

Wuthering Heights

classmate

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Emily Bronte

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Paper - IV Fiction

Unit - 03

Topic - Wuthering Heights
Lecture - 02

Wuthering Heights : A Spiritual Tragedy

or

The theme of Wuthering Heights

That death is not the end of existence seems to be a matter of faith with Emily Bronte. Death only marks the transformation of material life into existence in a spiritual form. The union of Heathcliff and Catherine was not possible during their life time for certain reasons and considerations, the chief being Catherine's regard for respectability. Though they loved each other deeply, worldly considerations in the way of their union. But prevent marriage, but cannot obliterate love.

But when the lovers exists in a spiritual form, worldly considerations cease to obstruct their union. The social and moral laws of world do not apply to life in spiritual form. That life is governed by its own laws of which we have no knowledge. The wish of Heathcliff and Catherine could not be fulfilled in their earthly life. But there is nothing to prevent its fulfilment in their spiritual existence. In that state of existence Linton has no claim

on her, and she wholly belongs to Heathcliff. Marriage is an indissoluble bond only in this life, and ends with death. So, Catherine is free from her bond of matrimony after her physical death. Even when alive she spiritually belonged to Heathcliff though Hinton was her husband in the physical sense. None is a spiritual force, and because she loved Heathcliff she belonged to him. So, it is in the fitness of things that after her death she is spiritually united to the man to whom she spiritually belonged during to think that love as a deep yearning of the soul can not be remain ~~of~~ unfulfilled. It is can not be fulfilled in their life, it will be fulfilled in the life to come. That is why Heathcliff and Catherine must in an everlasting union after their death.

Heathcliff and Catherine, however meet tragic end of their earthly life. Catherine 'grows pale spectre to and dies' a premature death. Her tragedy is that she could not marry the man whom she loved so passionately and intensely. With Heathcliff's return after a lapse of three years, causes devastating disturbances to her emotions. She ~~breaks~~ breaks down fall ill never to recover. Heathcliff's whole life is tragic and so is his death. He holds Hindley responsible for inflicting tortures on him and Hinton for taking Catherine - his soul - away from him. And therefore he wreaks vengeance on both. The intensity

of his revenge increases horribly with the death of Catherine when he starts wreaking vengeance of the next generation of Hindley and Hinton. It is only when he is visited by the ghost of Catherine that he relents. He becomes indifferent rather than remorseful. He starves himself to death thereafter. The two tragic characters, however, are united spiritually after their death. Hence the novel is a 'spiritual tragedy' though the phrase does not sound so appropriate.