

Degree – ii (English Honours)

Paper – iv

Book – Wuthering Heights

Lecture – 1

The Mystery of the Bond between Heathcliff and Cathy

The Mystery of the Bond

The problem of the bond between Cathy and Heathcliff and its significance remains the central mystery of the novel till the very end, just as the translation of this bond into language is the central triumph of the novelist. As children Cathy and Heathcliff seem to represent the spirit of freedom rebelling against tyrannical authority as represented by Hindley, and against religious bigotry as represented by Joseph. Cathy has a dream that, when she was in heaven, she wept because it did not seem to be her home, and the angels were so angry that they flung her out on the heath near Wuthering Heights where she woke sobbing for joy. she and Heathcliff are creatures of the wild moorland existence besides which conventional social standards are meaningless. Cathy admits that she has no more right to marry Edgar than she has to be in heaven, but she also declares that her marriage to another man could not separate her from

Heathcliff. The rhythm of the prose rises in intensity as she tries to define that world of being which unites her and Heathcliff.

No Romantic, Erotic Infatuation

Yet when Heathcliff has left, and Cathy marries Edgar, for six months “the gunpowder lay as harmless as sand, and Nelly has sure that Cathy and Edgar were really in possession of a deep and growing happiness. On Heathcliff’s reappearance, Cathy rushes to her husband flings her arms around his neck, and bursts out: “Oh Edgar darling! Heathcliff’s come back!” In spite of Edgar dismay, Cathy and Heathcliff sit looking at one another, too much observed their mutual joy to suffer embarrassment. Yet this is no romantic, erotic infatuation. Cathy describes Heathcliff to Isabella as an unreclaimed creature; an arid wilderness of furze and whinstone; a fierce, pitiless, wolfish man- Heathcliff himself makes no excuse for Cathy’s treachery to her own nature and to him.

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