesticity and role in society” (Myburgh 61). We see Cathy being called a witch a few times by men in the novel, but she appropriated this role to assert her position in a place she was destitute of her patrimony, as well as physically and mentally abused. In this passage, Joseph objected to Cathy’s ‘idleness’ and affirmed, according to his religious beliefs, that she would be predestined for damnation, as her mother was. However,

he only interprets Cathy as a sinful woman according to the religious lens through which he sees the world. As Nietzsche has claimed in *The Genealogy of Morals*, "'sinfulness' in man is not an actual fact, but rather merely the interpretation of a fact, of a physiological discomfort, - a discomfort seen through a moral religious perspective" (*The Geneology* 756). Cathy, on her turn, used this perspective, which she does not seem to share, to defend herself through frightening Joseph. Furthermore, she used the power of the threat her gaze represented, threatening Joseph by making sure he knew she was looking at him.

Beauvoir has affirmed that, through the development of the Christian dogma, it was emphasized that women would possess some kind of dangerous character. In the Bible, Adam was led to sin by Eve and from the time of Gregory VI, celibacy was imposed on priests, due to the supposed danger of being a prey to women – "Christianity poured out its scorn upon them, but accepted them as a necessary evil" (Beauvoir 126). The author has stated that woman as the Other was a concept in the heart of every man, as part of a myth. She explained:

> It is always difficult to describe a myth; it cannot be grasped or encompassed; it haunts the human consciousness without ever appearing before it in fixed form. The myth is so various, so contradictory, that at first its unity is not discerned . . . woman is at once Eve and the Virgin Mary. . . . she is man's prey, his downfall, she is everything that he is not and that he longs for, his negation and his raison d'être. And here lies the reason why woman incarnates no stable concept; through her is made unceasingly the passage from hope to frustration, from hate to love, from good to evil, from evil to good. Under whatever aspect we may consider her, it is this ambivalence that strikes us first. (169)

Beauvoir added that, in most of the popular representations of Death, it was a woman. Furthermore, there was the myth of Virginity, created in man's hesitation between the feelings of fear and desire, "between the fear of being in the power of uncontrollable forces and the wish to win them over" (178). The Christian, for the Feminist writer, was divided within himself, through the separation between body and soul. Since "sin makes of the body the enemy of the soul", all desire related to the flesh would seem evil (192). Thus, woman would be related to nature and to what man would not understand: "vale of blood, open rose, siren, the curve of a hill, she represents to man the fertile soil, the sap, the material beauty and the soul of the world. She can hold the keys to *poetry*; she can be *mediatrix* between this world and the beyond: grace or oracle, star or sorceress, she opens the door to the supernatural, the surreal" (272). This perspective on the myth of women explains then the use of the motif of the witch in *Wuthering Heights*, especially as it was used by Joseph, notably a Christian character, against Cathy, a woman that challenged the standards for her gender in the Victorian Age.

Through my analysis of Catherine Earnshaw in chapter III of this research, we could see the main reason why Joseph made such a negative judgement of both mother and daughter was that they resisted his expectations regarding the behavior of a woman, such as reading the Bible, doing household tasks and being obedient to men. Cathy made use of the motif of the witch in her favor, as a source of power over the ones that abused her. According to Myburgh, "Cathy's appropriation of the 'Black Art' shows how superstitions that were initially encouraged, and that then evolved to protect patriarchal power, can be turned against that power" (Myburgh 69). Therefore, *Wuthering Heights* explored the possibility women would have of subverting the patriarchal system by means of its own anxieties. In addition, considering Sartre's claims, both characters managed to define themselves through their

actions. They prove to be subjects apart from the ideal the others would have expected them to reflect, what men would have expected women's essence to be.

In chapter 18, when the recounting of Cathy's childhood began, we were informed that Edgar had always avoided any contact between his daughter and the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights, and the girl grew up without even knowing what was beyond the hills she saw from her window. However, Cathy was a curious child and wanted to go places where she had not been before. Therefore, she was always insisting to go beyond the hills. When she turned thirteen years old, her aunt Isabella died and Edgar had to bring Linton, her son, from London, where the two had been living during the past few years.

In her father's absence and without communicating Nelly, Cathy rode her horse until she ended up in Wuthering Heights. Nelly narrated ". . . she sprang up as gay as a fairy, sheltered by her wide-brimmed hat, and gauze veil from the July sun, and trotted off with a merry laugh, mocking my cautious counsel to avoid galloping, and come back early. The naughty thing never made her appearance at tea" (Brontë 239). According to Victorian standards, Cathy's attitude would be considered immoral. We have seen through Wollstonecraft and Mill's claims that a girl was supposed to be obedient and to content herself with a sedentary style of life, at home playing with dolls. Above everything, she was not supposed to disobey her father. According to Wollstonecraft, girls would learn since infancy to submit themselves to authority. Indolence and inactivity were cultivated as a sort of delicacy and girls were condemned to a sedentary life, which "weakens the muscles and relaxes the nerves", opposed to the boys, who played in the open air (Wollstonecraft ch. 3). According to the author, parental authority would substitute reason in raising a daughter, and this blind submission would not be required only towards parents, but also in relation to public opinion.

Wollstonecraft, Beauvoir and Mill's claims on obedience will be of great importance to my analysis of Cathy's development as a character. Wollstonecraft considered that the duty of obeying a parent only based on his status as a parent would prepare the mind for "a slavish submission to any power but reason" (ch. 11). In addition, this principle represented a selfish view of the child as property, and was exercised on girls even stronger than on boys. According to Mill, "[a]ll women are brought up from their earliest years to believe that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men: not self-will and government by self-control, but submission and accepting control by someone else" (9). In consequence of this upbringing, as Wollstonecraft has affirmed, women were taught to blindly submit to their parents and would be "prepared for the slavery of marriage" (ch. 11). In this chapter, we begin to see, as it will be even clearer in the next ones, how Cathy resists to these standards, an attitude which will shape her future courtship with Hareton as something disruptive of the social structure in which she lived.

When Nelly found her in Wuthering Heights, she recounted that Cathy had just met Hareton and was confused about the boy's attitudes because, if he was a servant, he must have treated her as 'miss' and done what she demanded, such as getting her horse for her – "He talked about 'our horse' and 'our folk'. I thought he had been the owner's son. And he never said, Miss: he should have done, shouldn't he, if he's a servant?" (Brontë 242). The maid of the house, Zillah, stated Hareton would not serve Cathy because he was her cousin, at which the girl laughed and regarded the statement as mockery: "'*He* my cousin!' cried Cathy, with a scornful laugh . . . 'Papa is gone to fetch my cousin from London: my cousin is a gentleman's son" (243). Before addressing him as a servant, what led to his rude response, Nelly said that Cathy had appreciated Hareton's company. However, she denied the idea that he could be her cousin now.

According to Victorian moral standards, we could not consider Cathy's behavior as immoral, since she distanced herself from someone that seemed to be from a different social class and level of education. This would agree with the ideology her family lived by, which would be, according to Marxist criticism, a mirror to the class struggle present in the social and political context of the Victorian Age. However, it would not be compatible with the selfless love that belongs to Christianity. Nelly, voicing these values that were so present in the manner she acted, said "people can have many cousins and of all sorts, Miss Cathy, without being any the worse for it" (243).

As affirmed by Wollstonecraft, this attitude would be a consequence of the education Cathy received, which would make her repeat "all the crude notions [she] ha[s] taken upon trust" and her reasoning would be enslaved to prejudice (sec. 5.5). According to Tytler, Cathy was brought up in "a very protected, not to say severely sequestered, environment" ("The Presentation" 27). She then expected her relations outside home to be as the ones she had with her father, nursemaid and servants. For the author, Cathy's treatment of Hareton, for instance, did not show meanness, but rather that she had not been taught how to deal with people that were considered her social inferiors. Her decisions were influenced by what she heard from the adults around her and from people she had an affection for, such as Linton. As it would be stated by Marxist criticism, she was trained in "certain modes of self-identification" that would form her reasoning inside the boundaries of the ideology her family lived by, which appeared in her discourse (Rivkin and Ryan 237).

According to Scanlon's Contractualism, we could not consider Cathy's actions immoral either. Cathy would be regarded as innocent in her speech, by "acting in a way that is justifi*able* to [others], on grounds they could not reasonably reject" (Scanlon 168) – considering 'others' as people from her same social class. However, as Sartre would propose, Cathy was responsible for treating Hareton with hostility. We cannot discard her social

condition as a factor that would influence her decision, but it was still her choice. And, as we will see in the next chapters, this choice did entail its consequences, shaping how her relationship with Hareton would develop.

In chapter 19, Edgar and his nephew Linton arrived from London. The boy was disagreeable to everybody's company and refused to sit in a chair to have supper with the family. He took his food to the sofa next to the fire and seated there alone weeping. Cathy then brought her supper to the sofa to seat with her cousin. According to Nelly, "she had resolved to make a pet of her little cousin, as she would have him to be; and she commenced stroking his curls, and kissing his cheek, and offering him tea in her saucer, like a baby" (Brontë 249). This caused Linton to dry his eyes and smile faintly. Here, although acknowledging what happened in the previous chapter, we can notice what Tytler has called Cathy's "quite extraordinary capacity for love" ("The Presentation" 31). She demonstrated the altruism that was valuable in the Christian culture in which she was inserted, as well as the affectionate behavior that was expected from women.

Here I pass on to chapter 21, when Cathy has reached her sixteen years of age and her cousin has been living in Wuthering Heights, since Heathcliff had demanded he would have his son with him. After receiving permission from her father, Cathy asked Nelly to take her to see a colony of moor-game. Nelly narrated "[s]he was a happy creature, and an angel, in those days. It's a pity she could not be content" (Brontë 262). She ran in the fields, leaving Nelly behind, and ended up meeting Heathcliff. The man persuaded her to visit Wuthering Heights so she could see her cousin. Nelly recounted that Linton and Cathy seemed so happy to see each other – "she kissed him fervently, and they gazed with wonder at the change time had wrought in the appearance of each" (265). Having talked to Hareton as well, they found amusement in laughing at him for his being illiterate: ". . . the two youngsters broke into a noisy fit of merriment; my giddy Miss being delighted to discover that she might turn his

strange talk to matter of amusement" (271). Cathy once again has shed light into the class struggle present in her society as she distanced herself from the lower social classes, seeking out the company of those from her same class. Like Eagleton has affirmed, "[t]he social relations between men, in other words, are bound up with the way they produce their material life" (*Marxism* 4). Thus, the fact that Cathy was from a dominant class would condition her social behavior in general. However, again, she would be choosing to disrespect and to talk down on a person due to her narrow upbringing at the Grange, something at odds with Christian precepts.

Cathy had difficulty understanding why her father would not let her see Linton. She believed Heathcliff had good intentions, since he had claimed to want the cousins together. She said to Edgar "But Mr Heathcliff was quite cordial, papa . . . *You* are the one to be blamed: he is willing to let *us* be friends, at least; Linton and I; and you are not" (Brontë 273). The girl then cried for Linton, because he would expect her the next day in Wuthering Heights and her father would make her break her promise. Nelly, persuaded by Cathy's sadness, agreed to let her send a letter to her cousin, even though Edgar had demanded that they would cut communication.

According to the Victorian ideal for women, Cathy would have to obey her father without questioning his orders. Therefore, she acted immorally. On the other hand, we can observe, through these passages, Cathy's constant need to fulfill her promises. In supplicating Nelly to send her note to Linton, she declared "I'm not crying for myself, Ellen . . . it is for him. He expected to see me again tomorrow, and there, he'll be so disappointed: and he'll wait for me, and I shan't come!" (275). This, according to Tytler, illustrated Cathy's moral integrity through how much she was concerned with truthfulness. As the author has sustained, "a promise for Cathy sometimes entails disobedience to her elders, that is because the promise is kept out of compassion for the person to whom it has been given" ("An

Amoral Novel" 203). The promises here must be evaluated considering the motives that would underlie them. For Tytler, the novel suggests that "morality is not simply a question of being respectably conscious of the dichotomy between virtue and vice", but it is about being prepared to go beyond this dichotomy when there is the need (205). Cathy chose to sacrifice truthfulness sometimes, either to benefit Linton or Nelly, but this does not undermine her moral integrity. In addition, according to the claims made by Sartre, Cathy would be acting in good-faith, once she did not take refuge behind her passions. On the contrary, she justified her actions as a minimization of the risk of hurting another person's feelings. She would be acting morally according to Scanlon's Contractualism as well, since she has told lies for a reason that would be justifiable to others.

Nelly narrated that, in the passing of some weeks, she observed her mistress always in corners with books and hiding what she was reading when someone came near. The maid then took the key from a secret drawer Cathy had and opened it, finding love-letters between the girl and Linton. This led to a quarrel between her and her mistress, but Cathy begged her to keep the letters secret from her father – ". . . she poured out further frantic entreaties that I would burn them – do anything rather than to show them" (Brontë 279). In the next morning, Nelly sent a note to Wuthering Heights saying Linton must not send anything to Cathy anymore.

Cathy's action would again represent disobedience towards her father, which would be immoral according to the ideology of the Victorian Age. Also, it would be an act of bad-faith according to Sartre's reasoning, since she had no justification for Nelly not to burn the letters besides her passions. In addition to this, Cathy would be risking her reputation becoming "a prey to love", which according to Wollstonecraft's ideas would degrade the girl forever, once she would be breaking the "duty of respecting herself" (ch. 8). According to Christian precepts, women would be required to preserve their chastity and be modest, for

their body was called the “Temple of the living God” (ch. 7). Therefore, they would aspire to be as pure as God was. However, Wollstonecraft has claimed this view consisted in confounding virtue with reputation, valorizing what was thought of women more than whom they really were. Furthermore, this was exclusive to women, for men would preserve their reputation even after committing some act of vice. For women, it would be impossible to recover their reputation returning to virtue, and “with chastity all is lost that is respectable in woman” (ch. 4). Wollstonecraft called attention to the fact that the honor of a woman would not depend on her own will and reputation would be based on “the shew instead of the substance” (ch. 8). So, this was a delicate moment for Cathy, since she was about to risk losing the only thing that would make her valuable to society.

In chapter 22, we see that Edgar has developed some illness, and has begun to spend most of the time in his bed. Cathy was now sad for both the situation with her cousin and with him. Nelly recounted this time they were walking in Thrushcross Grange:

> I requested my young lady to forego her ramble because I was certain of showers. She refused; and I unwillingly donned a cloak, and took my umbrella to accompany her on a stroll to the bottom of the park: a formal walk which she generally affected if low-spirited – and that she invariably was when Mr Edgar had been worse than ordinary; . . . She went sadly on: there was no running or bounding now, though the chill wind might well have tempted her to a race. And often, from the side of my eye, I could detect her raising a hand, and brushing something off her cheek. (Brontë 281)

However sad she could be for the end of her romance with Linton, Cathy told Nelly that her worry would always be the most for her father: “I care for nothing in comparison with papa” (283). Suddenly, Cathy’s hat was taken by the wind to the other side of the gate. She then

climbed some rocks to try to reach it, but ended up locked outside. While Nelly was looking for the key to open the gate for her mistress, Heathcliff found the girl and threatened her:

> I've got your letters, and if you give me any pertness I'll send them to your father. I presume you grew weary of the amusement and dropped it, didn't you? Well, you dropped Linton with it, into a Slough of Despond. He was in earnest: in love, really. As true as I live, he's dying for you; . . . he gets worse daily; and he'll be under the sod before summer, unless you restore him! (285)

Nelly sent Heathcliff away, rescued her mistress and closed the gate behind them. She then claimed to Cathy that what Heathcliff had said was a lie, but affirmed ". . . Catherine's heart was clouded now in double darkness. Her features were so sad, they did not seem hers: she evidently regarded what she had heard as every syllable true" (287). Cathy ended up planning a visit to her cousin, at least to make sure her uncle had not told the truth – "'You may be right, Ellen,' she answered; 'but I shall never feel at ease till I know" (287).

Her actions would be considered moral according to the Christian beliefs that embedded Victorian standards. As Nietzsche has claimed, Christians have developed a 'bad conscience', which would be the result of a latent instinct of freedom, "this instinct of freedom forced back, trodden back, imprisoned within itself" (*The Genealogy* 704-705). It is the feeling of owing a debt to the Christian God, which has grown in the same proportion as the belief in Christian dogma. According to the German philosopher, "[t]he appearance of the Christian god, as the record god up to this time, has for that very reason brought equally into the world the record amount of guilt consciousness" (709). And it would be the bad conscience, as a "will for self-abuse" that would provide the conditions for having altruism as a value (706). Therefore, Cathy has acted morally according to the religious beliefs her family had and acted in good faith, for she had felt guilty for having probably caused

suffering to another person, justifying then her altruistic decision of going to Wuthering Heights to see him.

Chapter 23 was when Cathy visited her cousin, who was disagreeable and complaining a lot – "You should have come, instead of writing. It tired me dreadfully, writing those long letters." (Brontë 289). Cathy made an effort to be kind to him, still showing feelings of guilt. The cousins ended up having a fight over their fathers, discussing who would be telling the truth about the other. Cathy pushed Linton's chair and he fell, starting a long suffocating cough. He claimed Cathy stroke him and, seeing her cousin's health state, Cathy was desolate. She apologized, but he would not accept it: "you've hurt me so, that I shall lie awake all night, choking with this cough!" (293). After it was implied by Linton that it would be better if Cathy was gone, she gave up staying. Nelly narrated:

> . . . she finally made a movement to the door and I followed. We were recalled by a scream. Linton had slid from his seat on to the hearthstone, and lay writhing in the mere perverseness of an indulged plague of a child, determined to be as grievous and harassing as it can. I thoroughly gauged his disposition from his behavior, and saw at once it would be folly to attempt humouring him. Not so my companion: she ran back in terror, knelt down, and cried, and soothed, and entreated, till he grew quiet from lack of breath: by no means from compunction at distressing her. (293)

Cathy ended up singing ballads to Linton while he leaned on her lap. Here, she exercised the affection that would be expected of her as a woman, being a sweet companion to men whenever they wished for her company. And it would not be surprising, according to Wollstonecraft's claims, that the two cousins would be fond of each other:

> Love is, in a great degree, an arbitrary passion, and will reign, like some other stalking mischiefs, by its own authority, without deigning to reason; and it may also be easily

> distinguished from esteem, the foundation of friendship, because it is often excited by evanescent beauties and graces, though, to give an energy to the sentiment, something more solid must deepen their impression and set the imagination to work, to make the most fair- the first good. Common passions are excited by common qualities. – Men look for beauty and the simper of good-humoured docility: women are captivated by easy manners; a gentleman-like man seldom fails to please them . . . (Wollstonecraft ch. 6)

Therefore, it would be logical, in Victorian society that they would be together. Linton was educated and a gentleman's son, and Cathy had always been remarked for her beauty, and was now showing her docility. Furthermore, considering the Marxist approach of *Wuthering Heights* as a mirror to the Victorian Age, this would be the option perceived as natural in its political context, for Linton and Cathy were from the same social class. For Wollstonecraft, in a successful marriage, this atmosphere of passion would "subside into friendship – into that tender intimacy, which is the best refuge from care" (ch. 6). But this expectative will not be fulfilled in the next chapters.

After this visit, Nelly reminded Cathy she was not allowed to come back, to what she answered she would not be stopped: "The Grange is not a prison, Ellen, and you are not my jailer. And besides, I'm almost seventeen: I'm a woman" (Brontë 295). In the final part of this chapter, Nelly narrated she got sick and Cathy has begun to nurse both her and Edgar – "The moment Catherine left Mr Linton's room, she appeared at my bedside. Her day was divided between us; no amusement usurped a minute: she neglected her meals, her studies, and her play; and she was the fondest nurse that ever watched" (297). According to Victorian standards, Cathy would be acting morally when she decided to make sure Linton was fine, for she would be reaching out for someone whose well-being might depend on her, even though she had disobeyed her father. Every decision she has made was chiefly in concern of others,

showing the selfless love that was so valued by Christianity. According to Sartre's claims, Cathy would be acting in good faith when she made such a decision, and there would be no moral code that could have defined *a priori* what she ought to have done, so her choice should be analyzed considering the specific situation in which she was.

In chapter 24, after recovering from her illness, Nelly found out Cathy had been sneaking out every evening. When confronted, Cathy begged: "Promise not to be angry, and you shall know the very truth. I hate to hide it" (300), before she confessed:

> I've been to Wuthering Heights, Ellen, and I've never missed going a day since you fell ill; except thrice before, and twice after you left your room. I gave Michael books and pictures to prepare Minny every evening, and to put her back in the stable: you mustn't scold *him* either, mind. I was at the Heights by half-past six, and generally stayed till half-past eight, and then galloped home. It was not to amuse myself that I went: I was often wretched all the time. Now and then, I was happy: once in a week perhaps. (300)

Here, however immoral Cathy's attitude might be considered according to the standards of obedience the Victorian Age enforced on women, she has shown a great deal of the altruism that is highly valued by the Christian dogma. According to Tytler, "Cathy's moral integrity is noticeable even in comparatively small matters" ("The Presentation" 32). For instance, in this passage when she claimed she had given books to Michael for helping her with her excursions, she said "so he offered, if I would lend him books out of the library, to do what I wished: but I preferred giving him my own, and that satisfied him better" (Brontë 300). She would rather abstain from involving her father's property in business he would not approve, and this is one of the attitudes that shows us Cathy's moral strength. In addition, this act also illustrates Cathy's compatibility with the ideal Sartre has proposed for a person of good-faith,

since she takes responsibility for her choices. The attitude of giving her own books instead of her father's would symbolize how Cathy perceived what she was doing as her own choice, therefore she would have to face the consequences of it alone.

Cathy's attitudes were at odds with the patriarchal system in which she lived, once Beauvoir has claimed that, ever since infancy, women would receive every stimulus for them to believe in masculine superiority. Cathy would be raised in a state of total dependence to her father and then to her husband, having as one of her most idealized features a lack of virility: "The ideal woman is perfectly stupid and perfectly submissive" (Beauvoir 277). According to the French author, Christian ideology contributed to the oppression of women, for "they could take only a secondary place as participants in worship" (121). Women were relieved from any painful tasks, but also from all responsibility. Therefore, it would be uncommon to see, among young women, attitudes like Cathy's, which showed a strong sense of responsibility and proactivity.

In her recounting of the visits to the heights, Cathy told Nelly the fun she and Linton had laughing at Hareton: "He imagined himself to be as accomplished as Linton, I suppose, because he could spell his own name; and was marvellously [sic] discomfited that I didn't think the same" (Brontë 303). Nelly then reprehended her: "To sneer at his imperfect attempt was very bad breeding. Had *you* been brought up in his circumstances, would you be less rude? He was as quick and as intelligent a child as ever you were" (304). According to Victorian standards, Cathy would be favoring the ideology of her social class, as it was the dominant one. However, Nelly has voiced the Christian dogma of charity with the less wealthy and educated. As Tytler has stated, Cathy presented the narrow-mindedness that comes from such a privileged upbringing as she had. This functions as an influence to her behavior, but we cannot discard her individual choice in the matter.

Cathy narrated that, during one of her visits to Wuthering Heights, she was frightened by the violent way Hareton treated Linton and ran away – "I galloped home more than half out of my senses" (306) – only coming back three days later, planning to reach Linton's room unnoticed. However, when she visited Linton, he attributed to her the blame for Hareton's behavior: ". . . I beheld Linton laid on a little sofa, reading one of my books. But he would neither speak to me nor look at me, through a whole hour, Ellen: he has such an unhappy temper. And what quite confounded me, when he did open his mouth it was to utter the falsehood that I had occasioned the uproar, and Hareton was not to blame!" (307). Cathy then left, spending the rest of her day at home. She went to Wuthering Heights a next time, but with a resolution: "As you don't like me, Linton, and as you think I come on purpose to hurt you, and pretend that I do so every time, this is our last meeting" (308). Linton then justified his actions saying he felt worthless because of the way his father treated him and he regretted his behavior towards Cathy. She claimed to Nelly:

> I felt he spoke the truth; and I felt I must forgive him: and, though he should quarrel the next moment, I must forgive him again. . . . About three times, I think, we have been merry and hopeful, as we were the first evening; the rest of my visits were dreary and troubled: now with his selfishness and spite, and now with his sufferings: but I've learned to endure the former with nearly as little resentment as the latter. (308-309)

Again, Cathy's strong sense of morality was shown through this passage, in which she did not only forgive Linton, but learned to endure some suffering in a selfless act of patience. As claimed by Beauvoir, women were required to "forget self and to love" (275). However, it is important to notice Wollstonecraft's statement that "girls very early learn the lessons which they afterwards practise on their husbands" (ch. 11). So, Cathy would be repeating outside her home the ability to forgive she had learned from Edgar. We saw he had been a loving

father, letting Cathy be with Linton if that was what she wanted, although Heathcliff was his worst enemy.

In chapter 26, Cathy visited Linton again, and his health state was worse. Nelly explained her mistress's feelings about the situation: "His lack of interest in the subjects she started, and his equal incapacity to contribute to her entertainment, were so obvious, that she could not conceal her disappointment" (Brontë 316). Linton asked her to report to Edgar he was feeling better, but she answered "I'll tell him that *you* say so, Linton. I couldn't affirm that you are" (317). After having decided there was no reason for her to stay, she rose up saying: "For today we must part . . . And I won't conceal that I have been sadly disappointed with our meeting, though I'll mention it to nobody but you: not that I stand in awe of Mr Heathcliff!" (319). According to Victorian social standards, Cathy's actions would be considered moral, because she refused to lie to her father, being an obedient daughter as well as a good Christian, honoring her parents[8].

Furthermore, as Tytler has it, we can see one more time the degree of Cathy's moral strength through how much she is concerned with truthfulness. Although her relations with people outside the Grange were marked by naivety, "it is a testimony to Emily Brontë's skill as a novelist that she should also show us a Cathy occasionally disclosing a certain strength of character whose existence we might otherwise have scarcely surmised in the contexts referred to hitherto" ("The Presentation" 30). She refused to keep up with a relationship that might not bring any positive results, as well as to discuss private matters of her friendship with Linton with anybody but him. Once more, we see Cathy has acted in agreement with Sartre's claims, for she did not refrain from assuming the responsibility for her own choices.

[8] "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (*Authorized (King James) Version,* Exodus 20:12)

Cathy opened up with Linton and tried to have the best relationship with him as she could, but without having any other person hurt in consequence of her decisions.

In chapter 27, we know through Nelly's narration that Edgar has gotten worse. Cathy has continued to visit Linton, as she had promised him. Seeing his unamiable temper, she asked: "*Why* won't you be candid? . . . Why cannot you say at once, you don't want me? It is strange Linton, that for the second time, you have brought me here on purpose, apparently, to distress us both, and for no reason besides!" (Brontë 321). Nelly affirmed her mistress's patience had run out, and she continued to confront her cousin:

> My father *is* very ill . . . and why am I called from his bedside – why didn't you send to absolve me from my promise, when you wished I wouldn't keep it? Come! I desire an explanation: playing and trifling are completely banished out of my mind; and I can't dance attendance on your affectations, now! . . . get off! I shall return home: it is folly dragging you from the hearthstone, and pretending – what do we pretend? Let go my frock! If I pitied you for crying and looking so very frightened, you should spurn such piety. . . . Rise, and don't degrade yourself into an abject reptile – *don't*. (322).

Linton claimed he was being threatened by his father, and was afraid to tell his cousin the real reason he had for wanting her there. Cathy then exclaimed "keep your secret, *I'm* no coward – save yourself: I'm not afraid!" (323). Here, Cathy's actions once again demonstrate her moral integrity, and also her courage, as it was stated by Tytler. The author claims it is "at this late stage of her adolescence that we come to realize that Cathy's presentation has all along been that of a fundamentally fearless person" ("The Presentation" 35). Also, her discourse to Linton emphasized her loyalty to her father, which was well praised by Christian dogma.

In addition, she has showed a great degree of maturity giving Linton an ultimatum and demanding he would be honest to her about his feelings. Cathy has well represented the ideal claimed by Wollstonecraft, when the author affirmed "I do not wish [women] to have power over men; but over themselves". Cathy refused to be made a fool by Linton: she would not endure the injustice of being taken from her father when he needed her, to be with someone that would not give the proper value to the effort she was making. According to Wollstonecraft, "[t]he being who patiently endures injustice, and silently bears insults, will soon become unjust, or unable to discern right from wrong" (sec. 5.1). She affirmed it would be unnatural for someone to be unmoved by such an attitude:

> Of what materials can that heart be composed, which can melt when insulted, and instead of revolting at injustice, kiss the rod? Is it unfair to infer that her virtue is built on narrow views and selfishness, who can caress a man, with true feminine softness, the very moment when he treats her tyrannically? Nature never dictated such insincerity; – and, though prudence of this sort be termed a virtue, morality becomes vague when any part is supposed to rest on falsehood. (sec. 5.1)

Therefore, we can conclude Cathy manifested the characteristics Wollstonecraft considered essential for women to go beyond their status of subversion to men. Cathy was revolted by injustice and had the courage and resolution to demand respect. This attitude shows a rupture in the ideology of the Victorian Age, which would include submission from women. Through her actions, Cathy affirmed herself as an independent woman.

Still in the same chapter, Cathy and Nelly ended up locked in Wuthering Heights by Heathcliff, who talked openly about the violence he would like to inflict on the girl and on Linton: "Had I been born where laws are less strict, and tastes less dainty, I should treat myself to a slow vivisection of those two, as an evening's amusement" (Brontë 326). Cathy

exclaimed “I’m not afraid of you!”, though Nelly said she probably did not hear this part of his speech (326). Cathy then tried to take the key of the front door from Heathcliff’s hand. This led to the following violent scene:

> ‘We *will* go!’ she repeated, exerting her utmost efforts to cause the iron muscles to relax; and finding that her nails made no impression, she applied her teeth pretty sharply. Heathcliff glanced at me a glance that kept me from interfering a moment. Catherine was too intent on his fingers to notice his face. He opened them suddenly, and resigned the object of dispute; but, ere she had well secured it, he seized her with the liberated hand, and, pulling her on his knee, administered with the other a shower of terrific slaps on both sides of the head each sufficient to have fulfilled his threat, had she been able to fall. (327)

Cathy then cried in Nelly’s lap. After Heathcliff left the room, Nelly and Cathy demanded that Linton would tell them what his father’s plan was. Cathy exclaimed “Yes, Linton; you must tell . . . It was for your sake I came; and it will be wickedly ungrateful if you refuse” (328). Here, we can notice that Cathy not only takes responsibility for her own actions, but demands the same behavior from others. What she asked Linton to do was in agreement with Sartre’s claims, once Linton has acted in bad faith when he used his father’s threats as justification for bringing Cathy to the house. He must acknowledge the fact that he made the decision to help his father, and he must face the consequences thereof.

According to Sartre, obeying someone’s orders is still a choice, because it reveals an intention. What one has as a cause for taking an action depends on the meaning this person has given to this cause. Therefore, Linton would obey his father based on the meaning of this obedience to him, as Heathcliff’s violence would represent something “not worth the trouble of being tolerated” (*Being and Nothingness* 440). However, what represents an obstacle for a

person may not be so for another, as we can imagine, through Cathy's anger, that she would not make the same decisions as Linton. For the French philosopher, the argument Linton gave of being passively obedient to external demands would be acting in bad faith, since it would be an effort to free himself from the anguish of the responsibility for his choices. This is impossible, for the author claims "we are not free to cease being free" (415).

Furthermore, according to Scanlon's claims, the conflict here would be that Linton acted in a way that was not justifiable to Cathy. What he gave her as reasons for his action were things she reasonably rejected. Therefore, for Cathy, Linton has acted immorally. This type of discussion was why Scanlon considered that "we have good reason to want to live with others who share our notions of justifiability", which we can see was not the case between the two cousins (176).

Linton declared his father wanted the cousins to marry, and this was why he was keeping Cathy in Wuthering Heights until the next morning, when they would have their wedding. Cathy began to look for a way out of the house, and Linton supplicated "Oh! darling Catherine! you mustn't go, and leave me, after all. You *must* obey my father, you *must*!" (Brontë 329). Cathy replied "I must obey my own . . . and relieve him from this cruel suspense" (329).

Heathcliff was back to the living room and Cathy promised him she would marry Linton, if her uncle would allow her to go back home to spend the night with Edgar. Heathcliff then discouraged her speaking about her father's love for her mother: "Catherine, his happiest days were over when your days began. He cursed you, I dare say, for coming into the world (I did, at least)" (331). After this statement and Heathcliff's affirmations about Linton's bad temper and violent nature – "He'll undertake to torture any number of cats if their teeth be drawn, and their claws pared" (332) –, Nelly reminded Cathy she could still

change her mind about the marriage. But the girl asserted "I'll not retract my word" and, right after, knelt at Heathcliff's knees, saying:

> Mr Heathcliff, you're a cruel man, but you're not a fiend; and you won't, from *mere* malice, destroy, irrevocably, all my happiness. If papa thought I have left him, on purpose, and if he died before I returned, could I bear to live? I've given over crying: but I'm going to kneel here, at your knee; and I'll not get up, and I'll not take my eyes from your face, till you look back at me! No, don't turn away! *Do* look! You'll see nothing to provoke you. I don't hate you. I'm not angry that you stroke me. Have you never loved *anybody*, in all your life, uncle? *Never?* Ah! you must look once – I'm so wretched – you can't help being sorry and pitying me. (332)

Here we can see another conflict caused by a divergence of notions of justifiability. Cathy refused to accept that Heathcliff would act the way he did from mere wickedness, since this would not be justifiable to her.

Georges Bataille, in his "Literature and Evil", compared Heathcliff's journey in *Wuthering Heights* with the one of a child in revolt with the world of Good, meaning the adult world, that commits then to the side of Evil. Heathcliff felt betrayed by Catherine Earnshaw when she allowed herself to be seduced by the genteel life of the Lintons and, in leaving her childhood friend, she also "has betrayed the sovereign kingdom of childhood to which, body and soul, she *belonged* with him" (Bataille 11). Therefore, "[t]he subject of the book is the revolt of the man accursed, whom fate has banished from his kingdom and who will stop at nothing to regain it", it is Evil against Good. However, we can affirm Cathy has opted for the most morally correct attitude against this Evil, according to the values of the society in which she lived, considering they were embedded in Christian beliefs. She has self-sacrificed in favor of the person she loved the most, her father. In addition, Cathy has showed

what Marianne Thormählen, in her article "Christian Ethics in *Wuthering Heights*", has defined as "a fundamental ethical principle at work in *Wuthering Heights*", which would be "overcoming bitterness over past wrongs so that loving kindness can warm the person's heart and guide his or her actions" (Thormählen 647). Cathy has not expressed a desire to avenge herself against Heathcliff, but to forgive him in favor of the possibility to see her father again.

Cathy shows a high degree of concern for others, and this proves her moral wholesomeness, according to Tytler. We see Cathy "bending or stooping or kneeling down in moments of her extreme anxiety about Linton Heathcliff, and even in a moment of tension with Heathcliff", which Tytler considers postures and gestures of humility ("The Presentation" 33). In addition, we have already seen several passages in which she cries selfless tears, for Linton or for her father – ". . . when her tears are caused by her distress over her father's illness or by her concern for his anxiety over her prolonged absence from the Grange, or by her worries about Linton's physical suffering . . ." (33). This concern for others would be in agreement with the precepts of Christian dogma, since it would have altruism as a value.

In addition, according to Eagleton's claims, Cathy would be showing here an ethos that would be in agreement to what Marx has idealized, an empathy with other people based on the material nature we share. The English critic has stated:

> The material body is what we share most significantly with the whole of the rest of our species, extended both in time and space. Of course it is true that our needs, desires and sufferings are always culturally specific. But our material bodies are such that they are, indeed must be, in principle capable of feeling compassion for any others of their kind. It is on this capacity for fellow-feeling that moral values are

> founded; and this is based in turn on our material dependency on each other" (Eagleton, *After Theory* 155-156)

Thus, to encounter another person would be to encounter both sameness and difference, someone who we see as other and to whom, at the same time, we can relate. Cathy shows this ability to see how she can relate to the sufferings of the people around her. These examples also demonstrate how the analysis of Cathy as kind and forgiving is in agreement with Sartre's claims. I do not affirm Cathy already presented some sort of essence as a character, rather that she has shown her goodness through her actions.

Furthermore, we cannot avoid taking notice of the second time a man was somewhat frightened by Cathy's gaze. As Newman states, castration anxiety is the manner in which "most of the significant male characters in Brontë's novel respond to a woman's returning gaze" (Newman 1031). Cathy's assertive look when she demanded that Heathcliff would look at her constitutes a rebellion against the patriarchal standard behavior for women, which would be based on adamant obedience. And, for Newman, "[a] gaze that escaped patriarchal specular relations would not simply reverse the positions of male and female, . . . but would eliminate the hierarchy altogether" (1032). Cathy asserted her existence and demanded that Heathcliff would admit this. In the passage in which he declared he would make a vivisection of both Cathy and Linton, he had also claimed "How she does stare! It's odd what a savage feeling I have to anything that seems afraid of me" (Brontë 326). Through Cathy's response, we see she was not afraid, and demanded to be let out of the house, an attitude which made Heathcliff confused, as narrated by Nelly:

> She stepped close up; her black eyes flashing with passion and resolution. 'Give me that key: I will have it!' she said. 'I wouldn't eat or drink here, if I were starving.' Heathcliff has the key in his hand that remained on the table. He looked up, seized

> with a sort of surprise at her boldness; or, possibly, reminded by her voice and glance, of the person from whom she inherited it. She snatched the instrument, and half succeeded in getting it out from his loosened fingers: but her action recalled him to the present; he recovered it speedily. (326)

Heathcliff needed to be called back to present, after being stroke by Cathy's gaze and speech. We also can recall that, in chapter 21, when Heathcliff requested that Hareton would accompany Cathy in her first walk around the heights, he had said to the lad "Here! You go with her round the farm. And behave like a gentleman, mind! Don't use any bad words; and don't stare, when the young lady is not looking at you, and be ready to hide your face when she is;" (268). As claimed by Newman, Heathcliff at this moment has taught Hareton to fear the female gaze and to "associate it to imposed muteness" (Newman 1036). As I analyze the next chapters, we will see Cathy freeing Hareton from this fear by making him speak and return her gaze.

Back to my recounting of the events, now on chapter 28, Linton told Nelly what happened when he and Cathy were alone:

> . . . papa says everything she has is mine. All her nice books are mine; she offered to give me them, and her pretty birds, and her pony Minny, if I would get the key of our room, and let her but; but I told her she had nothing to give, they were all, all mine. And then she cried, and took a little picture from her neck, and said I should have that two pictures in a gold case – on one side her mother, and on the other, uncle, when they were young. That was yesterday – I said *they* were mine, too; and tried to get them from her. The spiteful thing wouldn't let me: she pushed me off, and hurt me. I shrieked out – that frightens her – she heard papa coming, and she broke the hinges, and divided the case and gave me her mother's portrait; . . . but when papa was gone,

> she made me come to the window and showed me her cheek cut on the inside, against her teeth, and her mouth filling with blood; (338)

Here we see Cathy's resignation as she sacrificed her own wishes and even turned the other cheek, when she gave Linton the last thing she had[9]. As Mill has asserted, marriage would give a man unlimited power over his wife, and it also would encourage "the latent seeds of selfishness in the remotest corners of his nature,. . . .giving him freedom to indulge the parts of his basic character that in all other relations he would have found it necessary to repress and conceal" (21). So, Cathy would be totally subjected to Linton now, mirroring the majority of marriages that would occur during the Victorian Age. She would now have to find a way to cope with this hostile relationship in which she had no authority. However, according to Sartre, she would have chosen to be in this situation. The French philosopher did not discard the conditions that would influence such decision, but he still considered it a decision:

> If I am mobilized in a war, this war is my war; it is in my image and I deserve it. I deserve it first because I could always get out of it by suicide or by desertion; these ultimate possibles are those which must always be present for us when there is a question of envisaging a situation. For lack of getting out of it, I have chosen it. . . . Anyway you look at it, it is a matter of a choice." (Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* 530)

Although persuaded by Heathcliff, it was Cathy's choice to enter the house at Wuthering Heights, her father having forbidden her. She made the decision to put herself in danger, and now she must face the consequences of this action.

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[9] "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (*Authorized (King James) Version,* Matthew 5:38-39).

Cathy has focused not on the suffering she was experiencing, but on her goal to reencounter her father. This decision would be considered moral according to the Christian ideals she lived by, since she has accepted her suffering in the belief that it would be rewarded with something bigger in the near future. According to Nietzsche, Christians would have the tendency to look for reasons for their suffering, regarding the situation as a "*state of punishment"* (*The Genealogy* 770). She has showed an attitude that was valued by the Christian dogma, the sense of duty and humanity[10]. As claimed by Tytler, it is apparent that "Cathy has a quite extraordinary capacity for love and, above all, for the kind of love through which she will come to know suffering as never before in her life" ("The Presentation" 31).

Later the same night, Cathy managed to escape from Wuthering Heights and was welcomed at Thrushcross Grange by Nelly. The servant narrated:

> She wanted to run, breathless as she was, upstairs to Mr Linton's room; but I compelled her to seat down on a chair, and made her drink, and washed her pale face, chafing it into a faint colour with my apron. Then I said I must go first, and tell of her arrival; imploring her to say, she would be happy with young Heathcliff. She stared, but soon comprehending why I counselled her to utter the falsehood, she assured me she would not complain. (Brontë 341)

Here, we see Cathy's resistance to tell a deliberate lie, but she has demonstrated enough moral strength to understand the necessity of not complaining at her father's deathbed. As claimed by Tytler in his article "*Wuthering Heights*: An Amoral Novel?", "there are occasions when [Cathy] is clearly induced by thoughtfulness to collude with some of Nelly's dishonesties" ("An Amoral Novel" 204). She did not show the intention to tell lies, but has

[10] "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (*Authorized (king James) Version,* John 18:36).

agreed to be silent in relation to her suffering in the hands of Heathcliff – "As is self-evident, Cathy's silence in that respect does nothing to corrode her moral integrity" (204). As Sartre has sustained, there was no code of ethics that would say *a priori* what attitude would be morally correct. Cathy had to make her choice based on her perception of the situation. In addition, Cathy was using her own reasoning to make decisions, instead of merely submitting to her father's will. Submission would be the alternative most women would choose, according to the claims made by Wollstonecraft, Mill and Beauvoir about the social structure of Victorian England.

Cathy stayed with Edgar in the final moments of his life and, after his death, Nelly confirmed that the girl remained where she was seated until the sun rose and Heathcliff came to take her – "Whether Catherine had spent her tears, or whether the grief were too weighty to let them flow, she sat there dry-eyed till the sun rose" (Brontë 342). The situation in which Heathcliff has put Cathy illustrates Beauvoir's claims on the dependence men inflicted on women: "The classes in which women enjoyed some economic independence and took part in production were the oppressed classes, and as women workers they were enslaved even more than the male workers. In the ruling classes woman was a parasite and as such was subjected to masculine laws" (Beauvoir 153). The privileged place men enjoyed in economic and social life, as well as in marriage, would leave women in a state of subjection. According to Beauvoir, the result of this would be that "woman sees herself and makes her choices not in accordance with her true nature in itself, but as man defines her" (162). Therefore, besides having a strong sense of responsibility towards her promises, Cathy would scarcely see any alternative for herself other than coming back to Wuthering Heights to enter a marriage arranged by her uncle.

In chapter 29, we understand that Cathy has been transported back to Wuthering Heights to marry Linton. Cathy stated to Heathcliff that Linton was all she had to love in the

world, therefore her uncle could not make them hate each other. Heathcliff then affirmed Linton was the one that would make himself hateful, for his bad temper. Cathy replied:

> I know he has a bad nature . . . he's your son. But I'm glad I've a better, to forgive it; and I know he loves me, and for that reason I love him. 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! I wouldn't be you! (Brontë 345)

Through this speech, we see once more Cathy's great degree of courage and defiance towards the submission that was expected from women in the social context the book portrays, and also how her moral character is embedded in Christian values. She has based her argument on the idea that Heathcliff would inflict on others the suffering that he would feel due to lack of love, and has compared him to the figure of the devil.

Furthermore, we can notice some of the ideas Cathy had that would have been passed on to her by the patriarchal system in which she lived. According to Wollstonecraft, men would occupy the thoughts of women too much, in a manner that love would be entangled with all their reasons for acting: "having been solely employed either to prepare themselves to excite love, or actually putting their lessons in practice, they cannot live without love" (ch. 6). Therefore, Cathy would feel the need to attach to anyone she could love, and her only alternative was Linton, as she even acknowledged to Heathcliff.

I can add that Cathy seemed, one more time, to have comprehended what Eagleton defined as the ideal way of approaching morality. For him, the actions of a person must be analyzed considering the social, political and economic context in which this person is inserted: "To define morality in purely individual terms is to believe, say, that a history of

abuse and emotional deprivation has nothing whatsoever to do with a teenager becoming a petty criminal. . . . This does not refute the relation between the two." (*After Theory* 142). The English critic has also upheld that appeals to morality have often been a manner of avoiding a political discussion. Nobody would be able to be ethical without having the political institutions that would allow this to be possible. This is why, according to Marxism, a moral analysis would have to acknowledge all the factors that may have influenced an action or a way of life, not just personal reasons. We must acknowledge crimes have a purpose behind them, rather than being planned by simply evil people: "It is easier to caricature your enemy as a bunch of blood-crazed beasts – a deeply dangerous move, since to defeat an opponent you have first to understand him." (141). Cathy understood her enemy. She saw the factors that might have led Heathcliff to act the way he did and, as we will see in the next chapter, her opponent ends up defeated.

After this passage, we see an observation by Nelly: "Catherine spoke with a kind of dreary triumph: she seemed to have made up her mind to enter into the spirit of her future family, and draw pleasure from the griefs of her enemies" (Brontë 345-346). Here it is possible to notice that Nelly considered Cathy was learning something condemnable. She would be behaving like Heathcliff and cultivating hate, instead of aiming to forgive her enemies. However, we have already concluded that Nelly's judgement is biased and embedded within ideological constructs, and we have no access to Cathy's intentions to affirm she had planned to avenge herself. We can see both her and her father keep some bitterness towards Heathcliff, but not necessarily a will to revenge. As claimed by Thormählen, "[o]ne may question to what extent Edgar and Cathy can really be seen to forgive Heathcliff, but at least they manage not to allow hatred of him to poison their minds and take over their lives" (Thormählen 646). During the analysis of the next chapters, we will

see Cathy shows the ability to accept that she suffered, but that suffering should be in the past for her to continue her life uninfluenced by hatred.

In chapter 30, we read that Nelly has gone to the Heights to see how her mistress was, and Zillah told her that, after the two cousins got married, Cathy went upstairs to Linton's room without talking to anyone until the next morning. Then, "while the master and Earnshaw were at breakfast, she entered the house, and asked all in a quiver if the doctor might be sent for? Her cousin was very ill" (Brontë 350-351). Heathcliff claimed nobody there cared what became of Linton, and the doctor would not be called. Cathy then went back to Linton's room to nurse him and Zillah claimed "How they managed together, I can't tell. I fancy he fretted a great deal, and moaned hisseln [sic], night and day; and she had precious little rest, one could guess by her white face, and heavy eyes . . . Once or twice, after we had gone to bed, I've happened to open my door again, and seen her sitting crying, on the stairs' top;" (351). At last, Cathy entered Zillah's chamber one night asking her to call Heathcliff and to say his son was really dying this time. Zillah described Heathcliff's reaction:

> He cursed to himself, and in a few minutes came out with a lighted candle, and proceeded to their room. I followed. Mrs Heathcliff was seated by the bedside, with her hands folded on her knees. Her father-in-law went up, held the light to Linton's face, looked at him, and touched him; afterwards he turned to her.
>
> ' "Now – Catherine," he said, "how do you feel?"
>
> 'She was dumb.
>
> ' "How do you feel, Catherine?" he repeated.
>
> ' "He is safe, and I'm free," she answered: "I should feel well – but," she continued with a bitterness she couldn't conceal, "you have left me so long to struggle against death, alone, that I feel and see only death! I feel like death!" (352)

Here Cathy has behaved according to the moral standards of the Victorian Age. She has been obedient and has kept her promise to marry Linton, besides taking care of him when he was left as her responsibility. Cathy has been considerably altruistic helping her husband, as he depended on her care. As claimed by Tytler, Cathy's marriage represents a situation in which "she not only puts up with his sundry acts of selfishness with remarkable patience, but with exceptional devotion looks after him during his fatal illness without any help from her fellow residents at the Heights" ("The Presentation" 32). Furthermore, an altruistic attitude was encouraged in women, which can be understood as another form of subjection. As affirmed by Beauvoir, "[t]o identify Woman with Altruism is to guarantee to man absolute rights in her devotion, it is to impose on women a categorical imperative" (279). Thus, it would be part of the ideology that kept men in command, as the dominant class.

However, Cathy's attitude in this passage shows not only her courage but a certain degree of maturity in her sense of duty, besides demonstrating her level of independence from the men in the house, which would contradict the ideals of the people in her social circle. As Wollstonecraft has upheld, dependence was the expected for women, the situation that was perceived as natural. Women were "always taught to look up to man for a maintenance, and to consider their persons as the proper return for his exertions to support them" (Wollstonecraft ch. 4). Cathy has demonstrated her difference from most women of her time, since she managed to take care of herself and of her husband alone locked in a room, as a prisoner without any allies. Even in such a situation, she did not refrain from facing the consequences of the choices she had made.

The girl spent the next few days inside the room, saying she was ill – "Cathy stayed upstairs a fortnight, according to Zillah, who visited her twice a day, and would have been rather more friendly, but her attempts at increasing kindness were proudly and promptly repelled" (Brontë 353). Heathcliff went up once to show her Linton's will: "He had

bequeathed the whole of his, and what had been her moveable property to his father. . . . The lands, being a minor, he could not meddle with. However, Mr Heathcliff has claimed and kept them in his wife's right, and his also: I suppose legally, at any rate Catherine, destitute of cash and friends, cannot disturb his possession" (353). In this passage, we can see the legal subordination of the wife to the husband, as Mill has explained. About how the law would work on marriage:

> She can acquire no property for herself: the instant something becomes hers, even if by inheritance, it automatically becomes his. In this respect the wife's position under the common law of England is worse than that of slaves in the laws of many countries. . . . The two are called 'one person in law,' for the purpose of inferring that whatever is hers is his, but the parallel inference is never drawn that whatever is his is hers; the maxim is not applied against the man, except to make him responsible to third parties for her acts, as a master is for the acts of his slaves or of his cattle. (Mill 17)

For Mill, the ideal law would determine that whatever was the woman's property when she was not married, should also be under her control after the marriage. This, according to him, would prevent "the scandalous abuse of the marriage institution in which a man traps a girl into marrying him without a settlement, purely so as to get her money", which was exactly the case with Cathy (27).

Zillah told Nelly the first time Cathy went downstairs was on a Sunday afternoon, when Heathcliff was away: "She had cried out, when I carried up her dinner, that she couldn't bear any longer being in the cold; and I told her the master was going to Thrushcross Grange; and Earnshaw and I needn't hinder her from descending;" (Brontë 353). Cathy then made her appearance downstairs, avoiding contact with Zillah and Hareton – "she turned up her nose at

my civility", Zillah narrated (354). Hareton helped her getting some books, which she read quietly. During Cathy's reading, he began to pay attention to some pictures in the book, and then to her: "he contented himself with going a bit farther back, and looking at her instead of the book. She continued reading, and seeking for something to read. His attention became, by degrees, quite centered in the study of her thick, silky curls: her face he couldn't see, and she couldn't see him" (355). At this moment, Hareton touched Cathy's hair, and she reacted angrily: "Get away, this moment! How dare you touch me? Why are you stopping there?' she cried, in a tone of disgust. 'I can't endure you! I'll go upstairs again, if you come near me'" (355). The girl continued to read for half an hour, before Hareton whispered to Zillah if she could ask Cathy to read for them, without saying he was the one who made the request. Zillah did not follow the directions, and said to Cathy that Hareton would take it very kindly if she could read for them. Cathy answered:

> Mr Hareton, and the whole set of you, will be good enough to understand that I reject any pretence at kindness you have the hypocrisy to offer! I despise you, and will have nothing to say to any of you! When I would have given my life for one kind word, even to see one of your faces, you all kept off. But I won't complain to you! I'm driven down here by the cold, not either to amuse you, or enjoy your society. (356)

Hareton then claimed there was nothing he could have done, for he had talked to Heathcliff offering his help in taking care of Cathy. Cathy then demanded him to be silent, for she would not hear his "disagreeable voice" (356). Hareton then cursed the girl and went back to his usual Sunday occupations. However, the frost would set in in the next days, and Cathy soon needed to come down stairs and be around both Hareton and Zillah more and more.

Cathy's anger was comprehensible, due to everything she had faced during the previous days. It would be justifiable to others, and possibly not considered completely

immoral, for this reason. As the strong and subversive woman we can affirm she was, she refused to be looked at and touched. As Wollstonecraft has argued, women were perceived as "insignificant objects of desire" and, when Hareton seemed to be admiring Cathy in this manner, she immediately reprehended him. Her posture, however, would be considered immoral if I analyzed it through the perspective of the Christian dogma that embedded Victorian tradition, since she was supposed to show forgiveness to her enemies, to turn the other cheek. In the final paragraph of this chapter, we have the ending of Nelly's narration, and are back to reading the novel through Lockwood's perspective.

In chapter 31, Lockwood went to Wuthering Heights to close business with Heathcliff, since he intended to live in London for the next six months. Entering the house, he saw Cathy, who was preparing a meal. He narrated: "She hardly raised her eyes to notice me, and continued her employment with the same disregard to common forms of politeness, as before; never returning my bow and good-morning by the slightest acknowledgement. 'She does not seem so amiable,' I thought, 'as Mrs Dean would persuade me to believe. She's a beauty, it is true; but not an angel'" (358).

Again, Cathy did not keep up with Lockwood's expectations in relation to how a woman should behave, which would be the Victorian social standard of being agreeable and a good host. He affirmed, due to that, she would not be an angel. Wollstonecraft has used the same term when describing a woman that would take all the abuse of a man without rebelling against him: "Such a woman ought to be an angel – or she is an ass – for I discern not a trace of the human character, neither reason nor passion in this domestic drudge, whose being is absorbed in that of a tyrant's" (sec. 5.2). Therefore, Cathy was lowered from the status of a divine creature in Lockwood's perception only because she refused to endure abuse, she acknowledged the suffering she was inflicted and responded to it negatively, as a man would.

As Beauvoir has claimed, these notions were a part of the myth of woman. This myth was beyond what men experienced, rather it was seen as an absolute truth: “If the definition provided for this concept is contradicted by the behaviour of flesh-and-blood women, it is the latter who are wrong: we are told not that Femininity is a false entity, but that the women concerned are not feminine” (Beauvoir 277). Like Lockwood in the passage quoted, a man would be surprised and crossed by a woman that would not behave according to the social expectations. Cathy contradicted the myth, proving Sartre’s thesis that a person would make herself through her actions. This was the perspective Beauvoir also adopted, as she claimed “I reject also any comparative system that assumes the existence of a natural hierarchy or scale of values” (56).

Lockwood then tried to give Cathy, in secrecy, a letter from Nelly. The girl asked aloud what it was and chucked it off. Consequently, Hareton saw the situation and grabbed the letter, claiming Heathcliff should see it first. According to Lockwood, “[t]hereat, Catherine silently turned her face from us, and, very stealthily, drew out her pocket-handkerchief and applied it to her eyes” (Brontë 359). Her cousin then threw the letter on the floor beside her. Cathy read it and questioned Lockwood about the inmates of her former home, and then “lapsed into an aspect of abstracted sadness: neither caring nor knowing whether we remarked her” (359). Lockwood asked for an answer to the letter, and Cathy said he must tell Nelly “that I would answer her letter, but I have no materials for writing: not even a book from which I might tear a leaf” (359). She then manifested her anger at Hareton for stealing some of the books she had: “They are of no use to you; or else you concealed them in the bad spirit, that as you cannot enjoy them, nobody else shall” (360). Cathy added “I hear him trying to spell and read to himself, and pretty blunders he makes! I wish you would repeat Chevy Chase as you did yesterday: it was extremely funny! I heard you . . . and I heard you turning over the dictionary, to seek out the hard words, and then cursing, because

you couldn't read their explanations!" (360). Lockwood tried to soften the situation by saying all people had a beginning in learning how to read and write, so this should not be an embarrassment. Cathy said she used to have the contents of the books consecrated to her by associations, and she hated to have them profaned by Hareton's reading – "Besides, of all, he has selected my favourite pieces that I love the most to repeat, as if out of deliberate malice!" (361).

This moment, Hareton left the room, coming back soon after with half a dozen volumes in his hands, which he threw into Cathy's lap, saying "Take them! I never want to hear, or read, or think of them again!" (361). Cathy refused the books, saying now they would be associated with him in her mind and, according to Lockwood, "She opened one that had obviously been often turned over, and read a portion in the drawling tone of a beginner; then laughed, and threw it from her" (361). Lockwood affirmed "[t]he little wretch had done her utmost to hurt her cousin's sensitive though uncultivated feelings", and consequently Hareton threw Cathy's books on the fire and said she must now hold her tongue. Heathcliff arrived, so Cathy left in order to avoid him.

We can conclude Cathy has acted immorally according to Victorian standards when she refused to be polite to Lockwood and also when she made fun of Hareton. Distancing herself from the lower classes would be the usual behavior according to the ideology by which the family lived. However, now Cathy was dispossessed of all the inheritance of her father and was in the same position in that society as Hareton, making her hostile treatment of him not justifiable to their fellow people anymore. Therefore, Cathy would now be supposed to base her actions only on Christian values, which would condemn that she would amuse herself by her cousin's sufferings; her laughing of his inability to read being considered immoral. She was full of hatred, instead of exercising the loving-kindness and forgiveness that was praised in the Bible.

The chapter ended with the conversation between Heathcliff and Lockwood to settle their business together. Seeing Catherine's lack of objection to when Heathcliff demanded she would dine in the kitchen with Joseph, Lockwood made the assumption that:

> Living among clowns and misanthropists, she probably cannot appreciate a better class of people, when she meets them . . . What a realisation of something more romantic than a fairy tale it would have been for Mrs Linton Heathcliff, had she and I struck up in attachment, as her good nurse desired, and migrated together into the stirring atmosphere of the town! (364).

Lockwood expected Cathy to want his company and to be desolate being sent to the kitchen. He considered it was because of her time living with the other inhabitants of Wuthering Heights that she now would not recognize how he would be a better companion to her, although she showed such a level of beauty.

Once more, in accordance with Sartre's claims, Cathy has affirmed herself as different from Lockwood's expectations through her behavior; she has defined herself through her actions. Lockwood's reasoning was in agreement which the ideology by which he lived, the modes of self-identification in which he was trained since his infancy. Again, he treated Cathy as a mere object of desire and, as Wollstonecraft has stated, she would be "useless when the short-lived bloom of beauty is over", for Lockwood has based his fantasy of Cathy as his wife exclusively on her attractiveness (Wollstonecraft Intro.).

When leaving Wuthering Heights, Lockwood thought "What a realisation of something more romantic than a fairy tale it would have been for Mrs Linton Heathcliff, had she and I struck up an attachment, as her good nurse desired, and migrated together into the stirring atmosphere of the town!" (Brontë 364). We can see that, although Cathy has already affirmed herself as contrary to Lockwood's expectations of a submissive woman, he still

idealized her as such. As Beauvoir has stated, a woman would be seen as a special prize which men, as heroes and adventurers, were destined to win: "It is clear that in dreaming of himself as donor, liberator, redeemer, man still desires the subjection of woman; for in order to awaken the Sleeping Beauty, she must have been put to sleep; ogres and dragons must be if there are to be captive princesses" (209). Thus, the ideal woman most of Western men would imagine would be the one who freely accepts their domination, the attitude Cathy would take in Lockwood's imagination.

In chapter 32, it was 1802 and Lockwood was paying a visit to the Heights again. He saw Cathy teaching Hareton how to read: "'Con-*trary*!' said a voice, as sweet as a silver bell – 'That for the third time, you dunce! I'm not going to tell you, again – Recollect, or I pull your hair!' 'Contrary, then,' answered another, in deep but softened tones. 'And now, kiss me, for minding so well'" (Brontë 367-368). Lockwood described Cathy: "her light shining ringlets blending, at intervals, with his brown locks, as she bent to superintend his studies; and her face – it was lucky he couldn't see her face, or he would never have been so steady – I could, and I bit my lip, in spite, at having thrown away the chance I might have had, of doing something besides staring at its smiting beauty" (368). We can notice that Lockwood regretted now the fear of the female gaze that had prevented him from becoming closer to Cathy. In his act of relegating her to the state of an object, he lost the opportunity of enjoying her company as a subject.

As Beauvoir has stated, the myth of woman has been advantageous to men as it would justify their privileges and authorize their abuse. However, it has contributed to a lack of communication between the genders and, consequently, has avoided the construction of a concrete bound. Instead of admitting his ignorance of women's feelings, the man attributes it to a mystery outside himself. Therefore, "in the company of a living enigma man remains alone—alone with his dreams, his hopes, his fears, his love, his vanity. This subjective game,

which can go all the way from vice to mystical ecstasy, is for many a more attractive experience than an authentic relation with a human being" (Beauvoir 280). The Feminist author agreed with Sartre in the thesis that a person is nothing other than what their actions show, "the possible does not extend beyond the real, essence does not precede existence: in pure subjectivity, the human being is not anything. He is to be measured by his acts" (281). For this reason, she considered man would have nothing to lose if he would give up this symbol he has constructed for women. And this idealization would only end when relationships were lived more fully, for "[d]iscrimination between the imaginary and the real can be made only through behavior" (282).

The passage of *Wuthering Heights* I have just described was also where we could find another of Cathy's gestures that, according to Tytler, "betoken her concern for others, as well as a certain humility" ("The Presentation" 33). She bent down to give the most support she could during Hareton's learning process, and seemed to be following his reading. There was another mention of Cathy bending over in chapter 27, when Edgar's state of health was beginning to give signs of his eminent death, and Nelly explained that "the library, where her father stopped a short time daily – the brief period he could bear to sit up – and his chamber, had become her whole world. She grudged each moment that did not find her bending over his pillow, or seated by his side" (Brontë 320). This moment showed Cathy's love for her father and the same thoughtfulness involved in her actions towards Hareton, which "symbolically indicates how reliant she already is on the young man to whom she is by now betrothed" ("The Presentation" 33).

Lockwood continued his narration saying that "[t]he task was done, not free from further blunders; but the pupil claimed a reward, and received at least five kisses: which, however, he generously returned" (Brontë 368). He then concluded that the two went for a walk in the moors, and he met Nelly. He told the servant his reason for coming to the house,

which was to close his business with her master. Nelly answered he was supposed to settle this with Cathy, and saw a surprise in the visitor's face: "Ah! You have not heard of Heathcliff's death, I see!" (370). She then told Lockwood her master had died three months previously, and asked him to sit down and have something to eat while she would tell him the complete story.

Nelly began by when Heathcliff was still alive, but requested her help in the Heights for he was tired of seeing Cathy. Having her there would provide more comfort for everyone but, as Nelly explained, it would not last long:

> Catherine, contented at first, in a brief space grew irritable and restless. For one thing, she was forbidden to move out of the garden, and it fretted her sadly to be confined to its narrow bounds, as Spring drew on; for another, in following the house, I was forced to quit her frequently, and she complained of loneliness: she preferred quarrelling with Joseph in the kitchen, to sitting at peace in her solitude. I did not mind their skirmishes: but Hareton was often obliged to seek the kitchen also, when the master wanted to have the house to himself; and though, in the beginning, she either left at his approach, or quietly joined in my occupations, . . . after a while, she changed her behavior, and became incapable of letting him alone: talking at him, commenting on his stupidity and idleness; expressing her wonder how he could endure the life he lived . . . (371-372)

Hareton did not respond to what Cathy said, and she tried offering him a book, placing it on his hand. He did not accept, so Cathy left the book on a table and announced she was going to bed. Nelly claimed "[t]hen she whispered me to watch whether he touched it, and departed. But he would not come near it; and so I informed her in the morning, to her great disappointment" (372-373). According to Nelly, Cathy regretted having contributed to Hareton's decision to give up his studies. While the servant was doing her housework, Cathy

would bring a book and read it aloud to her and, "[w]hen Hareton was there, she generally paused in an interesting part, and left the book lying about" (373). However, her efforts did not seem to bring out any results, and Nelly claimed Cathy had said a few times that she was tired of living, "her life was useless" (373).

According to Wollstonecraft's claims, Cathy would have grown up preparing to please other people, with love entangled in all her motives of action. To excite love from a man would be "the grand end of her existence" (Wollstonecraft sec. 5.1). Sartre would reinforce this perspective, once he has upheld that, through love, "we feel that our existence is justified" (*Being and Nothingness* 347). Therefore, living in a hostile environment in which no one seemed to be fond of her, Cathy felt her life was deprived of meaning.

According to Scanlon's claims on well-being, Cathy would feel happy if she experienced satisfaction and enjoyment in her life, but also if she had success in achieving her aims. Because, as the author has sustained, "[t]his component of well-being reflects the fact that the life of a rational creature is something that is to be *lived* in an active sense – that is to say, shaped by his or her choices and reactions" (Scanlon 124-125). In addition to these aspects, Cathy's happiness would also depend on friendship and valuable personal relations, which we can see she could not find in the environment of Wuthering Heights. According to Scanlon, "one person can have a much better life than another – much happier and more successful, for example – even though their lives are lived under equally good or bad material and social conditions" (111). Therefore, we would not be able to attribute Cathy's lack of purpose exclusively to the loss of her possessions, even though this would have contributed to the situation. For Scanlon, "[p]leasure, the avoidance of pain and suffering" are aspects that can contribute to a person's well-being (123). Therefore, it would be logical for Cathy to feel her life was meaningless when she was confronted with the view that she had no friends or pleasure in her daily life.

Nelly continued her recounting saying that, on Easter Monday, Cathy began to demand Hareton to talk to her – "'Let me take that pipe,' she said, cautiously advancing her hand, and abstracting it from his mouth. Before he could attempt to recover it, it was broken, and behind the fire. He swore at her and sized another. 'Stop,' she cried, 'you must listen to me, first; and I can't speak while those clouds are floating in my face" (Brontë 374). Her cousin said then she should go to the devil, and she proceeded: "When I call you stupid, I don't mean anything: I don't mean that I despise you. Come, you shall take notice of me, Hareton: you are my cousin, and you shall own me" (374-375). Hareton cursed Cathy again and repelled her friendship, and Nelly said the girl was trying to "conceal a growing tendency to sob" (375). Cathy then claimed Hareton hated her, to which he replied "You're a damned liar . . . why have I made him angry, by taking your part then, a hundred times? And that, when you sneered at, and despised me . . ." (375). Cathy went on to say she did not know Hareton took her part and now questioned what she could do besides asking him to forgive her. Cathy then gently kissed Hareton's cheek. She wrapped a book in white paper, tied it with a ribband and addressed the present to her cousin, asking Nelly to deliver it. She told her to say to Hareton that, if he would take the gift, she would teach him to read and, if he would refuse it, she would never tease him again. At this moment, we see Cathy realizing the consequences she must face for having treated Hareton with such hostility in the past. According to the propositions made by Sartre, she has acted in good faith, since she admitted the flaws in her behavior and asked for forgiveness, taking responsibility for the quarrel her actions had begun.

Nelly then carried the present to Hareton, who would not touch it at first. Cathy waited until she heard the rustle of the wrapping being removed and quietly seated herself near her cousin. Nelly narrated:

> He trembled, and his face glowed: all his rudeness and all his surly harshness had deserted him: he could not summon courage, at first, to utter a syllable, in reply to her questioning look, and her murmured petition.
>
> 'Say you forgive me, Hareton, do! You can make me so happy, by speaking that little word.'
>
> He muttered something inaudible.
>
> 'And you'll be my friend?' added Catherine, interrogatively.
>
> 'Nay! you'll be ashamed of me every day of your life,' he answered. 'And the more, the more you know me, and I cannot bide it.'
>
> 'So, you won't be my friend?' she said, smiling as sweet as honey, and creeping close up.
>
> I overheard no further distinguishable talk, but on looking round again, I perceived two such radiant countenances bent over the page of the accepted book, that I did not doubt the treaty had been ratified, on both sides, and the enemies were, thenceforth, sworn allies. (376-377)

Nelly affirmed that Cathy, having arrived the time to retire to bed, smiled as she passed Hareton and went upstairs singing – "lighter of heart, I venture to say, than ever she had been under that roof before; except, perhaps, during her earliest visits to Linton" (378). The intimacy between the two then grew rapidly, for both their minds, according to Nelly, tended to the same point, "one loving and desiring to esteem, and the other loving and desiring to be esteemed" (378). According to Mill, this would be the beginning of a healthy relationship:

> When unlikeness is merely difference of good qualities, it may be more a benefit in the way of mutual improvement than a drawback from comfort. When each spouse wants and tries to acquire the other's special qualities, the difference ·between them· doesn't drive their interests apart but rather pulls them together, making each spouse

> still more valuable to the other. . . . with each being superior to the other in some things, so that each can enjoy the luxury of looking up to the other, and they can take turns in the pleasure of leading and the pleasure of being led in the path of development. (Mill 56)

Cathy and Hareton were sharing, besides their feelings for one another, their interest in literature and in planting a garden. They helped each other and started their path of development together, as Mill has illustrated. In the final lines of the chapter, Nelly said that the union of Cathy and Hareton would be the crown of all her wishes and, on their wedding day, there would not be a happier woman in England than herself.

The actions recounted in this chapter would be considered moral according to Christian values, since Cathy aimed at coming to peaceful terms with the people around her and shared her knowledge with Hareton, instead of making fun of him. As claimed by Thormählen, her actions show "a remarkable capacity to rise above the memories of past sufferings and injustices" (Thormählen 643). We see Cathy instantly happier after she became friends with Hareton, which is in agreement with the Christian precept in 1 Corinthians 13:4–7, which states that happiness would come from loving-kindness, forgiveness and patience.[11] In addition, it would make sense considering Scanlon's claims that happiness would be related to pleasure and valuable personal relations.

Furthermore, as stated by Tytler, "it is important to remember that it is Cathy, not Hareton, who takes the initiative for them to be reconciled", as we could also see her taking many initiatives during her relationship with Linton since the day he arrived in Thrushcross Grange ("The Presentation" 31). Cathy was the one who insisted on sitting beside her cousin,

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[11] "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (*Authorized (King James) Version*, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

on visiting him and sending a note when she could not, as well as making – it is possible to affirm after my analysis – almost all the effort for the relationship to survive the many obstacles it had. Through her education of Hareton, we can see unmistakable signs of Cathy's maturity. Also, through her initiative, we can see Cathy was one of the women that would not be satisfied with their condition of a "humble dependent", as it was conceptualized by Wollstonecraft (ch. 2). She taught a man how to read, which was something already out of the expected in the Victorian Age, since it was common sense that women would "learn with reluctance to read and write; but very readily apply themselves to the use of their needles" (sec. 5.1). As Beauvoir has stated, women in Victorian England would hide themselves in order to write, like Jane Austen did. She adds, "[i]t was only in the eighteenth century that a middle-class woman, Mrs. Aphra Behn, a widow, earned her living by her pen like a man. Others followed her example, but even in the nineteenth century they were often obliged to hide" (Beauvoir 130). Cathy's actions, according to Wollstonecraft, would be a great base for moral development, since "[w]ithout knowledge there can be no morality" and true happiness in marriage would arise when women would be "prepared to be their [husband's] companions rather than their mistresses" (ch. 12). Therefore, Cathy's independence and assertiveness would build a healthy relationship with her future husband, Hareton, which would be disruptive of the ideology she lived by.

The couple would also be in the beginning of a healthy relationship according to Mill's claims, since he has stated that "for two people to know one another thoroughly, they need to be not only intimates but equals" (14). Therefore, there would be no absolute master that would make all the decisions in the relationship. With the passages in which Cathy teaches Hareton, or reprehends his behavior, but also restrains her own when she would make him suffer, we see their relationship would be similar to Mill's suggestion: "The natural arrangement is a division of powers between the two, with each being absolute in the

executive branch of their own department, and any change of system and principle requiring the consent of both" (22). For Mill, the only way to build a genuinely moral relationship would be treating each other as equals, and this is the type of relationship we see with Cathy and Hareton, in opposition to the majority of the marriages in the social context the narrative would mirror.

In addition, when Cathy made her initiative to ask for forgiveness and be friends with Hareton, we see him trembling and lacking courage to talk to her. Cathy was assertive and honest with him about her feelings and, as claimed by Newman, "Catherine's imprudently assertive look makes her a monstrous woman to almost every male character in the novel" (Newman 1032). Cathy has asserted her existence and refused to be treated as an object to the male gaze. The relationship between her and Hareton, read in Newman's perspective, "tells the utopian story of a subtle but essential transformation of the structures the novel faults. . . . It involves the domestication (and figurative castration) of a potent male figure (Hareton), not the release of the woman from the domestic sphere" (1036). However, at the same time, the novel revises the domestic relations it illustrates, suggesting mutuality as an alternative to the male power, by means of the gaze. Hareton, in contrast to Heathcliff and Lockwood, has experienced not the destructive power of the woman that looks in return, but joy. Like Beauvoir has explained, "[t]o recognize in woman a human being is not to impoverish man's experience: this would lose none of its diversity, its richness, or its intensity if it were to occur between two subjectivities" (285).

During chapter 33, Nelly continued to recount to Lockwood what had happened in the Heights while he was away. She told him Cathy has persuaded Hareton to help her clean a space of ground for them to plant a garden. The girl also has started sitting with Hareton during meals and teasing him – "she had sidled to him, and was sticking primroses in his plate of porridge. He dared not speak to her, there: he dared hardly look; and yet she went on

teasing, till he was twice on the point of being provoked to laugh; . . . at last, Hareton uttered a smothered laugh" (Brontë 380). Because of that, Heathcliff was taken away from his thoughts and looked at the cousins. Cathy returned the look: "his eye rapidly surveyed our faces. Catherine met it with her accustomed look of nervousness, and yet defiance, which he abhorred" (380). At this moment, Heathcliff exclaimed, in anger, "What fiend possesses you to stare back at me, continually, with those infernal eyes? Down with them! And don't remind me of your existence again. I thought I had cured you of laughing!" (380). Here, we are able to notice one more time the negative reaction of a man to Cathy's returning gaze, as well as the influence of Christian values in this character's reasoning, for Heathcliff relates the girl's eyes to a view of Hell.

At this moment, Joseph entered the house angry at having seen some bushes pulled up in the garden. Heathcliff suggested it must be some quarrel between him and Nelly, to what he replied:

> It's noan Nelly! . . . Aw sudn't shift fur Nelly – Nasty, ill nowt as shoo is, Thank God! Shoo cannot stale t' sowl uh nob'dy! Shoo wer niver soa handsome, bud whet a body mud look at her 'baht winking. It's yon flaysome, graceless quean, ut's witched ahr lad, wi' her bold een, un' her forrard ways – till – Nay! It fair brusts my heart! He's forgotten all E done for him, un made on him, un' goan un' riven up a whole row ut t' grandest currant trees, i' t' garden! (381)

In this passage, we can see Joseph perceives a woman's beauty as a threat to the control men would exercise upon her. According to Myburgh, "the servant equates beauty with both sexual deviance and eternal damnation. He suggests, then, that only beautiful women possess the ability to undercut the established order, specifically as a result of their sexuality" (Myburgh 66). Joseph made it clear he did not believe Nelly was the one to contradict his

orders about the garden, since she was not attractive enough for him. Cathy, on the other hand, would have made use of her beauty to steal Hareton's soul, as a sort of spell.

Previously, in chapter 32, when Lockwood had entered the house and seen Nelly, Joseph was saying to her "un' that poor lad 'ull be lost, atween ye. Poor lad! . . . he's witched, Aw'm sartin on 't!". He was referring to Hareton, who he considered would be the victim of some witchcraft made by Cathy. As Beauvoir has claimed, it would be disquieting for men to see a woman "who makes free use of her attractiveness" (216). She recounted women had been burned, accused to be witches, for the simple reason that they were beautiful. The 'myth of woman', as she described, kept this ancient fear alive, and this is in agreement with the Marxist reasoning that, in class society, even the "capabilities which belong to us as a species" are used as means to an end (Eagleton, *After Theory* 172). The sexual life of women, for example, would be instrumental as to the advantage of men, as we see in this context of Joseph's discourse. According to Eagleton, "[s]exuality is a medium of solidarity which in patriarchal society becomes a means of power, dominion and selfish satisfaction" (172). Thus, restraining Cathy's sexuality and portraying it as evil would put the control of life in Wuthering Heights in the hands of the men of the house.

Hareton admitted he had pulled up the bushes in the garden, and Cathy confessed she was the one that has asked for it. Through this passage, we can see that Hareton, similarly to Cathy, takes responsibility for his own choices. He would be considered a man of good faith in Sartre's terms, for he did not attribute the blame to Cathy for having made the request. Hareton admitted that to help her was his own choice and did not try to escape from its consequences. At this moment, we can as well see a fundamental difference between the formation of the characters Linton and Hareton, considering their level of honesty and responsibility.

Cathy then exclaimed to Heathcliff: "[y]ou shouldn't grudge a few yards of earth, for me to ornament, when you have taken all my land!" (Brontë 382). Under harassment by Heathcliff, she continued: "And Hareton's land, and his money, . . . Hareton and I are friends now; and I shall tell him all about you!" (382). Nelly recounted her master was confounded for a moment, then rose up expressing a massive deal of hate, as Cathy continued to address him: "'If you strike me, Hareton will strike you!' she said; 'so you may as well sit down.' 'If Hareton does not turn you out of the room, I'll strike him to Hell,' thundered Heathcliff. 'Damnable witch! Dare you pretend to rose him against me? Off with her! Do you hear? Fling her into the kitchen!" (382). Hareton then tried to persuade Cathy to go, but she would not follow his advice. Heathcliff was furious with them both and approached Cathy to execute his own command, for Hareton would not:

> 'He'll not obey you, wicked man, any more!' said Catherine; 'and he'll soon detest you, as much as I do!'
>
> 'Wisht! wisht!' muttered the young man reproachfully. 'I will not hear you speak so to him – Have done.'
>
> 'But you won't let him strike me?' she cried.
>
> 'Come then!' he whispered earnestly.
>
> It was too late: Heathcliff had caught hold of her.
>
> 'Now *you* go!' he said to Earnshaw. 'Accursed witch! this time she has provoked me, when I could not bear it; and I'll make her repent it for ever!
>
> He had his hand in her hair; Hareton attempted to release the locks, entreating him not to hurt her that once. His black eyes flashed; he seemed ready to tear Catherine in pieces, and I was just worked up to risk coming to the rescue, when of a sudden, his fingers relaxed . . . (383)

Heathcliff let his hand fall from Cathy's head to her arm and gazed her intently. According to Nelly, he then took a moment to collect himself and talked to the girl more calmly. He advised her not to provoke him, lest he would murder her some time, and threatened to send Hareton away if he would listen to her. He then sent everyone away from the room, for he would like to be alone.

Here, Cathy was disobedient and provoked her uncle, which would be extremely immoral for a woman in Victorian England. In addition, she sought for revenge, which would also be immoral according to Christian values. However, Cathy sought out the truth; she helped revealing to Hareton he had been manipulated, and the truth is highly valued in Christianity[12]. Therefore, we can imply Cathy's actions in this situation were morally correct, considering her apparent intentions. For, as Nietzsche defined, this narrative takes place in the moral period of mankind, when the value of an action would be determined by the intention behind it.

Besides these observations, we can also notice again the religious point of view Heathcliff adopted towards the world added to the myth of woman Beauvoir has explained. When Cathy behaved in a disagreeable way, he related her to the figure of a witch. After the speech already quoted here, when he called Cathy a 'damnable witch', there was also a reference to the concept of cursing, which is religious. Heathcliff called Cathy a witch because she resisted the expectations regarding the behavior of a woman in the Victorian Age; she contradicted the social structure that would keep the power in the hands of men.

Later on in the chapter, during a conversation with Hareton, Cathy offered to expose the truth about what Heathcliff had done to both him and his father. According to Nelly's narration, "[h]e said he wouldn't suffer a word to be uttered to him, in his disparagement: if

[12] "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight" (*Authorized (King James) Version*, Proverbs 12:22).

he were the devil, it didn't signify; he would stand by him; and he'd rather she would abuse himself, as she used to, than begin on Mr Heathcliff" (384). Nelly considered Cathy did not understand this at first, but Hareton was successful in his request when he made her think how she would feel if he would talk of her father like that. She comprehended, then, "that Earnshaw took the master's reputation home to himself" and was extremely attached to the man (384). Nelly said that Cathy was now understanding her cousin's feelings: she avoided complaining about Heathcliff and showed sorrow for having "raise[d] a bad spirit" between Hareton and him (384).

This attitude of Cathy would be considered morally correct in Christian terms, because she has sacrificed her own wishes in order not to hurt Hareton's feelings, even though she did not agree with him. Her actions would also agree with the ideal moral inquiry Marxism defended, since she was capable of relating to Hareton and acting with empathy for a fellow person. In addition, she would be acting in good faith, according to Sartre's claims, because she appears to have acted in concern for Hareton, not justifying herself with her own passions. According to the French philosopher, the person of good faith would have as her main desire freedom for herself as well as for others, and would base her decisions on truth, which is exactly what we see Cathy doing in this passage.

Cathy has showed her ability to overcome bitterness over the suffering that had been inflicted on her and, as Thormählen has proved, Hareton also presents this feature in his character:

> The stumbling progress of the relationship between young Cathy and Hareton sees the two of them overcoming a succession of obstacles which Heathcliff's actions have placed in their way. Both have to conquer their not inconsiderable pride—Hareton's in his family name, which is all he has, Heathcliff having robbed him of everything

> else; Cathy's in her educational attainments, which are all she has after Heathcliff has robbed her of everything else. To come closer to Cathy, Hareton has to go against the wishes of the only person he loves, who is, extraordinarily enough, Heathcliff. Cathy, on her part, has to respect that love and stop defying and speaking ill of Heathcliff. (Thormählen 643)

Both cousins are seen rising above the memories of their past and of the injustice they have suffered in an act of selfless love and empathy. And this is, according to Thormählen, what makes these two characters attain the lasting happiness that few of the others seem to have.

Nelly described their relationship after the slight conflict:

> . . . they were thick again, and as busy as possible, in their several occupations, of pupil, and teacher. . . . His honest, warm, and intelligent nature shook off rapidly the clouds of ignorance and degradation in which it had been bred; and Catherine's sincere commendations acted as a spur to his industry. His brightening mind brightened his features, and added spirit and nobility to their aspect: I could hardly fancy it the same individual I had beheld on the day I discovered my little lady at Wuthering Heights, after her expedition to the crags. . . . The red firelight glowed on their two bonny heads, and revealed their faces, animated with the eager interest of children; for, though he was twenty-three, and she eighteen, each had so much of novelty to feel and learn, that neither experienced nor evinced the sentiments of sober disenchanted maturity. (Brontë 385)

Nelly's assumptions here make it clear the relationship was contributing for the learning of both Hareton and Cathy, once they were benefiting from knowing each other and comprehending their differences. According to Wollstonecraft, "[m]ankind, including every description, wish to be loved and respected by something", and woman should not be loved

only “on account of her sex” or because she acts as a servant to the man (ch. 4). In Cathy and Hareton’s relationship, there was a bond formed by sharing and acknowledging the other as a subject, which would be the best ground for a marriage. They encountered in the other both relatability and otherness, as the moral ideal promoted by Marxism.

Nelly continued saying the couple lifted their eyes from the paper to Mr. Heathcliff, when the latter arrived, and she noticed how their eyes were precisely similar to those of Catherine Earnshaw. While Cathy had little likeness to her mother, Hareton’s resemblance was evident: “it is singular, at all times – then it was particularly striking: because his senses were alert, and his mental faculties wakened to unwonted activity” (Brontë 385). Nelly supposed the resemblance was what disarmed Heathcliff, who walked to the hearth in agitation, took the book from Hareton, glanced at the open page and gave it back without any observation.

After the couple had departed and only Nelly was still in the room, Heathcliff discoursed about how now he did not have the will that made him start his revenge, for he had lost the capacity of enjoying the suffering of his enemies:

> My old enemies have not beaten me; now would be the precise time to revenge myself on their representatives: I could do it; and none could hinder me. But where is the use? I don’t care for striking: I can’t make the trouble to raise my hand! That sounds as if I had been labouring the whole time, only to exhibit a fine trait of magnanimity. It is far from being the case – I have lost the faculty of enjoying their destruction, and I am too idle to destroy for nothing. (386).

Heathcliff claimed he had no interest in his daily life, and often forgot to eat and drink. He also declared Cathy and Hareton had given him pain, because they would invoke past associations. Everything reminded him of Catherine Earnshaw, and he exclaimed “Hareton’s

aspect was the ghost of my immortal love, of my wild endeavors to hold my right, my degradation, my pride, my happiness, and my anguish" (387). Nelly told Lockwood she was inclined to believe, as Joseph did, that "conscience had turned his heart to an earthly hell" (388).

The passages quoted above, on Heathcliff's suffering, do not concern Catherine's or Cathy's actions, which would be the scope of this research. However, they are pertinent to illustrate part of the moral dimension of the novel, which has much of the Christian ethos. According to Thormählen, failed revenge is a crucial component of the ethics of *Wuthering Heights*, for "hatred, wherever it manifests itself, is a compact obstacle to any kind of satisfaction, ensuring that the hater is cut off from the healing operations of love" (Thormählen 645). Happiness, in Brontë's novel, is related to the ability to forgive, which we see in Edgar, Cathy and Hareton. These three characters have acknowledged what had been done to them, but did not let the suffering take over their lives. Their actions agreed with the claims made by Sartre, when states that, although a person has to take his decisions considering a past that he cannot modify, the meaning of this past will be given in accordance to what this person intends to do in the present – "the only force of the past comes to it from the future" (*Being and Nothingness* 475). This means, what happened to Cathy, Edgar and Hareton would only mean what they would make it mean, according to what they would choose to make of their lives after those experiences.

On the other hand, Heathcliff seemed unhappy despite having fulfilled his plan and achieving the results he wanted out of it. He has obtained Edgar's property and married Cathy and Linton, so he was now the owner of both Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights. However, as Scanlon has defined, a person's well-being does not depend exclusively on his success on his goals: "many goods that contribute to a person's well-being depend on the person's aims but go beyond the good of success in achieving those aims. These include such

things as friendship, other valuable personal relations, and the achievement of various forms of excellence, such as in art or science" (125). Heathcliff manifested then his lack of purpose to Nelly, having discovered that, apart from material property and the feeling of revenge, he had nothing.

In the last chapter of the narrative, number 34, Nelly continued her recounting of what happened while Lockwood was in London. She mentioned how Heathcliff had isolated himself and eaten little, and Hareton and Cathy have continued arranging their garden. Heathcliff has acquired the habit to wonder in the moors at night, and Nelly began to wonder if he could be a ghoul or a vampire – "I had read of such hideous, incarnate demons" (Brontë 393-394) – evidencing one more time how her reasoning was greatly influenced by the Christian dogma. One night, when Heathcliff declared to Nelly how unhappy he felt with what had become of his life, she gave him the following advice:

> You are aware, Mr Heathcliff, . . . that from the time you were thirteen years old, you have lived a selfish, unchristian life; and probably hardly had a Bible in your hands during all that period. . . . Could it be hurtful to send for someone – some minister of any denomination, it does not matter which, to explain it, and show you how very far you have erred from its precepts, and how unfit you will be for its heaven, unless a change takes place before you die? (398)

Nelly, as a Christian woman, attributed Heathcliff's suffering and lack of purpose to the fact that he had been for a long time distant from the Christian faith. This can be attributed to the ideology she lived by, as she would have been trained in "certain practices of self-discipline", which would include Christian values (Rivkin and Ryan 237). As we could see in the first chapters of the novel, when she recounted Heathcliff and Catherine's infancy, the children used to disrespect Joseph and his orders for them to read their Bibles. And, as we have also

seen in my analysis of chapter 3, Catherine Earnshaw was not portrayed through a favorable light by Nelly.

In the following evening, Nelly found Heathcliff dead in his room, with his eyes opened. She tried to close them, but it was not possible. Joseph attributed this to an encounter with the devil – "Th' divil's harried off his soul" (Brontë 400). Nelly said Hareton was the only one who really suffered: "He sat by the corpse all night, weeping in bitter earnest. He pressed its hand, and kissed the sarcastic, savage face that everyone else shrank from contemplating; and bemoaned him with that strong grief which springs naturally from a generous heart, though it be tough as tempered steel" (400-401).

Nelly told Lockwood that some country folks said Heathcliff's ghost walked around the area, and a boy told her he had seen Heathcliff with a woman, in the moors. Nelly claimed she did not believe those tales, but also did not feel comfortable alone in the house in Wuthering Heights. She said she looked forward to when Hareton and Cathy would move to the Grange, and take her with them – "'They are going to the Grange, then?' I said. 'Yes,' answered Mrs Dean, 'as soon as they are married; and that will be on New Year's Day'" (402). Lockwood then saw Cathy and Hareton coming back from their walk in the gardens and looking at each other under the moonlight. He declared "*They* are afraid of nothing, . . . Together, they would brave satan and all his legions" (402). This was the last time Cathy was mentioned in the narrative.

About Lockwood's words, Tytler claims he "by the end of the novel has practically transformed Cathy into a fictional heroine" and this is caused by the presentation of Cathy as fundamentally a fearless person ("The Presentation" 35). But Lockwood's interpretation is biased, once we have seen he attempted to perceive Cathy as an object. According to Newman, *Wuthering Heights* illustrates, through the situation of Lockwood as a narrator,

"[t]he role of onlooker, the conventional position of the masculine spectator with respect to the feminine spectacle" (Newman 1034). The novel suggests the gaze is not a position of complete control, but it even opens a space of resistance towards that control. The voyeur then defends himself against the threat of the returning look of a woman by objectifying her, "by telling her story, writing it down in his diary, and seeking in this oblique way to make it – and her – his own." (1034). This is how Lockwood managed to restore the sense of control he had lost when Cathy first returned his stare.

Furthermore, Lockwood's view of Cathy as a heroine fits in a type of judgement already debated by Wollstonecraft, when she exposed how women were not perceived as reasonable creatures. They would be thought of as heroines or brutes, being once again objectified by men. Cathy was not a heroine from a fiction, but a fearless woman, because she would determine her own future. According to Wollstonecraft, "[t]he being who can govern itself has nothing to fear in life" (sec. 5.4). This was the feature in Cathy's character that Lockwood was not capable to understand completely.

Chapter IV – Mother and Daughter

Catherine Earnshaw and Catherine Linton were thought of by Brontë as mother and daughter who carried the same first name, and this could lead us to think of them as similar in personality. In fact, the trajectory of both women along *Wuthering Heights* and some of the features of their characters are similar. However, the differences between the two are many and extremely significant for understanding the novel in its revolutionary and feminist form. This is the reason why this chapter is dedicated to the comparison of mother and daughter, Catherine and Cathy, through their moral choices and the consequences thereof in the long term.

This chapter will be divided in five sections as an order of aspects that must be contemplated to have an accurate comparison between Catherine and Cathy. In Section 1, I will discuss how, in some situations, these characters acted in agreement with the Victorian standards for women and, in other moments, their actions represented transgressions of these values. In Section 2, I will be describing how mother and daughter were perceived by the men in the novel, as well as by Nelly, as a patriarchal figure. Section 3 will be dedicated to the analyses of attitudes from mother and daughter that would be classified, according to Sartre's Existentialism, as acts of good or bad faith. In Section 4, I will be covering their relationships with their respective romantic interests – Catherine's relationships with Heathcliff and Edgar compared to Cathy's relationships with Linton and Hareton. My last section, number 5, will then be about the level of fulfillment and satisfaction I can attribute to each character in the moment the narrative shows an end to their trajectories, basing myself on Scanlon's concept of well-being.

Section 1 – How Catherine and Cathy stand in regard to Victorian standards

On the first aspect of this discussion, we may notice how some of the actions of Catherine and Cathy's may be judged as in agreement with the Victorian standards for women. For instance, in chapters 7 and 8, Catherine seemed to have forgotten her relationship with Heathcliff since she began to be attracted to Edgar and to the gentry life the Lintons had. She made fun of Heathcliff for being dirty and rejected his effort to rebuild their friendship. The boy showed her the calendar in which he had marked the time Catherine had spent with him and with Edgar, which she scorned. With such an attitude, Catherine would be distancing herself from the less privileged social groups, acting in agreement with the prevalent ideology in Victorian society.

Cathy, being born in this world of the gentry, also distanced herself from the servants when she joined Linton in making fun of Hareton's lack of knowledge. Nelly narrated their conversation: "Have you noticed, Catherine, his frightful Yorkshire pronunciation?' 'Why, where the devil is the use on 't?' growled Hareton, more ready in answering his daily companion. He was about to enlarge further, but the two youngsters broke into a noisy fit of merriment" (271). However, one difference I can highlight is that Cathy's perspective was full of prejudice because of the way she was raised. She got attached to Linton as she saw in him her similar, in opposition to her mother, that seemed to forget her previous friendship with Heathcliff. Although this evaluation would have little to do with Victorian standards, this event demonstrated Catherine's lack of loyalty to friends, as well as a preference to opt for what is more convenient for her, regardless of other people's feelings. These small situations add up to the state she is to be found in her deathbed, which I will analyze in Section 5. From these early chapters, the reader is already prepared as to what to expect from her as a character.

On the contrary to the examples above, I can point out many situations in which the attitudes of either mother or daughter constituted transgressions of the Victorian standards for women. In chapter 5, Nelly recounted Catherine Earnshaw seemed to have fun in being disobedient and reproved by the adults – ". . . she was never so happy as when we were all scolding her at once, and she defying us with her bold, saucy look, and her ready words" (67). We did not see this feature in Cathy, even though we saw disobedience sometimes. We have one example in chapter 21, when she argued with her father about why she could not see Linton: "But Mr Heathcliff was quite cordial, papa . . . *You* are the one to be blamed: he is willing to let *us* be friends, at least; Linton and I; and you are not" (273). Cathy also ran away when prohibited to see her cousin and, after imprisoned in Wuthering Heights, could not see how Linton would simply obey his father in his plan to take her there. After the boy claimed he was threatened by Heathcliff, Cathy exclaimed "keep your secret, *I'm* no coward – save yourself: I'm not afraid!" (323). Therefore, Cathy did not blindly obey, but we could not see an instance in which she would show joy in defying authority, as it was observed of her mother.

Besides Catherine's apparent pleasure in disobedience, we can consider she lived in disagreement to what was expected from girls in the Victorian England. According to Wollstonecraft's considerations on the infancy of girls, they were perceived to be naturally inclined to play with dolls in confined spaces: "To render it weak, and what some may call beautiful, the understanding is neglected, and girls forced to sit still, play with dolls and listen to foolish conversations; – the effect of habit is insisted upon as an undoubted indication of nature" (sec. 5.1). Catherine would instead run across the moors with Heathcliff, leaving her shoes behind. In chapter 6, Mr. Linton even repudiated the way her brother raised her, attributing the unexpected habits of the girl to his lack of discipline: "'What culpable carelessness in her brother!' exclaimed Mr Linton, turning from me to Catherine. 'I've

understood from Shielders' (that was the curate, sir) 'that he lets her grow up in absolute heathenism" (76). Cathy Linton's infancy, on the other hand, was quite the opposite from her mother, since she grew up secluded, prohibited to go beyond the gates of the Grange. However, she was curious and, as I acknowledged in my analysis of her behavior, ended up running away several times.

Catherine did not respect her father as the head of the house, as we can see from this passage in chapter 5: "Why cannot you always be a good man, father?" (68). After married, neither did she respect her husband. Catherine enforced the company of Heathcliff on Edgar and quarreled with him for not accepting it, showing a rebellious attitude towards the institution of marriage, as well as no consideration for Edgar's wishes. As claimed by Mill, in the eyes of the law, the wife was servant to her husband, "[s]he promises life-long obedience to him at the altar" (17). Therefore, Catherine disrupted the patriarchal order of the ideal Victorian home, in which the authority of the husband was not to be questioned. She has never behaved as the lady of the house was supposed to, and was not contained by the gentry home in which she lived.

Catherine did not accept to be treated as a possession and to be limited by Edgar. The moment she opened the door of her chamber after three days locked, in chapter 12, she said to her husband:

> I suppose we shall have plenty of lamentations now . . . I see we shall. . . but they can't keep me from my narrow home out yonder: my resting-place, where I'm bound before spring is over! There it is: not among the Lintons, mind, under the chapel-roof, but in the open air, with a headstone; and you may please yourself, whether you go to them or come to me! . . . What you touch at present you may have; but my soul will be on that hilltop before you lay hands on me again. I don't want you, Edgar: I'm past

> wanting you. Return to your books. I'm glad you possess a consolation, for all you had in me is gone. (Brontë 165-166)

This speech demonstrates how Catherine refused to sacrifice her own will for what Edgar wanted. This can be analyzed as a lack of empathy and a great deal of selfishness, but also as a rebellious and feminist move. She was assertive on what was a priority to her and did not let a man restrict her life. We can also see this rebellious attitude in her daughter Cathy through her relationship with Linton, for she would not let him treat her with disrespect. For instance, in chapter 24, after she visited her cousin and was received with an unhappy temper and false accusations, Cathy came back with a resolution: "As you don't like me, Linton, and as you think I come on purpose to hurt you, and pretend that I do so every time, this is our last meeting: let us say goodbye" (308). This passage shows that Cathy imposed boundaries to Linton, limiting his behavior when she felt abused. Similarly to her mother, Cathy was disruptive of the Victorian standards for women, which would expect her to be passively obedient to men.

Another instance of Cathy's rebellion against male authority can be seen in chapter 27, after she was kidnapped by Heathcliff. She stared back at her uncle and claimed the key in order to leave the house: "'Give me that key: I will have it!' she said. 'I wouldn't eat or drink here, if I were starving.'" (326). In chapter 33, she also defied Heathcliff's authority attempting to put Hareton against him. Cathy questioned her situation, and would not merely accept a life of servitude, only taking orders. In chapter 32, Nelly narrated Cathy was curious about how Hareton could live this way:

> . . . [she] became incapable of letting him alone: talking at him, commenting on his stupidity and idleness; expressing her wonder how he could endure the life he lived – how he could sit a whole evening staring into the fire, and dozing. 'He's just like a

> dog, is he not, Ellen?' she once observed, 'or a carthorse? He does his work, eats his food, and sleeps, eternally! What a blank, dreary mind he must have! Do you ever dream, Hareton?" (371-372)

Cathy compared the life of a servant to that of an animal. Not only did she have a rebellious attitude towards the Victorian ideal of the subservient woman, but she also did not comprehend how anybody could agree to that.

It is worth pointing out that Cathy taught Hareton to read, something that would not be expected from a woman in the Victorian Age. According to Wollstonecraft's considerations on the infancy of girls, they were expected to "learn with reluctance to read and write; but very readily apply themselves to the use of their needles" (sec. 5.1). Therefore, if the relationship between Hareton and Cathy was a typical interaction between a man and a woman in Victorian England, Cathy would be the illiterate one. Thus, the portrait of the couple as we have in the narrative shows, among several other aspects, how *Wuthering Heights* challenged the ideology of its time.

Section 2 – Catherine and Cathy as seen by patriarchal characters

I will now continue my analysis of mother and daughter from the way they were perceived by the men around them, as well as by Nelly, a perpetuator of the patriarchal oppression even though being a woman. During Catherine Earnshaw's infancy, we can begin to see her rebellion against the rules of her home and Joseph's demands for her to read her Bible. She and Heathcliff responded with a remarkable sign of disrespect towards tradition and authority: "I took my dingy volume by the scroop, and hurled it into the dog-kennel, vowing I hated a good book. Heathcliff kicked his to the same place" (Brontë 44). Through

my analysis of Catherine, in chapter III of this dissertation, we could see the main reason why Joseph made such a negative judgement of both her and Cathy. Their behavior opposed to his expectations for women, which would consist in habits such as reading the Bible, doing household tasks and being obedient to men.

When Heathcliff ran away, in chapter 9, Nelly mentioned that Catherine went to look for him in the moors, at night and under rain. When she was back, after Hindley has asked what would have driven her outside in those circumstances, Nelly recounted the answer given by Joseph:

> 'Running after t' lads, as usuald!' . . . 'If Aw wur yah, maister, Aw'd just slam t' boards i' their faces all on 'em, gentle and simple! Never a day ut yah're off, but yon cat uh Linton comes sneaking hither; and Miss Nelly shoo's a fine lass! shoo sits watching for ye i' t' kitchen; and as yah're in at one door, he's aht at t' other; und, then, wer grand lady goes a coorting uf hor side! It's bonny behaviour, lurking amang t' fields, after twelve ut' night, wi' that fahl, flaysome divil uf a gipsy, Heathcliff! (118-119)

Joseph called Hindley's attention to some of Catherine's attitudes that he did not approve and, consequently, did not expect it to be approved by his master as well. This would consist in spending her time going after boys – with the additional fact that one of them was a gypsy – and leaving the house after midnight. Therefore, as affirmed by Myburgh, "Joseph's hatred for Catherine and fear of Cathy's influence, as well as his resultant belief that they are witches, hinges largely on their female sexuality" (Myburgh 65). As a result of having the 'myth of woman' latent in his mind as a man, he equated what, for the customs of the Age, would be considered sexual deviance, to witchcraft and eternal damnation, and regarded this behavior as a threat to male power. In addition, Catherine's response to his accusation was

also deviating from what would be expected of a woman – “Silence, eavesdropper! . . . None of your insolence, before me!” (Brontë 119). Catherine did not show any of the respect Joseph would have expected to receive from whom was to be the lady of the house.

When Lockwood visited Wuthering Heights for the first time in chapter 2, we also saw Cathy not acting the host, as would be considered the natural behavior for a lady. As affirmed by Mill, a woman was “expected to have her time and abilities always at the disposal of everybody” (44). Hence, Lockwood was surprised by Cathy’s aim to continue doing her own tasks in the presence of a visitor. This could be another attitude that would relate her to her rebellious mother. However, we must acknowledge that, even though Cathy had shown some disobedience before, her behavior during the scene just described was a consequence of the suffering she was put through. This suffering was evidenced by Lockwood’s description of her eyes: “the only sentiment they evinced hovered between scorn and a kind of desperation . . .” (Brontë 32). It is worth pointing out that Lockwood perceived these feelings as “singularly unnatural to be detected there”, in the expression of a lady (32).

Shortly after, Joseph called Cathy out for spending some time in idleness, comparing the girl to her mother: “yah’ll niver mend uh yer ill ways; bud, goa raight tuh t’ divil, like yer mother afore ye!” (37). Cathy answered the insult with a threat: “‘I’ll show you how far I’ve progressed in the Black Art: I shall soon be competent to make a clear house of it. The red cow didn’t die by chance; and your rheumatism can hardly be reckoned among providential visitations!’ (37). Joseph left praying and calling Cathy wicked. The servant’s fear that what Cathy said could be true showed how the ‘myth of woman’, as conceptualized by Beauvoir, would be a constant in his mind. The myth portrayed woman as an incarnation of nature and, as so, “[s]he can hold the keys to *poetry*; she can be *mediatrix* between this world and the beyond: grace or oracle, star or sorceress, she opens the door to the supernatural, the surreal” (Beauvoir 272). Nature inspired ambivalent feelings in man, “[h]e exploits her, but she

crushes him, he is born of her and dies in her" (170). Beauvoir added that, in most of the popular representations of Death, it was a woman, and women were expected to bewail the dead because "death is their work" (173). Then, the idea of Cathy as a witch would be, for Joseph, highly credible.

As we have seen in my analysis of Cathy in chapter IV of this dissertation, Albert Myburgh claimed, in his article "Cathy's Subversive 'Black Art' in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*", that the witch motif was used "to explore the novel's depiction of nineteenth-century anxieties surrounding threats to patriarchy, and of expectations around women's domesticity and role in society" (Myburgh 61). In this passage, then, Joseph interpreted Cathy as a sinful woman according to the religious lens through which he saw the world. Cathy, on her turn, used this perspective, which she does not seem to share, to defend herself through frightening Joseph. As claimed by Myburgh, "Cathy's appropriation of the 'Black Art' shows how superstitions that were initially encouraged, and that then evolved to protect patriarchal power, can be turned against that power" (69). She appropriated the role of the witch to assert her position in a place she was destitute of her patrimony, as well as physically and mentally abused. This way, *Wuthering Heights* explored the possibility women would have of subverting the patriarchal system by means of its own anxieties.

In addition, it is worth highlighting the strong Christian values behind every one of Joseph's speeches in the novel. His interpretation of Cathy's character, then, reflects Beauvoir's concept of the 'myth of woman' specifically in relation to the Christian dogma, which emphasized that women would possess some kind of dangerous character. In the Bible, Adam was led to sin by Eve and, from the time of Gregory VI, celibacy was imposed on priests, due to the supposed danger of being a prey to women – "Christianity poured out its scorn upon them, but accepted them as a necessary evil" (Beauvoir 126). The Christian, for the Feminist writer, was divided within himself, through the separation between body and

soul. Since “sin makes of the body the enemy of the soul”, all desire related to the flesh would seem evil (192). Then, a woman’s sexuality would represent evil.

We can notice Joseph manifesting this perception of Cathy’s sexuality in chapter 33, when he entered the house angry at having seen some bushes pulled up in the garden and Heathcliff suggested it would be some quarrel between him and Nelly. He replied:

> It’s noan Nelly! . . . Aw sudn’t shift fur Nelly – Nasty, ill nowt as shoo is, Thank God! Shoo cannot stale t’ sowl uh nob’dy! Shoo wer niver soa handsome, bud whet a body mud look at her ’baht winking. It’s yon flaysome, graceless quean, ut’s witched ahr lad, wi’ her bold een, un’ her forrard ways – till – Nay! It fair brusts my heart! He’s forgotten all E done for him, un made on him, un’ goan un’ riven up a whole row ut t’ grandest currant trees, i’ t’ garden! (Brontë 381)

Joseph perceived Cathy’s beauty as a threat to the control men would exercise upon her. As affirmed by Myburgh, “ . . . the servant equates beauty with both sexual deviance and eternal damnation. He suggests, then, that only *beautiful* women possess the ability to undercut the established order, specifically as a result of their sexuality . . . ” (Myburgh 66). Joseph made it clear he did not believe Nelly was the one to contradict his orders about the garden, since she was not attractive enough for him. Cathy, on the other hand, would have made use of her beauty to steal Hareton’s soul, as a sort of witchcraft. Beauvoir has claimed it would be disquieting for men to see a woman “who makes free use of her attractiveness” (216). She recounted women having been burned, accused to be witches, for the simple reason that they were beautiful. The ‘myth of woman’ kept this ancient fear alive.

At this point, it is important to review the relevance of the female gaze in men’s perceptions of Catherine and Cathy. As claimed by Beth Newman in her article “‘The Situation of the Looker-On’: Gender, Narration, and Gaze in *Wuthering Heights*”, Western

culture had the gaze constructed as a male privilege, a way of putting women in the state of objects: “Through Catherine [Linton], the text parodically inscribes the dynamics involved in the gaze and articulates the psychological fact that when a woman looks back she asserts her ‘existence’ as a subject, her place outside the position of object to which the male gaze relegates her and by which it defines her as ‘woman’” (Newman 1032). This claim was similar to Beauvoir’s, when she stated that the ideal of beauty men would look for in a woman was variable, but what persisted was their demand that women would “present the inert and passive qualities of an object”, for they were destined to be possessions (183).

Lockwood, as the majority of men in Victorian England, would then expect to gaze at Cathy without being gazed in return, as if he was appreciating a work of art. That is the reason why, in chapter 2, Cathy made the visitor uneasy by asserting her existence and not letting him perceive her as his object of delight. When Cathy threatened Joseph by claiming she had progressed in Black Art, Lockwood described his impressions: “The little witch put a mock malignity into her beautiful eyes, and Joseph, trembling with sincere horror, hurried out praying and ejaculating ‘wicked’ as he went” (Brontë 38). By their reactions, we can state that both men saw something evil in Cathy’s eyes, and she used the threat her gaze represented to frighten Joseph, making sure he knew she was looking at him.

In chapter 27, we see Cathy’s demand that Heathcliff would look at her while she begged to be free from him: “. . . I’ll not take my eyes from your face, till you look back at me! No, don’t turn away! *Do* look! You’ll see nothing to provoke you” (332). Cathy’s attitude here was rebellious considering the patriarchal standard behavior for women, which was based on adamant obedience. She asserted her existence and demanded that Heathcliff would admit this. Shortly after, Cathy made another move:

> She stepped close up; her black eyes flashing with passion and resolution. 'Give me that key: I will have it!' she said. 'I wouldn't eat or drink here, if I were starving.' Heathcliff has the key in his hand that remained on the table. He looked up, seized with a sort of surprise at her boldness; or, possibly, reminded by her voice and glance, of the person from whom she inherited it. (326)

Nelly mentioned Heathcliff did not seem to be expecting such "boldness" from Cathy, and both her voice and her eyes would have probably reminded him of Catherine. Therefore, the power we see in Cathy's gaze would have been inherited from her mother, who also defied the men around her.

During chapter 33, Cathy returned Heathcliff's look, as described by Nelly: "Catherine [Linton] met it with her accustomed look of nervousness, and yet defiance, which he abhorred" (380). Her uncle then exclaimed, in anger, "[w]hat fiend possesses you to stare back at me, continually, with those infernal eyes? Down with them! And don't remind me of your existence again" (380). Heathcliff related the girl's eyes to a view of Hell, which is in agreement with Newman's perspective that "Catherine [Linton]'s imprudently assertive look makes her a monstrous woman to almost every male character in the novel" (Newman 1032). The novel suggests the gaze is not a position of complete control, but it even opens a space of resistance towards that control. It "revises domestic relations to suggest mutuality, not the unequal power relations of male dominance" (1036).

Now concentrating on Nelly as a patriarchal figure in the novel, we can notice she presented the first Catherine in an unfavorable light during the whole novel[13]. Nelly even omitted information that could have prevented her mistress's decay and death, as we can see

[13] Although an analysis of *Wuthering Heights* through a Marxist perspective as I have presented would call for a deeper discussion of Nelly and Heathcliff – for they are characters from a working class –, I chose to limit the scope of my research to Catherine and Cathy. A moral analysis of Nelly and Heathcliff is then open to future exploration.

in this passage from chapter 12: “Mrs Linton on the third day, unbarred her door, and having finished the water in her pitcher and decanter, desired a renewed supply, and a basin of gruel, for she believed she was dying. That I set down as a speech meant for Edgar’s ears; I believed no such thing, so I kept it to myself” (Brontë 157). On the other hand, Nelly’s opinions on Cathy were almost always favorable, containing several remarks on her beauty. According to Tytler, this would represent the perspective of beauty as related to character – “. . . for physiognomists such as Lavater no less than for those of classical antiquity, beauty is a sign of moral virtue” (“The Presentation” 33).

In chapter 9, Catherine mentioned to Nelly she believed she was not made to be in Heaven and, therefore, neither was she made to marry Edgar: “. . . heaven did not seem to be my home; and I broke my heart with weeping to come back to earth; . . . I’ve no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven” (Brontë 111). As we can see from Nelly’s response, “[a]ll sinners would be miserable in heaven”, the servant perceived her mistress as a sinner (110). In chapter 11, Nelly manifested a doubt if Catherine would be faking her own illness not only for her husband: “. . . I believed a person who could pan the turning of her fits of passion to account, beforehand, might, by exerting her will, manage to control herself tolerably, even while under their influence” (154). We must keep in mind that, as a narrator, Nelly directed the readers in their evaluation of Catherine and Cathy, and her disapproval of Catherine is evident. As claimed by McBride, Catherine and Nelly embodied the two archetypical women in early Gothic literature, “the submissive woman who accepts her role in the established patriarchy, and thrives in it (Nelly); and the woman who attempts to fight this established order, never hiding her ‘passionate’ nature, eventually being destroyed for this rebellion (Catherine)” (McBride 49). Thus, Nelly, as a representative of the patriarchy, shed a negative light on Catherine’s character during the whole narrative, as opposed to her daughter Cathy.

According to Shunami, “Nelly offers Lockwood the illusion of deciding for himself the significance of what occurs in her story. But in fact she is the one who directs him to evaluate, in accordance with her will, the characters and the nature of their deeds” (Shunami, 464). In addition, the fondness Lockwood had for Cathy from his first day at Wuthering Heights created a distorted perception of her mother: “. . . just as he exaggerates in refashioning Cathy as an enchanted romantic figure, he likewise overdoes Catherine's striking demonic image” (460). As claimed by Woodring, these two characters are not only narrators and interpreters, but also actors in the plot:

> Lockwood does not merely hear the tale in a tavern in Leeds; he dreams in the paneled bed beside the ghostly window and himself threatens to interrupt the final purgation and the happy-ever-after. As Heathcliff intrudes from some netherworld, Lockwood intrudes from the city. Mrs. Dean belongs. From the time she takes Hindley’s knife between her teeth, she perfects the symbols. She interweaves Heathcliff's hair with Edgar’s for Catherine’s locket; at the end she combs the hair of the dead Heathcliff and closes the window. (Woodring, 305)

Their lack of empathy may confuse the reader, as Lockwood can be understood as skeptical and “the average London reader” (301). However, in her article “Women writers, women’s issues”, Flint described both him and Nelly as foils “through which we learn of passion”, and a device to put the readers in the privileged position of recognizing desire in its presence and power (Flint, 177). Then, if the reader of *Wuthering Heights* aims to understand what happens below the surface of the story, he must consider the unreliability of both Nelly and Lockwood as narrators. I must analyze Catherine and Cathy keeping in mind that they are presented through the lens of patriarchal characters.

Section 3 – Acts of bad and good faith

Outside from the perspectives of other characters, I will now be discussing some of Catherine's and Cathy's actions which, according to Sartre's claims in *Existentialism is a Humanism*, may be regarded as of bad or good faith. In several instances of the narrative, we see Catherine lying. She lied about slapping Nelly in chapter 8 and attempted to fake an illness for her husband in chapter 11 – "And, Nelly, say to Edgar, if you see him again tonight, that I'm in danger of being seriously ill. I wish it may prove true. He has startled and distressed me shockingly! I want to frighten him" (Brontë 153). Through these examples, we can see in Catherine a tendency to cover the truth with some story when it is convenient for her. As Tytler claimed, she is "quick to fall back on lies, especially when she finds herself on the horns of a dilemma in her quest to retain Edgar Linton's early interest in her without forfeiting Heathcliff's friendship" ("An Amoral Novel" 197).

Catherine's justification, according to Sartre, would make her attitude one of bad faith, since she was punishing Edgar for restraining the exercise of her passions. Because he has distressed her not letting her do as she wanted, she felt she had the right to frighten him with an invented disease. This may also be interpreted as avoidance to bear responsibility for her own choices. Catherine has chosen to marry Edgar, but not to cut communication with Heathcliff, even though she was warned that this would be expected. In chapter 9, when Catherine manifested to Nelly her decision to marry Edgar, the maid pointed out:

> As soon as you become Mrs Linton, [Heathcliff] loses friend, and love, and all! Have you considered how you'll bear the separation, and how he'll bear to be quite deserted in the world? Because, Miss Catherine –'
>
> 'He quite deserted! We separated!' she exclaimed, with an accent of indignation. 'Who is to separate us, pray? They'll meet the fate of Milo! Not as long as I live,

> Ellen: for no mortal creature. Every Linton on the face of the earth might melt into nothing, before I could consent to forsake Heathcliff. Oh, that's not what I intend – that's not what I mean! I shouldn't be Mrs Linton were such a price demanded! He'll be as much to me as he has been all his lifetime. Edgar must shake off his antipathy, and tolerate him, at least. He will, when he learns my true feelings towards him. (112)

Catherine also justified her choice with her intention to help Heathcliff with her wealth, a move Nelly also reproved:

> Nelly, I see now, you think me a selfish wretch; but did it never strike you that if Heathcliff and I married, we should be beggars? Whereas, if I marry Linton, I can aid Heathcliff to rise, and place him out of my brother's power.'
>
> 'With your husband's money, Miss Catherine?' I asked. 'You'll find him not so pliable as you calculate upon: and though I'm hardly a judge, I think that's the worst motive you've given yet for being the wife of young Linton.' (112)

Therefore, Catherine's separation from Heathcliff was a condition that Nelly has warned her about before her marriage, and that was later on reinforced by Edgar's reprobation of the friend's visits. She did not choose to be with one of the man completely and, according to Sartre, ". . . if I decide not to choose, that still constitutes a choice" (*Existentialism* 44). Therefore, Catherine had to face the consequences of her earlier negligence.

We also saw Cathy Linton omitting facts sometimes. But, contrary to her mother, her motives to sacrifice truth were for somebody else's well-being, such as in her hidden relationship with Linton. She visited him every time she had promised to go, crying on the prospect of having to disappoint her cousin. She justified the times she ran away to Wuthering Heights with her worry about Linton:

> It was not to amuse myself that I went: I was often wretched all the time. Now and then, I was happy: once in a week perhaps. At first, I expected there would be sad work persuading you to let me keep my word to Linton: for I had engaged to call again next day, when we quitted him; . . . while Michael was refastening the lock of the park door in the afternoon, I got possession of the key, and told him how my cousin wished me to visit him, because he was sick, and couldn't come to the Grange; (300)

Through this passage, we can see Cathy did not opt for lying because it was convenient for her. On the contrary, she was 'wretched' often. Her motives were the keeping of promises and the happiness of someone else, and not her own passions or some deterministic theory. Therefore, Cathy acted in good faith.

Another example of this attitude can be seen in her choice of omitting her suffering from Edgar, in agreement to Nelly's plan of not disturbing him in his death bed – "She stared, but soon comprehending why I counselled her to utter the falsehood, she assured me she would not complain." (Brontë 341). Cathy's actions in this passage showed her sense of responsibility towards her choices. Besides wanting to spare her father from pointless suffering in his last minutes alive, she was aware it had been her own decision to escape the safe place he provided for her, and now she would face the consequences of her disobedience alone.

I can also state some differences between mother and daughter in the way they acted or reacted to violence. In chapter 8, Catherine acted violently towards both Nelly and Hareton, while the boy was still a toddler. After slapping Nelly, Catherine tried to avoid being held accountable for her actions by calling Nelly a liar. Her nephew, who had seen the maid crying and complained against "wicked aunt Cathy", was then her next victim (100).

After marrying Edgar, she overlooked the violence that Heathcliff was about to inflict on Isabella and even subjected her own husband to an eminent risk of harassment – “If you have not the courage to attack him, make an apology, or allow yourself to be beaten” (151). Her violence towards Hareton, Nelly and Edgar does not seem justifiable, other than by her own passions. She limited Edgar’s freedom locking him in the kitchen, as she did to Isabella by omitting information that was crucial for her decision to marry Heathcliff. Thus, Catherine acted in bad faith.

On the opposite situation of her mother, we see Cathy being target to Heathcliff’s physical violence in chapter 27 as well as to Linton’s psychological one in chapter 28. Her reactions were also distinct from Catherine’s, as we can see when the boy stated that all she used to have would be his, and Cathy gave him the portrait she had on her necklace. The girl, instead of responding accordingly to the violence she suffered, showed Linton the other cheek. She was resigned as she sacrificed her own wishes and feelings, giving Linton the last thing she had, in agreement to Christian dogma.

In marriage, I can also state significative differences between the trajectories of Catherine and Cathy. Catherine escaped from “a disorderly comfortless home into a wealthy, respectable one”, while her daughter made the opposite change (109). The mother, in facing a choice between Heathcliff and Edgar, chose the latter for his possessions and social status, in order to be “the greatest woman in the neighbourhood” (108). This is a justification based on passions, besides the fact that Catherine, in a conversation with Nelly, backed up her choice saying she would help Heathcliff to rise with Edgar’s money. She claimed that “there is or should be an existence of yours beyond you” (113). She continued fabricating what Sartre conceptualized as a deterministic theory: “What were the use of my creation, if I were entirely contained here?” (113). Therefore, we can see Catherine’s decision was made in bad faith.

A similarity between Cathy and her mother would be the defying of the standard behavior for women in the nineteenth century by actively choosing a partner. Cathy sent love letters to Linton after Edgar prohibited their communication, and we see her saying to Nelly that she was not going to be kept where the servant and her father wanted her to be, for she was already a woman. She chose to run away from the Grange several times in favor of her own freedom as well as of Linton's. Cathy ended up marrying her cousin compulsorily as a condition to see her father before he was dead. She lost all her property and nursed her sick husband alone until his death, besides having to work for Heathcliff as a servant. As seen in chapter 29, after Edgar died and Heathcliff came to take Cathy back to Wuthering Heights, he claimed ". . . that lass owes me her services for her bread; I'm not going to nurture her in luxury and idleness after Linton is gone" (345).

However, contrary to what could be expected from the situation in which she was, Cathy did not show any hate towards either Linton or his father. She said to Heathcliff "Linton is all I have to love in the world, and, though you have done what you could to make him hateful to me, and me to him, you *cannot* make us hate each other!" (345). In addition, she supposed the origins of her uncle's evil doings: ". . . we shall still have the revenge of thinking that your cruelty arises from your greater misery!" (345). Cathy's actions were in agreement with Sartre's claims in *Being and Nothingness*, when the philosopher refers to overcoming a situation the individual had no power to avoid. Thus, Cathy's freedom could not modify the fact that Heathcliff kidnapped her and now she was married to her cousin, but she could take new decisions in terms of this situation. "[T]he only force of the past comes to it from the future", so the meaning of all that happened to Cathy would be asserted in accordance to what she decided to do after it (*Being and Nothingness* 475). From her level of fulfillment in the end of the narrative, which I will analyze in my final section, we can conclude she has made the best choice.

Catherine Earnshaw showed a lack of empathy for her fellow ones during the narrative. For instance, in chapter 9, when she convinced her husband and brother to send Nelly to the grange, leaving the toddler Hareton without a nursemaid. Nelly narrated:

> Little Hareton was nearly five years old, and I had just begun to teach him his letters. We made a sad parting; but Catherine's tears were more powerful than ours. When I refused to go, and when she found her entreaties did not move me, she went lamenting to her husband and brother. The former offered me munificent wages; the latter ordered me to pack up: he wanted no women in the house, he said, now that there was no mistress; (Brontë 121)

Catherine followed her own inclinations with no regard for others, no compassion. According to the principles elaborated by Sartre, she acted in bad faith, since she did not base her choices on truth and freedom for the others besides herself.

Her daughter Cathy, on the contrary, had several attitudes of altruism and made her decisions thinking about the needs of others. As examples, I can point out her declarations during the time she was kidnapped, right before her marriage to Linton. During her last visit to her cousin before being locked in the house, she questioned his disagreeable conduct after she had left her ill father to be there: "why didn't you send to absolve me from my promise, when you wished I wouldn't keep it?" (322). After Nelly asked Linton to reveal his father's plan, Cathy completed: "Yes, Linton; you must tell . . . It was for your sake I came" (328). She desired that her cousin would take responsibility for his choices, as she did for her own, and that he would have consideration for her father's feelings as well as for hers. Her cousin then begged her to stay, to which she replied, referring to Edgar, "The whole night! What would he think? he'll be distressed already. I'll either break or burn a way out of the house. Be quiet! You're in no danger – but, if you hinder me – Linton, I love papa better than you!"

(329-330). The way Cathy justified her choices showed us how greatly she valued the needs and feelings of others, rather than her own will. She left the Grange because Linton was in need of her, and wanted to come back for the needs of her father.

We do not see Cathy justifying her decision with egoistic reasons or refraining from acknowledging responsibility for her own attitudes. She nursed Edgar, Nelly and Linton until his death, and we have the testimony of Nelly and Zillah on her dedication. When Nelly was sick, she recounted that Cathy's day was devided between her and Edgar, she neglected her personal life to exercise her role as "the fondest nurse that ever watched" (297). Then, when Nelly visited Wuthering Heights in chapter 30, Zillah narrated that, before Linton's death, Cathy was full-time nurse: ". . . she had precious little rest, one could guess by her white face, and heavy eyes . . ." (351). Through her actions, she demonstrated selfless love and empathy. In addition, she made her decisions aiming freedom for herself as well as for others, and not justifying herself with her passions or any deterministic theory. According to Sartre's claims, Cathy acted in good faith.

Section 4 – Relationship dynamics

During the narrative of *Wuthering Heights*, we saw situations and dilemmas that were repeated in Catherine's and Cathy's lives. As claimed by McBride, this shows the importance of the idea of inheritance in Brontë's work, "the past transgressing on the present" (McBride 56). The aspect is evident through the several times Heathcliff saw Catherine's eyes in her daughter's or even in Hareton's. In addition, both women faced major changes in their lives caused by their relationships with men from their social class – Edgar and Linton – and with servants – Heathcliff and Hareton. At this point, I will discuss the

differences between the dynamics of Catherine's relationships with Edgar and Heathcliff and her daughter Cathy's relationships with Linton and Hareton.

Edgar and Catherine's dynamics were based on compliance when one's wishes were attended and resentment when they were not. As we can see in chapter 10, when Catherine tried to enforce Heathcliff's company on Edgar, the latter suddenly stopped being gentle. Catherine narrated:

> Edgar is sulky, because I'm glad of a thing that does not interest him: he refuses to open his mouth, except to utter pettish, silly speeches; and he affirmed I was cruel and selfish for wishing to talk when he was so sick and sleepy. He always contrives to be sick at the least cross! I gave a few sentences of commendation to Heathcliff, and he, either for a headache or a pang of envy, began to cry: so I got up and left him. (Brontë 131)

Here Catherine complained of an attitude that was exactly what we saw her doing later on, in chapter 11, when she attempted to fake an illness to frighten her husband for opposing to her friendship with Heathcliff. On the other hand, when Edgar allowed Catherine to visit Wuthering Heights, she "rewarded him with such a summer of sweetness and affection in return, as made the house a paradise for several days" (134). Catherine did not respect either Edgar or Heathcliff's feelings and did not hold herself accountable for the expectations she encouraged in both men. She demonstrated total disrespect for her marriage and home when she locked Edgar in the kitchen and humiliated him in favor of her relationship with Heathcliff.

In addition, Catherine did not accept to be treated as a possession and to be limited by Edgar, as I have discussed in section 1. I have also pointed out how Cathy would not let Linton treat her with disrespect. However, Cathy and Linton's relationship showed a higher

degree of maturity than her mother's relationships with Edgar or Heathcliff, since it was strongly based on dialogue and problem prevention. The girl demanded that her cousin would be honest about his feelings and motivations, while her mother would resent and eventually let her anger out in an explosion, such as the one we have seen after she locked herself in her room.

In chapter 27, Cathy highlighted the sacrifice she was making for their relationship and implied Linton should not take her for granted. She contested being called from her father's bedside for her cousin to treat her with despise: ". . . playing and trifling are completely banished out of my mind; and I can't dance attendance on your affectations, now!'" (322). Besides making this healthy effort to dialogue, Cathy also took initiative in the maintenance of her relationship with Linton. We can see an instance of this attitude in chapter 24, when she recounted to Nelly how she managed to escape the Heights to see her cousin, after being prohibited: "I gave Michael books and pictures to prepare Minny every evening, and to put her back in the stable: you mustn't scold *him* either, mind" (300). Cathy was then forced to marry Linton and nursed her husband without any help until his death, demonstrating an empathy and altruism we did not see in her mother. As Tytler claimed, ". . . if Cathy's love relationship with Linton can hardly be declared a truly adult one, what is significant about it is the fact that it becomes a means whereby she comes to learn about love in ways that even her mother seems hardly to have known or experienced" ("The Presentation" 32).

After Linton's death, Cathy was also the one that made the effort for her relationship with Hareton to develop. Nelly narrated:

> Catherine employed herself in wrapping a handsome book neatly in white paper; and having tied it with a bit of ribband, and addressed it to 'Mr Hareton Earnshaw,' she

> desired me to be her ambassadress, and convey the present to its destined recipient. 'And tell him, if he'll take it, I'll come and teach him to read it right,' she said; 'and, if he refuse [sic] it, I'll go upstairs, and never tease him again.' (Brontë 376)

Cathy and Hareton's relationship also seemed more morally ideal than her mother's experiences, considering the Marxist claim of encountering in the other both relatability and otherness. Cathy and Hareton formed a bond by sharing and acknowledging the other as a subject, in their similarities and differences. She understood the boy's limitations, both in his education and in his attachment to Heathcliff, acknowledging her responsibility in the development of the relationship and apologizing for her behavior when necessary. According to Rodems, when Cathy joined Hareton in a rebellion against Heathcliff's power, they duplicated the "identities established before they were born", those of the children Catherine and Heathcliff (Rodems 36). Therefore, *Wuthering Heights* came full circle in its second half, when Cathy and Hareton surpassed the problems the previous generation got stuck with: "Though their names are similar to their predecessors, their natures differ enough so that they can help rather than destroy each other. Cathy seeks to pull Hareton from the inferior position forced upon him; the position that her mother could not accept or find a way to resolve previously with Heathcliff" (36). The couple shared a compassion with each other that was not present in the previous generation.

This aspect can also be seen in Cathy's speech after making an error of judgment in relation to Hareton's actions: "I didn't know you took my part, . . . and I was miserable and bitter at everybody; but, now I thank you, and beg you to forgive me, what can I do besides?" (Brontë 375). Later on Nelly recounted:

> . . . she comprehended that [Hareton] Earnshaw took the master's reputation home to himself; and was attached by ties stronger than reason could break – chains, forged by

> habit, which it would be cruel to attempt to loosen. She showed a good heart, thenceforth, in avoiding both complaints and expressions of antipathy concerning Heathcliff; and confessed to me her sorrow that she had endeavoured to raise a bad spirit between him and Hareton: indeed, I don't believe she has ever breathed a syllable, in the latter's hearing, against her oppressor, since. (384)

Cathy demonstrated respect for Hareton, as she tolerated his relationship with Heathcliff even though she did not understand it. In addition, as Nelly exposed, Heathcliff was her oppressor. Cathy suffered from his physical and psychological violence, and still sacrificed her feelings for Hareton's, something we did not ever see her mother doing for either Edgar or Heathcliff. In Hareton and Cathy's relationship, there was no absolute master. They treated each other as equals and learned with their differences.

In chapter 24, Cathy said about her late husband: ". . . I *was* sorry Linton had that distorted nature. He'll never let his friends be at ease, and he'll never be at ease himself!" (308). She respected both Linton's temper and Hareton's background. Cathy's manner of conducting her relationships with both men was unconventional for a young woman in Victorian England. Though the couple Hareton and Cathy could be seen as a "triumph of civilised norms" and of domesticity, they still challenged the power relations of their time. As stated by Flint, "[i]t is Cathy who teaches Hareton to read, thus giving him the key to unlock literature: the very thing which, the novel demonstrates by its own existence, has the potential to unsettle norms, to pose questions rather than provide answers" (Flint 177).

Catherine Earnshaw, on the other hand, did not show the empathy and maturity we saw in her daughter. She did not take responsibility for her mistakes or apologized. Catherine blamed Heathcliff and Edgar for all that happened to her – "You and Edgar have broken my heart, Heathcliff! And you both come to bewail the deed to me, as if you were the people to

be pitied!" (201). She avoided being held accountable for her choices. Catherine's relationships with both Heathcliff and Edgar ended up the way they did because of choices of the three people involved, but Catherine denied her share of the blame.

Another trait we see in Cathy that is opposite to her mother's is her ability to forgive. An instance of this attitude is in chapter 24, when she talks to Nelly about Linton: "I felt he spoke the truth; and I felt I must forgive him: and, though he should quarrel the next moment, I must forgive him again" (308). As I have discussed, Cathy demanded her cousin would take responsibility for his actions. However, in spite of his conduct, she still showed empathy for him and felt thankful for having, as she said, 'a better nature', being able to forgive him.

This ability to forgive was crucial for Cathy to overcome suffering caused by other characters. Here, it is important to recognize what Thormählen conceptualized as an ethical pattern in *Wuthering Heights*: "whatever lasting happiness is experienced by the characters in the novel is the result not of self-absorbed passion but of a love that resembles Christian charity in being kind, patient and forgiving, a love that does not seek its own and does not rejoice in iniquity" (Thormählen 642). Hatred would be then an obstacle to satisfaction and to healing, "and any kind of happiness is predicated on the ability to forgive" (645). Among the characters in the novel, we can see that Edgar, Cathy, Hareton and Isabella were the ones able to forgive their oppressors. They did not allow hatred to take over their lives. Therefore, Cathy's ability to forgive lead to her final state of well-being, which I will analyze in my next section.

Section 5 – The final moments of Catherine and Cathy

During my analysis of chapter 9, when I mentioned Catherine's belief that she was inadequate either to Heaven or to marry Edgar, I emphasized Nelly's response, as it showed the servant saw her mistress as a sinner. However, this may also be how Catherine perceived herself, which is crucial information to consider now as I cover the end of her life in the narrative. In this last part of the discussion, I will concentrate in the level of fulfillment we can attribute to the characters Catherine and Cathy in the final parts of their lives in the chronology of *Wuthering Heights*.

Catherine saw something evil in her that would make her unfit to the heaven described in the Bible. This was part of Catherine's mentality as a Christian and, as Nietzsche defined, Christian faith was, from the beginning, related to sacrifice: "the sacrifice of all freedom, all pride, all self-confidence of spirit" (*Beyond Good and Evil* 432). Therefore, either for going to Heaven or for marrying Edgar, Catherine would have to sacrifice her desire for Heathcliff. She did this in the belief that she could make him rise with Edgar's money, basing her choice on the deterministic perspective that her existence would have a greater extent than just what she knew. However, as we could see from the events that lead to her decay and death, she did not have success in this sacrifice.

According to Scanlon, we should evaluate someone's well-being recognizing three main points: certain experiential states, such as satisfaction and enjoyment; the individual's success in his or her main aims (considering how well these aims were chosen and pursued); and his or her personal relations to others, such as friendship. During her sick period, Catherine manifested to Nelly she perceived the last seven years of her life as a blank, as if she had turned suddenly into the wife of a stranger. She wanted to have back the freedom she had when she was a child – "I wish I were a girl again, half savage and hardy, and free . . . and laughing at injuries, not maddening under them! Why am I so changed? why does my blood rush into a hell of tumult at a few words? I'm sure I should be myself were I once

among the heather on those hills" (Brontë 163). This passage demonstrated how Catherine perceived losing her freedom as related to losing herself. Feeling other than herself contributed then to the disagreeable experiential state in which we see her during the final moments of her life.

Catherine asked desperately for Heathcliff to stay with her, even though Edgar had arrived in the house. Shortly after, Nelly narrated "Catherine's arms had fallen relaxed, and her head hung down" (206). She and Edgar managed to restore his wife to consciousness, but Catherine was not in a pleasant state: ". . . she was all bewildered; she sighed, and moaned, and knew nobody" (207). According to Nelly, at twelve o'clock that night, Cathy was born and, two hours after, her mother died, "having never recovered sufficient consciousness to miss Heathcliff, or know Edgar" (207). From this last passage of Catherine's life, we can see she died in a disagreeable experiential state. She was without Heathcliff, the only person she wanted to be there, and detached from her relatives due to her mental state.

Catherine succeeded in her aim to marry Edgar and become the lady of Thrushcross Grange, but failed in helping her childhood friend with her money. Her plan included that Heathcliff would wait for her help, and that him and Edgar would treat each other friendly after they saw it would make her happy. As stated by Scanlon, any individual would prefer to live with people who share his notions of justifiability. However, for Catherine, as well as for Edgar and Heathcliff, this was not the case. During the narrative, there were instances in which each character was disappointed with the other for having attitudes that did not seem justifiable to them. Here, I will highlight the case of Catherine, who had to face the fact that neither her husband nor her best friend were willing to abandon their own feelings for hers. Catherine's disappointment fit into what Flint described as a frequent theme in the fiction of all three Brontë sisters: "the problems faced by an independent-minded woman, determined on expanding the emotional, intellectual, and on occasion the geographical boundaries of her

immediate sphere, and yet forced to consider how far she is prepared to accommodate to societal norms" (Flint 171). Catherine was not prepared to accommodate to the norms of marriage and to be contained in the immediate sphere of her home. We can see the consequence of this conflict during the final moments of her life.

Cathy adopted the same perspective of her mother's in sacrificing her immediate desires for the achievement of something bigger in the future, but with a greater level of success. Cathy sacrificed her freedom and will in the marriage with Linton in order to see her father one last time, which seemed to mean more to her than her individual life: ". . . if I stay, papa will be miserable; and how can I endure making him miserable – when he – when he – Mr Heathcliff, *let* me go home! I promise to marry Linton" (Brontë 330-331). Later on, instead of focusing on revenge against Heathcliff, Cathy concentrated her efforts in forgiving him and appealing to some goodness she claimed to exist behind his evil doings. Cathy believed that good existed in all people, and she refused to accept that Heathcliff would simply want to be evil: "Mr Heathcliff, you're a cruel man, but you're not a fiend; and you won't, from *mere* malice, destroy, irrevocably, all my happiness … Have you never loved *anybody*, in all your life, uncle? *Never?*" (332).

Cathy then lost her freedom and, after being imprisoned with no one she loved, felt her life was useless. Nelly recounted being called to work in Wuthering Heights and what she saw of Cathy's behavior: the girl had grown "irritable and restless" and complained of loneliness (371). She tried to amuse herself by talking to Nelly and trying to entice Hareton's interest in reading, but the servant recounted it did not produce a satisfactory effect. This and also Catherine's dissatisfaction with the domestic life in the Grange are examples of what Flint presented as "the rejection of passivity and the recognition of woman's need of an active sphere", which was present in the works of the Brontë sisters (Flint 190). According to her, this aspect distinguished their works from those of "their more cautious contemporaries",

making a powerful legacy (190). *Wuthering Heights* depicted a violent domestic reality that was at odds with the Victorian ideal of the home. Through her work, Emily Brontë has moved beyond the categories of gender imposed by the culture by which she lived.

As I have discussed in chapter IV, Cathy's efforts to develop a friendship with Hareton resulted in a much more fulfilling life for both. Hareton learned to read and Cathy now had company, they planted a garden together and were planning to get married. Soon after Hareton accepted Cathy's gift, in chapter 32, Nelly recounted that the girl, having arrived the time to retire to bed, smiled as she passed Hareton and went upstairs singing, "lighter of heart" than she had ever been in the Heights (Brontë 378). In another passage, when the friends were reading a book together, the maid also claimed the firelight glowed on their faces and showed their animation, the "eager interest of children;" (385).

We saw Cathy for the last time through Lockwood's perspective in chapter 34, when he observed the couple as they looked at each other under the moonlight: "*They* are afraid of nothing, . . . Together, they would brave satan and all his legions" (402). From these last moments of Cathy's presence in the narrative, I may claim her experiential state included satisfaction and fulfillment. Although she did not manifest earlier what major aims she had for her adult life, Cathy was visibly joyful and developed healthy relationships with the other people around her. Thus, according to the concepts posited by Scanlon, I can attribute to Cathy a much superior status in relation to well-being than I would do to her mother.

Complementing this analysis on the possibility to overcome suffering, I will now briefly discuss another character who was able to rebuilt her life after being harassed by Heathcliff, Edgar's sister Isabella Linton. In her article "'My name was Isabella Linton': Coverture, Domestic Violence, and Mrs. Heathcliff's Narrative in *Wuthering Heights*", Judith E. Pike claimed Isabella would represent a foil to Catherine, appearing as weak and

conventional in the proportion that Catherine would be strong and unconventional. She was superficially attracted to Heathcliff as Catherine was to Edgar and, through the letter she sent to Nelly recounting her marriage, *Wuthering Heights* contradicted the typical Victorian view of domestic violence, which was considered limited to the poor families.

As Pike showed, the violence is now in "a middle-class setting where the female witness and victim was a lady from the gentry class" (Pike 357). However, Nelly's view on Isabella when she paid a visit to Wuthering Heights illustrated the standard Victorian perspective on the abused woman. She described Isabella: "Her pretty face was wan and listless; her hair uncurled: some locks hanging lankly down, and some carelessly twisted round her head. Probably she had not touched her dress since yester-evening" (Brontë 188). Her comment can be read as an affirmation that Isabella would now be unfit for polite gentry society, as Nelly's role as the patriarchal housekeeper would be to "enforce decorous" and the standard behavior for women (Pike 364). Secondly, Nelly's portrait of Isabella, according to Pike, would suggest not only her change of appearance but also her "questionable virtue" (365). Whereas what Isabella has written in her letter gave the background of the mistreatment she suffered from her husband, Nelly and Heathcliff presented a different view. Once Nelly pointed out how worse Isabella looked, Heathcliff replied "[s]he degenerates into a mere slut!" (Brontë 191). According to Pike, "Heathcliff's account of his wife's condition, echoed in part by Nelly's observation of what others would think, presents a classic scenario of a mentally or morally depraved woman, whose degraded state is her own doing and moral failings" (Pike 365). *Wuthering Heights* exposed how even the women from the higher classes could be victims of domestic abuse, "due not to their slatternly behavior but rather to their naïveté and their blind inculcation of false notions of romance and marriage, along with the male prerogative of 'chastisement.'" (372).

In chapter 17, when Isabella managed to escape Wuthering Heights and Nelly received her in the Grange, the servant showed her disapproval at her conduct. Isabella arrived laughing, glad for having succeeded in her escape, and Nelly reprehended her saying "[d]rink your tea, and take breath, and give over laughing: laughter is sadly out of place under this roof, and in your condition!" (Brontë 216). Isabella attempted to have a carriage to continue her escape, but Nelly insisted that she would change her attire before it. Pike remarked that "[t]he transgressive nature of Isabella's account is not lost on Nelly", as she refused to be silenced: "In our final glimpse of Isabella, Brontë portrays her as a strong woman who regains her composure and is in full command of herself" (Pike 376; 378).

The last thing Isabella did before leaving the house was to kiss Edgar and Catherine's portraits. The gesture, according to Pike, demonstrated that, even after all the abuse Isabella suffered in the Heights, she was able to redeem herself and restart her life:

> She regains decency in the manner of both her attire and her womanly gesture of kissing the portraits and Nelly before she departs. Her decision to leave is not a hysterical reaction or an irrational flight; instead, she collects herself, sips her tea, dons her bonnet, and departs from the Grange without a tear. Thus, Brontë allows Isabella the possibility not only for escape but also for self-transformation. (379)

In the present dissertation, I have concentrated my analysis on the two Catherines rather than on Isabella. However, I acknowledge the importance of this character, since Brontë chose to make her the narrator of most of chapter 13, through the letter she wrote to Nelly. Isabella's participation in the narrative called into question the ideals of domesticity in the Victorian Age, as well as of "companionate marriage" (380). According to Pike, this would be the ideal that people would marry for love, rather than for social ascendance. In the first night Isabella passed in Wuthering Heights, she soon became aware that her marriage was not for love:

"Heathcliff takes full advantage of the laws of coverture, and any hope of companionate marriage ended for Heathcliff when Catherine chose Edgar", so he used Isabella as part of his revenge (381).

Around the time Brontë would be writing, marital abuse was a subject far from the public's eye. Within the next decade, social awareness was increased with the Aggravated Assaults Act of 1853 and the Divorce Act of 1857. There were newspaper accounts of domestic violence and of court cases that included stories of abuse, but it was still "mostly considered to be a 'working-class' problem" (382). Brontë offered a new perspective over marital abuse when "a man of property with middle-class standing" was presented as the aggressor (Pike 373). By means of Isabella's story, *Wuthering Heights* subverted the domestic ideals of the nineteenth century through the perspective of a woman, which developed in the second half of the novel, when Cathy was confined to the Heights.

Similarly to Isabella, Cathy was also superficially attracted to Linton, but was forced to marry him and to lose all her possessions. As described by Nelly in chapter 30, Linton's will left her legally "destitute of cash and friends" (Brontë 353). However, also similarly to her aunt and contrary to her mother, she managed to rebuild her life coming to peaceful terms with the people around her and starting a much healthier relationship with Hareton. The death of her mother Catherine can be seen as the sacrifice of a woman to the will of men around her. Cathy was also sacrificed for the will of men, but she managed to overcome this. The ending of Cathy's story, alongside with her attitudes during the narrative, show the extent to which *Wuthering Heights* challenged de ideology of its time.

As claimed by Gilead, Victorian novels were frequently in an uncertain position towards the ideological discourse of their social context: "Sometimes misread as easily conforming to that discourse, sometimes misread as essentially in revolt against that

discourse, the great Victorian novels occupy an unstable place between these two positions" (Gilead 188). This way, she described the usual plot for characters such as Catherine and Cathy:

> . . . rebellious figures are either themselves transformed into good citizens or into reasonable simulacra thereof, or assist in the transformation of others; they thereby purify a guilty society, import into their culture apparently lost moral values, secularize the universal spiritual content of traditional religion, and reestablish social order on a firmer, more justifiable ground. (Gilead 188)

This perspective would explain the end of the narrative, considering the couple Hareton and Cathy as a move back to domesticity. However, in the present dissertation, I will not consider domesticity as the main reason Cathy and her mother's states of well-being differed so significantly.

Our perspective is that a final state of well-being depends chiefly on the character's reactions during the narrative, her choices and how she managed to overcome suffering. As Flint affirmed, "*Wuthering Heights* is, ultimately, a novel about desire, not fulfilment" (Flint 176). Both Catherine and her daughter Cathy had to face "the impossibility of achieving one's desire for a spiritually complementary Other within the terms of social norms and conventions", but the difference in their choices lead to the difference of their ends (Flint 177). *Wuthering Heights* challenged the ideology of the Victorian Age, once it showed, at the same time, how men can limit a woman's freedom, but also how women can overcome patriarchal power.

Final Considerations

> "It is the future which decides whether the past is living or dead"
>
> (Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*)

The aim of this dissertation was to study the manner in which Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* challenged and criticized Victorian moral standards, based on the choices made by the main women characters in the work, Catherine Earnshaw and Cathy Linton, and on the ending provided for each of them. The women have faced some similar situations in their lives, such as their love relationships to men of their own social class – Edgar and Linton – and to servants – Heathcliff and Hareton. In addition, both were targets to the psychological and emotional – and in Cathy's case, physical – violence of the men in the novel, facing the oppression of living in the patriarchal environment of Victorian England. Both women challenged the moral standards of their time. However, Cathy showed a greater level of altruism and ability to forgive, overcoming the suffering other characters had inflicted on her. This led to her higher level of well-being in the end of the narrative, in opposition to her mother's last moments of life. Cathy managed to rebuild her life, taking the first steps to a future that, as exposed in the quote from Sartre, would decide that her past of aggression and oppression was dead. Cathy's ending showed how, although conforming to Christian dogma in its view of virtue, *Wuthering Heights* challenged the moral standards for women in the Victorian Age.

The methodology of this research was based upon the development of systematic textual investigation. For defining the standard behavior Victorian society projected on women, I have studied several approaches on philosophical morality, women's writings and ideological conceptualizations from the Classical Age to contemporaneity. The theorists considered from the 18th century on were Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill, Friedrich

Nietzsche, Karl Marx, Louis Althusser, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Terry Eagleton and T. M. Scanlon. After this was done, *Wuthering Heights* was critically read, in order to build a scholarly *status questionis*, not only based on this theoretical framework, but also on contemporary articles, analyzing attitudes of Catherine and her daughter Cathy which would be considered moral or amoral in relation to the standard behavior expected from them. The consequences of these actions were also analyzed considering Scanlon's concepts on well-being, and mother and daughter were compared in the moment the narrative ended for each of them.

Chapter I of this dissertation, entitled "Morality, women's writing and ideology across the ages", was dedicated to discussing the theoretical framework and highlighting the key concepts on which the analysis of *Wuthering Heights* was based. Chapter II, called "Catherine Earnshaw", was when I studied the choices Catherine made throughout the narrative according to the theoretical framework, as well as their consequences. Chapter III was entitled "Cathy Linton", and consisted of the study of the choices Cathy made throughout *Wuthering Heights* and their consequences, in the same manner as done to her mother's. Chapter IV, called "Mother and Daughter", was the comparison between Catherine and her daughter Cathy. I discussed then the actions of the two characters in relation to the theoretical framework and the positive and negative consequences of each choice, as well as analyzing the ending of the story for both characters based on Scanlon's concept of well-being.

Considering the theoretical framework of this research and the analysis elaborated during chapters II, III and IV, I can point out several similarities and differences between the main women characters in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, Catherine Earnshaw and her daughter Cathy Linton. Catherine demonstrated a lack of loyalty to friends, as well as a preference to act in terms of what was more convenient to her, regardless of the effects of her

decisions on other people. Going after her passions, she acted violently towards Nelly and Hareton when the boy was still a toddler and, after her marriage to Edgar, Catherine overlooked the violence Isabella was about to suffer and subjected her husband to risk of harassment. Catherine followed her own inclinations with no regard for the feelings of others, no compassion. According to Sartre's claims on the background of choices, she acted in bad faith, since she did not base her attitudes on truth and freedom for the others besides herself.

In Catherine and Edgar's marriage, the couple's dynamics were based on compliance when one's wishes were attended and resentment when they were not. Catherine did not accept to be treated as a possession and to be limited by Edgar, which was a trait we also saw in her daughter Cathy, when she demanded that her cousin Linton would be honest about his feelings and motivations in their relationship. However, while Cathy would use dialogue to trace a solution to the problems she and Linton were facing, her mother would resent and eventually let her anger out in an explosion, such as when she locked herself in her room. She did not show the empathy and maturity we saw in her daughter, as she would not take responsibility for her mistakes or apologize.

Catherine did not accept the need to be separated from Heathcliff after marrying Edgar, even though this was a condition about which she had been warned before and the warning was even reinforced by Edgar's reprobation of the man. In my analysis of the moment she decided to accept Edgar's offer to marriage, I concluded she did not choose to be with one of the men altogether. According to Sartre's principles, not choosing still constitutes a choice, so Catherine eventually had to face the consequences of her negligence. She also did not cope with that, refusing to be held accountable for her mistakes in the relationships to Heathcliff and Edgar. In her deathbed, she blamed the men for what happened to her, and died in a situation that, according to Scanlon's claims, would be classified as a very low level of well-being. She was in a disagreeable experiential state, detached from her relatives and

friends. In relation to her aims in life, she was successful marrying Edgar and becoming the lady of Thrushcross Grange, but failed in helping Heathcliff to rise with her husband's money. Catherine was not prepared to accommodate to the norms of marriage in the Victorian Age and to face the fact that neither her husband nor her best friend were willing to abandon their own feelings for hers. Her lack of consideration for the wishes of others and her self-centered manner of making decisions led to the poor state in which we could see her during the final moments of her life.

Cathy, contrary to her mother, showed several acts of good faith, making her decisions while thinking about the needs of others. In my analysis of her, in chapter III, we saw that, when she opted for lying, for instance, it was not because it was convenient for her. Her motives were the keeping of promises and the happiness of someone else. For instance, in order not to disturb Edgar at his deathbed, Cathy chose to omit from him the suffering Heathcliff was inflicting on her. Besides sparing her father from preoccupation in his last minutes alive, Cathy's attitude also showed her sense of responsibility towards her choices, as it was her own decision to escape the safe environment Edgar had provided for her.

Cathy was target to violence from men in the novel, but she responded to them with forgiving. She was deceived by her cousin Linton and kidnapped by Heathcliff, but did not show any hatred towards either of them. We did not see Cathy planning revenge towards Heathcliff. Instead, she concentrated her efforts in forgiving him and appealing to some goodness she believed would exist behind his evil doings. Since the beginning of Cathy and Linton's relationship, we could see she had a higher level of maturity than her mother, as the girl would demand that Linton would be honest with her, basing their relationship on dialogue and problem prevention. After being forced to marry her cousin, Cathy nursed him without any help until his death, demonstrating one more time an empathy and altruism we could not see in her mother.

The justifications Cathy gave to her choices showed us how greatly she valued the needs and feelings of others, rather than her own will. She left the safety of the Grange because Linton was in need of her, and wanted to come back in concern for her father. She nursed Edgar, Nelly and Linton until his death, and we have the testimony of Nelly and Zillah as proof of her dedication. Cathy did not ever justify her decisions with egoistic reasons nor did she refrain from acknowledging responsibility for her own attitudes. She made her choices in good faith, according to Sartre's claims, and her actions showed selfless love and empathy.

Cathy and Hareton's relationship also seemed more morally ideal than both of her mother's experiences did, for the young couple formed a bond by sharing and acknowledging the other as a subject, in their similarities and differences. They shared a compassion for each other. Cathy was patient with Hareton's attachment to Heathcliff, even though the latter had kidnapped and beaten her up. She sacrificed her feelings for Hareton's, something we did not ever see her mother doing for either Edgar or Heathcliff. In Hareton and Cathy's relationship, there was no absolute master. They treated each other as equals and learned with their differences.

Cathy's relationship with Hareton resulted in a much more fulfilling life for both. During the last chapters of the narrative, we see they have planted a garden together and were planning to get married. Cathy's final moments in the narrative were seen from the perspective of Lockwood, when he observed her and Hareton as they looked at each other under the moonlight. Her experiential state included satisfaction and fulfillment and, although she had not manifested any specific aims in which she would want to succeed, Cathy was visibly joyful and developed healthy relationships with the other people around her. Thus, according to the concepts posited by Scanlon, I can attribute to Cathy a much superior level of well-being than I would do to her mother.

Cathy's ability to overcome past suffering through forgiving the ones who have inflicted it was crucial for her final state of well-being, and this is what indicates the influence of the Christian dogma in the ending of *Wuthering Heights*. Cathy's happiness during her last moments in the narrative was a result of actions that resemble Christian charity. She was selfless, patient and forgiving. The death of her mother Catherine Earnshaw can be seen as the sacrifice of a woman to the will of men around her. Cathy was also a victim of the same oppressive and sexist society, but she managed to rebuild her life coming to peaceful terms with the people in Wuthering Heights and surrounding herself with healthy relationships. *Wuthering Heights* conformed to the Christian dogma at the same time as it challenged the standards for women in the Victorian Age.

The choice of this object of study for the present research was based on the representability of Brontë's work as a woman author from the Victorian period. *Wuthering Heights* illustrated people's anxieties in England at that time, especially the want of doing what was morally accepted in their society while being successful in their own personal desires. Catherine and Cathy reacted very differently to the adversities they faced, which led to significantly different endings for each character. Each woman's final state of well-being showed us how challenging the book was of the social standards of its time, contributing to the studies of Victorian literature and morals.

Clearly, the work made here is far from exhaustive and the study of morals in *Wuthering Heights* is still open to future research. However, the differences in the ending of the narrative for Catherine and Cathy provided the ideally scientific criticism proposed by Eagleton. Those constitute the principle that ties this *Wuthering Heights* to an ideology while also distancing the two, once the ending for each character shows how men could limit a woman's freedom, but also how women could overcome patriarchal power. Thus, Brontë's

work was embedded in the ideology predominant in Victorian England but also constituted a meaningful transformation thereof.

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