

OF SANSCULOTTIC EARTHQUAKES AND SAVAGE OTHERS:
SOCIAL AFTERSHOCKS IN JANE EYRE AND
WUTHERING HEIGHTS

Hannah Gracy

Of Sansculottic Earthquakes and Savage Others: Social Aftershocks in *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*

A Thesis
Presented to
The College of Graduate Studies
Austin Peay State University
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
M.A. English

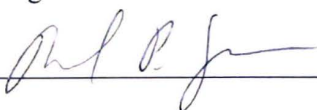
Hannah Gracy

May 2012

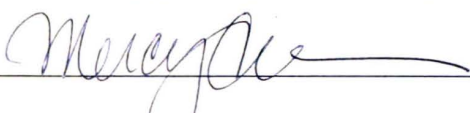
May 2012

To the College of Graduate Studies:


We are submitting a thesis written by Hannah Gracy entitled "Of Sansculottic Earthquakes and Savage Others: Social Aftershocks in *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*." We have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content. We recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of M.A English.



Research/Committee Advisor/Chair



Committee Member

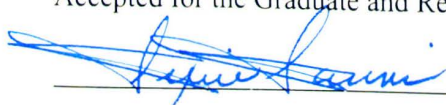


Committee Member



Committee Member

Accepted for the Graduate and Research Council

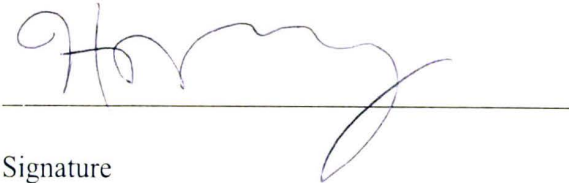


Dean, College of Graduate Studies

Statement of Permission to Use

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the M.A. English at Austin Peay State University, I agree that the library shall make it available to borrowers under the rules of the library. Brief quotations from this thesis are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgement of the source is made.

Permissions for extensive quotation or reproduction of this field study may be granted by my major professor, or in his/her absence, by the Head of the Interlibrary Services when, in the opinion of either, the proposed use of the material is for scholarly purposes. Any copying or use of the material in this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.



Signature

26 April 2012

Date

Critical Principles and Influences

The treatment of *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* in critical studies has often been distinctly ahistorical, as critics have erroneously tended to view the Brontë sisters as individuals who lived almost wholly isolated among the moors of northern England. In my approach to these novels, then, I felt that a historical approach would be most beneficial. All novels are to a certain degree products of their specific eras, but Victorian novels are famously preoccupied with the political and social concerns of the moment. Given the numerous technological and social changes that characterized the Victorian era, it should be no surprise that the literature of the nineteenth century was significantly impacted by such events. Even occurrences outside of England heavily impacted the development of British literature, most notably the French Revolution. With such notable attention paid by Victorian novels to world events, a reexamination of Charlotte and Emily Brontë's two most famous works is appropriate so that they too, like their fellow Victorian novels, may be understood more fully in a historically contextual light. In approaching my thesis, then, I wanted to view *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* in their historical context and to see not only the impact of English events on these English novels, but also to investigate the effect of European and world events on their composition.

Considering the historical context of these novels, however, other critical approaches did appear frequently in my research. For example, the prevalence of the Other in both novels has led to much postcolonial speculation concerning them. While this view proved helpful in the formation of my thesis, I did not use it alone, as I felt a more comprehensive historical approach would be more beneficial. With its inherently historical approach, Marxist criticism also proved

integral to my argument, particularly as found in the ideas of Terry Eagleton, but again, it served as only part of the whole historical context.

Because I chose to take a historical approach to these novels, it was of course essential to include a significant historical introduction in order to help my readers understand the basis of my arguments concerning *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*. Given the significant amount of scholarship already existing on both these novels, it was also important to acknowledge the work that critics have done in the past. At times, I used past critics' works to buttress my argument, and in other instances, I refuted such works by asserting particular points to which my own research has led me. As for the specific historical events I detail in my thesis, I focused on those that bore direct relation to my topic, although there were numerous other events that formed an important background for the composition of Charlotte and Emily Brontë's novels. In addition, there have been a number of critics who have examined the impact of the French Revolution on English literature, but their analyses largely cease before the era of Victorian literature. I argue, however, that the ideals associated with the French Revolution had a lasting impact on British literature well into the nineteenth century. By uniting a thorough historical investigation with detailed textual analysis, I was able to prove this impact as it appears in the Brontë sisters' novels.

To aid my research into the historical context of these Brontë novels, I employed a number of different sources. Perhaps most importantly among them was my usage of primary sources written around the same time as *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*. Thomas Carlyle, Edmund Burke, and Elizabeth Gaskell proved invaluable sources regarding the historical circumstances of the Victorian era, the French Revolution, and the Brontës themselves. In

addition to these primary sources, I also relied heavily upon more general histories of Victorian England and the French Revolution. Cultural criticism such as that of Anne McClintock and Edward Said was also helpful, as was literary criticism of Charlotte and Emily Brontë.

While it is by no means an exhaustive treatment of every aspect of *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*, I believe my thesis is an important contribution to existing scholarship, as it fuses a vast historical context with specific textual detail from the novels. Whereas other critics have focused more narrowly on one aspect of history as it relates to these novels, such as the slave trade or British imperialism, my approach is a bit broader, as it attempts to show how various facets of the French Revolution had a lasting effect on the culture and literature of Victorian England. My thesis argues that despite the belief of many critics that Charlotte and Emily Brontë's works are tales secluded in the remote countryside of England, they are in fact indisputably products of the attitudes, values, and fears of the Victorian era. *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* represent a profound awareness of historical events occurring in England, Europe, and the rest of the world during the Victorian era.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
Chapter II: Revolutionary Backgrounds.....	3
Chapter III: An Anglicized Identity.....	13
Chapter IV: French Superficiality and West Indian Depravity: The Taming of Foreign Forces in <i>Jane Eyre</i>	20
Chapter V: “Scum Condensed of Irish Bog”: Heathcliff’s Corrosive Presence in <i>Wuthering</i> <i>Heights</i>	45
Chapter VI: Conclusion.....	72
Works Cited.....	75
Annotated Bibliography.....	79

CHAPTER I

Introduction

“[L]ittle doubt have I, that convulsive revolutions put back the world in all that is good, check civilisation, bring the dregs of society to its surface That England may be spared the spasms, cramps, and frenzy-fits now contorting the Continent, and threatening Ireland, I earnestly pray.” So writes Charlotte Brontë in a private letter to a friend following Louis Philippe’s overthrow in the French Revolution of 1848. She afterwards goes on to point out how undeserving of compassion the French and Irish are in their respective rebellions (Gaskell 2: 49). Not only does Charlotte here seem highly aware of contemporary European events in the Victorian era, but she also understands the degree of influence that such events had in England itself. Many critics have read both Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* and Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights* as simply tales of supernatural passion spun by solitary spinsters in the wild moors of North England (Barker 14). The truth, however, is that the sisters were intimately acquainted with the revolutionary events occurring in their own locale, as well as in the world beyond their reach.

As the ideals of the French Revolution invaded England in the guise of Irish revolts and the Chartist movement, the Brontës were increasingly aware of the precariousness of Britain and traditionally British values. This paper will demonstrate that not only did the revolutionary movements and imperial expansion of the Victorian era serve as the backdrop to the composition of Charlotte and Emily Brontë’s novels, but they also function as vital forces within the novels themselves. In *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*, the Brontë sisters illustrate the perceived need to produce and solidify a British, or anglicized, identity in response to the growing cultural and

ideological threats that menaced it both at home and abroad. Both novels therefore address the cultural threats that possessed the potential to undermine British ideals, as well as the conflict between such threats and anglicized characters and identities. In my chapter on *Jane Eyre*, I show that Jane's maturation throughout the novel coincides with her anglicization. In fact, she will grow so anglicized during the process of her maturation that she will also be able to anglicize other characters in need of it. Later, in my discussion of *Wuthering Heights*, I demonstrate how one foreign character, Heathcliff, will challenge the anglicized identity of all the principal characters, destroying many of them in a way that precisely echoes the Victorian British fear of foreign influences corrupting the native English. Before we can fully understand these novels, however, we must first examine a brief overview of the historical context of anglicization and the threats to which it responded.

CHAPTER II

Revolutionary Backgrounds

The French Revolution, both the original one and subsequent rebellions called by the same name, sent shockwaves throughout Europe. Not for nothing did Victorian historian Thomas Carlyle call the original French Revolution of 1789 a “Sansculottic Earthquake” (17), whose far-reaching effects reverberated not only in France but also in Europe—and indeed the world—as a whole. Great Britain faced more than just the influx of revolutionary ideals into England and Ireland, however. As Britain entered the Victorian era, her inhabitants had to address wars and internal rebellions in addition to rapid technological changes, most importantly the Industrial Revolution and the beginning of the railroad. As historian Raymond Chapman writes, “For the first time in the history of mankind, travel on land was not limited to the speed of a horse . . . The whole country suddenly seemed to become smaller . . . [leading to] a mixture of excitement and distrust” (155). This ambiguity of emotions applies not only to British attitudes towards the railroad but also towards the shrinking of their world as their empire expanded.

In the midst of this world of constant change, the Brontës perceived, along with a number of other British citizens, that it was necessary to re-emphasize their unique identity as the Victorian era began. To understand why more fully, we must first examine the threats and differences external to the nation, as well as their internal similarities and divisions. Britain’s increasing contact with unfamiliar peoples in imperial territories, in addition to the recent Napoleonic Wars that had once again made France a military threat, had begun to break down the British sense of power and superiority. Even as British influence expanded across the globe, British citizens felt the need to reassert the traits that they believed had made them the most

powerful nation in the world. If they did not, they faced the possibility of being absorbed into any one of a number of foreign cultures that surrounded them.

As Charlotte Brontë expressed in her letter, one of the sources from which the British felt a significant degree of danger in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was France. The numerous wars between France and Britain over the centuries solidified the continental country's status as a physical threat, but it was also a menace culturally, a peril which lasted from prior to the Napoleonic Wars to long after them (Colley, *Britons* 5). Indeed, James Eli Adams has argued that the British relied heavily on the French to determine what their own identity was by comparison (70). Aside from the territorial disputes that led to many of the Anglo-French wars, another particularly significant factor contributing to the British dissimilarity with the French was its geographical isolation. As an island nation, Britain was forced to create a unified identity from the peoples dwelling within her, an identity that was reinforced by constantly looking across the Channel and seeing, as well as imagining, all the things that she was not (Colley, *Britons* 17). The external threat from a much larger France, coupled with such geographical isolation, was decisive in helping end, at least for the most part, the centuries of internal division that had plagued Britain in the form of quarreling Scotland, Wales, and England (Colley, *Britons* 164). Although physical danger from France largely ceased after the Napoleonic Wars (Colley, *Britons* 324), the French threat nevertheless persisted.

The political consequences of the Napoleonic Wars would continue into the Victorian era. The British people were constantly reminded of their victory, and hence of their purported superiority, over the French in the continued public presence of the Duke of Wellington through the mid-century, as well as in the celebration of Waterloo Day every year until at least 1852

(Longmuir 168). In addition to these persistent political effects, many British travelers to France around the turn of the nineteenth century remarked upon the similarly steady cultural character of the French, who “remained constant in their very fickleness” (Wellington 38). Rather than changing along with the numerous technological and political shifts of the early nineteenth century, the ‘bad’ character of the French was perceived by many, including Mary Wollstonecraft, as unchanging. This, of course, necessitated that Britain continue to resist the French cultural influence, lest its own populace be contaminated by it (Wellington 48).

This French cultural influence was believed to pertain to both men and women. While many Victorians worried that the morals of young Englishwomen were being polluted by the French (Colley, *Britons* 241), others were concerned with how easily Englishmen in contact with the French seemed to lose touch with the purportedly virile and manly masculinity so long associated with the British. British men were increasingly influenced by the French in their mannerisms, behavior, and dress, despite the traditional desire to separate the effeminate French from themselves as distinctly Other (Colley, *Britons* 165). Because the British have long portrayed themselves as a blunt and straightforward culture, two traits that were heavily associated with men for countless generations, the growing French influence on them proved problematic. These masculine traits were also in opposition to what the British perceived as fundamentally female traits, such as vanity and a shallow sophistication. Notably, the French were often characterized by such supposedly feminine characteristics (Colley, *Britons* 252).

Even more dangerous than the possible incursion of French cultural values, however, was the pervasive revolutionary spirit and ideals that originated in France and led to the fateful uprisings of 1789 there. Not only did these revolutionary ideals inspire insurrections and

revolutions across Europe throughout the nineteenth century, but they also found their way into the heart of Britain itself. The number of slave rebellions that took place in Britain's holdings abroad prior to the abolition of slavery has been well documented, such as occurred in Jamaica, Demerara, and Barbados in the early nineteenth century. There were in addition a vast number of smaller revolts that have not yet been fully investigated, although the rebellions gradually grew in size over time up until emancipation (Higman 393-4). The unrest, however, was often much closer to home for the British. The insurrections of most direct significance to Britain would occur in France, Ireland, and in their own realm in the form of the Chartist movement.

Thomas Carlyle and Edmund Burke seemed more aware than most British citizens of the various causes of such revolutions, and their respective works *The French Revolution* in 1837 and *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in 1790 attempted to advise British readers how to avoid such insurrections in their own country. Carlyle places the responsibility for the original French Revolution with individuals from every class, insisting that each class should have been more concerned with France as a whole rather than with only their own needs (58). In telling his readers this, Carlyle attempts to warn his British readers to take care of their own country. It has even been suggested that the reason Carlyle wrote so much of *The French Revolution* in the present tense was to show how the effects and aftermath of the revolution were still present in the England of 1837 (Ryals 932). Burke too, although writing some decades before Carlyle and the Victorian period, attempted to warn British readers in a manner similar to Carlyle. He condemns the chaotic freedom the French began to engage in following the beginning of the revolution, asserting that only a "manly, moral, regulated liberty" should be seen as desirable (7). Indeed,

Burke goes so far as to write of the French: "Their liberty is not liberal. Their science is presumptuous ignorance. Their humanity is savage and brutal" (118).

Furthermore, just as Charlotte Brontë would write years later in 1848 of her concern that the same insurrections plaguing France would occur in England, so too did Burke forecast the destructive impact that the French Revolution might have on Great Britain. Burke emphasizes the deep connection between France and the rest of Europe as potentially dangerous (118-9), and he also stresses the importance of taking preventative action in England rather than waiting for the worst to happen, as it did in France (10-11). "At home we behold similar beginnings," Burke writes. "We are on our guard against similar conclusions" (157). The "similar conclusions" were, of course, still a menace in the England of the Brontës, perhaps particularly so because Burke's attempts to warn his fellow Englishmen about the dangers of the French Revolution coming to their own shores went unheeded by many of them. This would lead Sir James Graham in 1843 to bemoan the fact that unlike other European countries, England had failed to learn from France's example and had continued instead on the same path to destruction rather than educating her people about how properly to conduct themselves (Hammond 192).

Graham's assessment that the other countries of Europe had learned from the French Revolution, however, would be proven wrong only a few years later in the multitude of revolutions that swept across Europe in 1848. Although the events of 1848 occurred after the writing and publication of both *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*, the spirit and ideals leading up to this year must nevertheless be examined in order to understand the historical context of these novels properly. Many Englishmen and women believed these revolutionary ideals to have already invaded England, as manifested in the French revolutionaries' impact on Irish rebels and

English Chartists (Saville 2). For example, not only did a crowd of united Irishmen and Chartists greet word of the 1848 French Revolution with cheers, but both groups also generally allied themselves with the French agitators, often quite openly (Thompson 216). Most British citizens, on the other hand, reacted to the news of the 1848 revolution as Charlotte Brontë did in her letter to a friend mentioned earlier.

The Irish connection to the French Revolution is integral to an understanding of the Brontës' novels, as they were of Irish descent themselves. Ever since England began to dominate Ireland, the former had feared a collaboration between the latter and France, a fear which was not ungrounded considering the two countries' mutual Catholic identities and hatred of England. Rather than attempting to pacify the Irish, however, the English exacerbated the situation by continually treating the Irish as inferior human beings. Even the Irish Rebellion of 1798 apparently had but negligible impact on English policies towards the Irish. English attitudes towards the Irish in fact seem to have grown more calloused.

While the English still feared the Irish, they refused to treat them as fellow citizens, which would prove so disastrous in the infamous Irish Potato Famine, lasting from approximately 1845 to 1852. Although English politicians did little to counteract the horrors of the Famine, the country of England itself offered a possibility of escape to the Irish who could manage to emigrate there. There are no exact numbers for how many Irish poured into England during the years of the Famine, but rough estimates put the number at around 500,000 during the period spanning 1841-1851. Liverpool saw perhaps the greatest influx of Irish, but the situation that awaited the immigrants there was often little better than the one they had left behind in Ireland. Frequently, they faced the same poverty and hunger in both countries (Hammond 23-4).

It seems only natural, then, to assume that the situation of Ireland and the Irish weighed heavily on Emily Brontë's mind, for although *Wuthering Heights* is set largely prior to the nineteenth century, it was composed between 1845 and 1846, coinciding with the beginnings of the Potato Famine.

Ireland was perceived as a threat to England for more than just the possibility of her allying with France, however. The frequent political coalition between the Irish and the Chartists in England alarmed the English with increasing urgency throughout the first half of the nineteenth century (Saville 93), nor was the increasing violence of both groups lightly dismissed (Saville 117). In fact, the deplorable Irish Coercion Act of 1833 may have even served as a key impetus in the rise of the Chartist movement (Thompson 19). This Coercion Act covered a variety of legislation, most notably the refusal to give accused criminals the right of a trial by jury (Bardon). It should therefore not come as a surprise that the increased number of transplanted Irish in England frightened the English, who saw the threat of both Chartism and revolutionary France being cultivated by these immigrants. The rapid influx of poor, hungry, and unhappy Irish into England was thus frightening not only for the chance of revolution that they brought with them, but also for their alliance with other menacing movements such as Chartism.

In addition to Ireland, France too served as continual inspiration for the Chartist movement, as the English working-class participants often looked to repeated French revolutionary events for encouragement (Saville 55). In addition to sharing many of the same ideals as the French revolutionaries, English Chartists also shared the Continental rebels' zeal for the new French Republic. Their shared eagerness manifested itself particularly in one of the Chartists' popular mottoes: "France has the Republic, England shall have the

Charter” (Thompson 311). Not unexpectedly, many Englishmen deeply feared Chartism, for its own merits as well as for its connections with Ireland and France. Indeed, Carlyle wrote of his firm belief that “[t]hese Chartisms, Radicalism, Reform Bill, Tithe Bill . . . are our French Revolution” (qtd. in J. Adams 75). Chartism was perceived as particularly dangerous because of its ability to unite numerous and sometimes opposing forces into a single movement (Hammond 268). The English aristocracy’s fear of Chartism turning violent was realized several times during the movement’s lifetime, though perhaps most of all in the Newport Rising of 1839. Instead of executing the leaders of the Rising, which likely would have led to much greater bloodshed, the British had them transported for life, largely quelling the small revolts that had begun in the West Riding of Yorkshire following their arrest (Thompson 84).

It is of no small importance that the West Riding was also home to the Brontë family, nor should it be ignored that only in 1848, a year after the publication of *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*, did the Chartist movement truly begin to fade (Thompson 299). Thus, while the Brontë sisters were composing their novels, the Chartist movement was still very much a real force and a genuine revolutionary threat in England, particularly in the specific area that they inhabited. Indeed, only a few years before the Brontës wrote their famous novels, there was a Chartist plan to convert one of the Chartist Conventions into an English version of the French National Assembly, thereby transferring governmental power into the hands of the nation’s workers. In her description of this 1842 plan, Thompson notes that the strategy incorporated both Irish political structures and French insurgent policies, again emphasizing the link that existed between these three movements, a link perceived as dangerous by the Victorian British (319).

Towns and villages in the West Riding had long advocated reform in the government, so when Chartism arose to answer their frustrations, it was widely embraced by most living there (Thompson 13). Halifax, a town only about ten miles from the Brontës' home in Haworth, saw frequent conflicts between soldiers and Chartists, as well as a number of Chartist arrests (Thompson 292). In addition, the West Riding as a whole was host to numerous military-style training events of Chartist workers (Eagleton, *Myths* 45). Eagleton perhaps best expresses the intimate connection of Chartism with the Brontë sisters in his book *Myths of Power*:

They [the Brontës] lived, in short, through an aspect of the events which Karl Marx described in *Capital* as the most horrible tragedy of English history. Their childhood witnessed machine-breaking; their adolescence Reform agitation and riots against the New Poor Law; their adulthood saw the Plug strikes and Chartism . . . Sir Charles Napier, Governor of the Northern Division headquarters at Halifax, . . . wrote in 1841 that 'Every element of a ferocious civil war is boiling in the district.' (3)

The Brontës, then, grew up surrounded by this social turbulence, and the links between the Chartism around them and the Irish and French revolutionary movements would not have passed by them unobserved.

For the Brontës, however, it was more than simply a matter of being surrounded by a society so marked by inner tumult. Chartism, as well as the violence that sometimes accompanied it, imprinted itself upon the Brontës in their everyday lives. It was therefore a daily reality, not just an atmosphere. Although his conscience sometimes led him to side with the workers rather than with the employers, Patrick Brontë, the girls' father, also stood against the workers when he deemed them to be in the wrong. Unfortunately, this frequently led to bad

feelings between himself and the workers, and he began to carry a gun with him on his daily walks to prevent any possible rash actions on the part of the workers (Gaskell 1: 53).

Charlotte Brontë too would later recall how one of her teachers, Miss Wooler, often spoke of the working-class threat of insurrection early in the nineteenth century. Like many in England at the time, Miss Wooler may have sympathized with some of the injustices done to the workers, but she also feared what they might do. This fear was only exacerbated by “mysterious nightly drillings” and “the muttered threats of individuals too closely pressed upon to be prudent.” Charlotte’s friend Elizabeth Gaskell would note that Miss Wooler’s tales of near-revolutions in England “sank deep in to the mind of one, at least, among her hearers” (1: 115). Just how fully Charlotte did pay attention to the threats of the revolutionary ideals pouring in from France, will be discussed shortly in relation to her novel *Jane Eyre*. As a precursor to this discussion, however, note how seamlessly the threat of Chartist revolution works its way into Charlotte Brontë’s famous novel. Jane’s playful teasing of Rochester about rousing his harem against him is much more than harmless joking. Instead, as Elsie Michie notes, Jane’s employment of such words as “mutiny” and “charter” points to the very real political events occurring in England at the time *Jane Eyre* was composed (138). While Charlotte was not unsympathetic to Chartist grievances, she seems to have been much more concerned with first repressing any possible insurrection, and then, perhaps, extending some sort of help to the defeated rebels (Eagleton, *Myths* 46).

CHAPTER III

An Anglicized Identity

To unify British citizens against such revolutionary tendencies abroad and at home, British politicians focused on the internal similarities of the populace. In their estimation, if the British felt part of a great nation, they would be less likely to revolt against it. In order to unify Britons properly, of course, it first had to be determined what the British had in common that opposed the threatening Other and its insurrectionary ideals. The clear British opposition to the French has already been mentioned, but it should be noted that one of the most powerful unifying factors in Great Britain was also one of the strongest ways in which they saw themselves superior to the French: Protestantism. Protestantism was especially important not only because it allowed Britain to oppose itself to Catholic France, but it also encouraged a unity among Scotland, Wales, and England rather than a continuation of the historical conflicts between these nations (Colley, *Britons* 18). Linda Colley has termed this Protestant unity against Catholic France a kind of “English Francophobia” (*Britons* 25), an apt description for how fears of the external Other served as a unifying domestic force.

Protestantism’s opposition to the excesses of Roman Catholicism can also be seen in the morality that stems from its tenets. Colley describes the French character, as perceived by the British, as irrational, self-indulgent, and economically lacking. The British, of course, interpreted themselves as the complete opposite of all these characteristics (*Britons* 368). As further proof of the British belief in their moral superiority, it should be noted that in 1840, Charlotte Brontë herself wrote a letter to her friend Ellen Nussey describing a number of French novels she had recently read as “clever, sophistical, and immoral” (Shorter 191). With wars, rebellions, and

perceived moral corruption occurring in both Continental Europe and Britain's imperial holdings, it is hardly surprising that the British chose to focus on the internal similarities they had, such as Protestantism and its derivative morals, thereby clinging to something persistent as the world around them changed.

While the British clearly defined themselves against the European and the imperial Other in contrast to these internal similarities, they also felt a perceived need to separate themselves from the potential contamination that both these Others threatened. Part of this stemmed from the British characterizations of the peoples of other countries, as we have already seen to a degree in the stereotyping of the French character. The text of *Jane Eyre* itself suggests this stereotyping in Rochester's assessment of his foreign mistresses, calling his Italian woman "unprincipled and violent"; his German mistress "honest and quiet; but heavy, mindless, unimpressive"; and describing his French mistress as one who "deserved only scorn" (266, 123). Patrick Brantlinger also summarizes the British stereotyping of other nations nicely: "The thieving Italian, the volatile Frenchman, the lazy Barbadian complement by contrast the courageous, rollicking British tar [sailor]" (50). The brave British man is here held up as superior by virtue of his morals and work ethic, but Brantlinger also notes that the British perceived their whiteness as giving them superiority as well. The 'purity' and whiteness of British Anglo-Saxons constantly renewed their sense of supremacy, particularly as they encountered a more obviously racial Other in the supposedly evil and weak black inhabitants of the British Empire (81).

In addition to its being a point of pride, the British viewed their white Anglo-Saxon heritage as another aspect of their identity that solidified their sense of uniqueness, as well as their sense of superiority. With the sanctity of their pure Saxon blood in mind, it was

insupportable for the British at the time to think of mixing with any darker race, whether socially or sexually (Brantlinger 22-3), for fear of racial ‘contamination.’ While some of the danger of racial contamination was believed to stem from the lower, working classes in British society, which were seen as less pure, the largest threat manifested itself in the native women of imperialized countries. Although any interracial sexual relations between whites and non-whites were viewed as dangerous, relations between white men and non-white women were particularly frightening to the Victorians. Such relations were said to pose the hazard of disease, but more importantly, such interactions supposedly exposed the white men to “debased sentiments, immoral proclivities and extreme susceptibility to decivilized states” (McClintock 48).

Although the British were adept at defining their own identity in its various facets of Protestantism, morality, and Anglo-Saxon blood, it seems they were less sure about what to do with the presence of the Others already in their homeland and their imperial holdings. This foreign presence was sometimes physical but often simply cultural. Given the British Empire’s reach and Britain’s status as a European country, it is only natural that such foreign influences should have worked their way into the nation. Realistically, it was impossible to expel all foreign persons and influences. Thus, Britain was faced with the choice of assimilating these foreign presences into their British identity or allowing them to continue unchecked. By anglicizing these influences, the potential threat they represented would be minimized.

Foreign presences in need of such anglicization existed both at home and abroad in the Empire, but they were perhaps more obvious in the countries imperialized by Britain. As non-European peoples were viewed as inherently less civilized, their foreign influence was seen as particularly dangerous because it could ‘corrupt’ proper British citizens who lived in constant

contact with these people. These presences, therefore, were in need of anglicization to diminish their threat. It was believed that through frequent exposure and adherence to European, particularly British, culture, these non-white peoples could become more 'civilized,' though it was doubted if they would ever reach a fully civilized stage (Brantlinger 6).

Foreign influences within the Mother Country, however, were just as important.

Raymond Chapman has commented on how the Irish, viewed by many English as "human chimpanzees" (96), were long seen as a dangerous foreign element within Great Britain. He argues that despite this English fear, the Irish were gradually accepted in British society so long as they suppressed what the English saw as their native urges (95). In contrast to Chapman's argument, McClintock's presentation of Irish stereotypes suggests that the Irish were far from being accepted in British society. Her reasoning must be examined, particularly since Charlotte and Emily Brontë were the daughters of an Irishman. While the danger of the Irish uniting with the English Chartists has already been mentioned, McClintock demonstrates how threatening the Irish were simply by their very existence. She points out that because the Irish were as white as the English, a way to distinguish them from the 'superior' Anglo-Saxons had to be found that did not involve skin color. Most often, this came to involve the 'uncivilized' Irish accent and the perceived lack of order within Irish households (52-3). The otherness of Ireland was so pronounced by virtue of its largely Catholic population, its strange accent, its physical distance from England, and its constant rebellions, that even when it was officially a part of Great Britain, it was still viewed as a dangerous foreign land by the British (Colley, *Britons* 8).

In response to the perceived otherness of their nationality, many Irish men and women attempted to adopt a distinctly English identity in order to mask their Irish roots. One such man

was Patrick Brontë, Charlotte's father, who was born in County Down in Ireland, the son of one Hugh Brunty. Patrick was in fact born on St. Patrick's Day in 1777, and his Irish heritage, like his birthday, would prove to be something from which he could never quite escape. After finally saving enough money, Patrick left Ireland when he was 25 years old and began studying at Cambridge (Shorter 22-3). While at Cambridge, he quickly changed his surname to Brontë, which was decidedly less reminiscent of Ireland and more evocative of elite European connections (Eagleton, *Myths* 9). Both Patrick and his daughters, however, continued to face discrimination for being Irish in spite of their best attempts to conform to an English identity. For example, although Patrick was able to purge the Irish brogue from his own accent (Gaskell 1:35), Charlotte still possessed a decidedly Irish accent during her years at school, an 'unfortunate' trait that Anne Longmuir associates with Charlotte's exclusion from Englishness and a uniquely English identity (165). Even Patrick's adoption of an English accent, however, failed to save him from social exclusion, as the inhabitants of his Haworth parish never allowed him to forget his Irish roots (Eagleton, *Heathcliff* 2).

Thus, Charlotte Brontë's awareness of her own otherness at school led her, as it had led her father previously, to anglicize herself as much as possible. While many of the Irish who tried to anglicize themselves in order to fit better into English society did not wholly succeed, a number of them did at least succeed enough not to be ostracized by it. Even several decades after the publication of *Jane Eyre*, this was still a common occurrence, as can be seen in the case of Oscar Wilde, who purposefully eradicated both his Irish accent and identity, adopting an "affected Englishness" that far surpassed that of the English themselves (Pearce 57). Although Brontë may have been less successful in erasing all traces of her Irish heritage from her personal

life. her writing of *Jane Eyre* demonstrates the process of anglicization. Jane's adoption of a distinctly British identity suggests her author's own desire to be assimilated into British society, and Jane's subsequent anglicization of Rochester and Adèle indicates a wholehearted belief in the superiority of such an identity. In the following chapter, I first demonstrate how Jane herself assumes the anglicized identity that I have just outlined, including how her doing so echoes Brontë's own attempts to conform to a British identity. I then show how Jane furthers the spread of anglicization by redeeming Rochester and Adèle from the corrupted identities that they have gained through their association with foreign elements within the text.

In contrast to her sister, Emily Brontë seems to have been more struck by her father's exclusion from English society than she was by the possibility of she and her family becoming part of it. Her invention of Heathcliff can, in fact, be seen on one level as the re-creation of the English typecasting of her father as a savage Irishman. While there are many different theories concerning Heathcliff's racial background, the most convincing and the one which I will argue casts Heathcliff as an Irishman, and the similarities between Heathcliff and Patrick Brontë should not go unnoticed. For example, Patrick Brontë may have escaped the terrible situation of living in Ireland, but he would never have been permitted to escape his racially Irish roots (Michie 132). Similarly, Heathcliff's return to the Heights after several years of absence shows that he has outwardly become a gentleman, just as Patrick outwardly conformed to English societal standards once he left Ireland. Heathcliff, however, was only concealing his true savage Otherness beneath a veneer of respectability. While Emily surely did not see her father in this light, she must have known that this would have been how many Englishmen interpreted Patrick Brontë and all other 'anglicized' Irish. In the chapter on *Wuthering Heights* that follows my

discussion of *Jane Eyre*, I examine the complex force of Heathcliff in Emily Brontë's novel. Not only is he the character around whom the action of the novel is almost entirely built, but he is also alternately despicable and sympathetic, all while destroying the society around him. I first study why Heathcliff's origins are responsible for his destructive influence before looking at the specific ways in which he ruins the anglicized society that he has infiltrated. Finally, I turn my attention to which, if any, characters escape the influence of Heathcliff's foreign presence.

CHAPTER IV

French Superficiality and West Indian Depravity: The Taming of Foreign Forces in *Jane Eyre*

Although England may be the setting for *Jane Eyre*, it is nevertheless an England heavily influenced and threatened by the foreign elements within it. Before understanding the precise ways in which Jane opposes these foreign influences and values in the text, we must first realize how un-anglicized Jane is at the beginning of the novel, as well as how she is able to reform, or anglicize, herself. Only after anglicizing herself is she able to address the problems she encounters in Adèle and Rochester. Because Jane begins the novel in an already corrupt environment, the Reed household, an examination of the Reeds' traits is necessary.

The three Reed siblings are markedly different, but each of them represents a perversion of some aspect of the British identity. I have already mentioned how the British perceived themselves as highly masculine, and in some ways, John Reed seems to fit this image. At the same time, however, John distorts British masculinity by becoming a violent bully rather than simply a powerful male figure. Jane remarks, "He bullied and punished me . . . continually; every nerve I had feared him" (8). His dissipation into a life of "wild" living and "strange ways" (188) represents the warping of British manhood; what should be a strong, authoritative life turns into a cruel, controlling one.

Eliza Reed also perverts an aspect of Britishness, but whereas her brother twisted proper masculinity, Eliza represents a disfiguration of Protestantism. On the surface, Eliza's appearance may seem similar to the older Jane's, what with "the extreme plainness of a straight-skirted, black stuff dress" that she wears, along with her "hair combed away from the temples" (194). Jane even describes her appearance as "puritanical," which could also aptly be applied to Jane's

looks. Eliza, however, possesses none of the admirable qualities that will later come to characterize Jane's Protestantism. Instead, Eliza has "a sallow face and severe mien" (194), indicating that she has transformed Protestantism from a moral guide into a bleak duty. Jane informs us later that Eliza's version of Protestantism causes her to join a French convent, where she can have no positive impact on the world but will instead "be walled up alive" (206). Not only does this indicate a lack of true religion, as she refuses to use her beliefs to help others, but it also shows one of the 'worst' things that could happen to a Victorian Protestant: converting to Catholicism and more than that, French Catholicism.

Georgiana Reed, in addition to being so opposite in character to her serious sister, almost seems as though she fits the conventional image of a Victorian domestic angel, well-dressed and sociable but desiring no more than to be married and have children. Indeed, she is externally beautiful, a kind of blonde precursor to Blanche Ingram, and even the servants are charmed by her "long curls and her blue eyes, and . . . [her] sweet colour" (21). The truth, however, is that Georgiana's shallowness of character signals her as having been influenced by French cultural values. Just as the French were perceived as overly concerned with artifice and superficiality, so too is Georgiana, as can be seen in Brontë's description of her "interweaving her curls with artificial flowers and faded feathers" (24). She will eventually blossom into a beautiful young woman, but she fails to gain any depth of character. Even when her mother is dying, Georgiana still takes care that her dress is "stylish" as well as impeccable (194), undoubtedly an influence from the purportedly frivolous French. Linda Colley has already pointed out the pervasiveness of French dress in British society that lasted well beyond the American Revolution, in both men and women. In many cases, when men and women wore French couture, it was to signal their own

elitism. The elaborate nature of these fashions also prohibited these elites from engaging in any kind of work while wearing them, another symbol of their supposed superiority (*Britons* 165-6). Because Jane grows up in such a world of artifice and sloth, she will necessarily later have to purge herself of such French corruption in order to assume a wholly English identity.

Jerome Beaty maintains that Jane is unquestionably superior to the Reeds (189). While she may begin the novel as innately superior to them, however, she certainly does not exhibit the traits that make her so, as her older self will. She may feel herself better than the Reeds initially, but it is only when she has learned to tame her own passions that she truly becomes worthier than them. Beaty points out that Jane's outspoken defiance of Aunt Reed would have been deeply disturbing to Victorian readers, contrasting the often applauded modern interpretation of her defiance as being heroic and passionate (191). This excess of passion was decidedly un-British, albeit in response to equally un-British excesses of shallowness and violence. Another instance in the novel cited by Beaty that appeals to modern readers but likely frightened Victorians, is Jane's first conversation with Mr. Brocklehurst. While Mr. Brocklehurst is no shining beacon of Protestant purity, Jane's initial encounter with him shows that she too is far from the desired Protestantism so necessary to the British identity. Jane tells Mr. Brocklehurst that she is determined to eschew hell simply by staying alive and that she is not fond of the entire Bible, both appalling admissions to Victorian readers (192).

Young Jane's constant vehemence, in both her words and actions, is all the more surprising given her gender. While the supposed superiority of the British manifested itself partly in the self-control that Continental Europeans, such as the French, lacked, this restraint was particularly expected of British women. Young Jane is, of course, far from representative of a

child who will grow up to be a Victorian angel of the house. Indeed, she is referred to at various times as a “mad cat” with “shocking conduct” (9), “an underhand little thing” (10), “wicked” (13), “the most wicked and abandoned child ever reared under a roof” (23), and a “precocious actress” possessing “virulent passions, mean spirit, and dangerous duplicity” (14). Abbot, one of the servants in the Reed house, goes so far as to suspect Jane of being an “infantine Guy Fawkes” (21). We cannot ignore all the implications that accompany this comment. To Victorians, a reference to Guy Fawkes would conjure images of a destructive Catholic attempting to blow up Parliament. Not only would such a Catholic threat be associated with both France and Ireland, but it would also be linked with the revolutionary movements in both countries. Furthermore, thoughts of Irish rebellions would hold direct significance for the British, against whom these rebellions were directed. For Charlotte Brontë to allow a character to call her heroine a kind of Guy Fawkes is remarkable, and it signals young Jane as a distinctly non-English force that must be tamed.

Nor does Jane protest Aunt Reed’s classification of her as passionate, though she does object, in a “savage” voice, to being called deceitful (31). Jane admits that as a child, she had a passionate nature too easily stirred to anger, as well as how wrong it was for her to respond to the violence and superficiality of the Reeds with equal rage. After her confrontation with Aunt Reed, Jane feels as though she “had been poisoned” by her immoral vengeance (31). Although Jane realizes that both she and the Reeds are wrong in their behaviors, she has yet to meet an example of how a proper Englishwoman, or any British citizen for that matter, should comport herself.

Thus, even when Jane is freed from the corrupting influence of the Reeds in her enrollment at Lowood School, the passionate and immoral traits that have developed within her

must still be corrected. It is at Lowood, however, that Jane's negative qualities will begin to be reformed through the influence of Helen Burns and Miss Temple. Jane's early interactions with Helen serve as evidence that Jane's fiery nature must still be tamed. When Helen is punished and made to stand in the middle of the schoolroom, Jane cannot understand why Helen takes her discipline "so quietly— so firmly" (43). Soon after this, Jane confesses her belief to Helen that "[w]hen we are struck at without a reason, we should strike back again very hard" (48). Helen responds calmly by telling her that she will learn better as she grows up, for she is now "but a little untaught girl" (48). Jane does indeed learn the proper, moral British way to express her feelings, and Helen will prove instrumental in this development.

Helen fascinates Jane from their first meeting, at which time Jane cannot understand why Helen would want to read a serious book like *Rasselas*. Jane even remarks how boring *Rasselas* seems to her because it includes "nothing about fairies, nothing about genii; no bright variety" (42). For her own reading, Jane prefers books that make her think of foreign lands such as Iceland and Siberia, as well as those with strange pictures of ships, wrecked boats, and a "black, horned thing seated aloof on a rock, surveying a distant crowd surrounding a gallows" (6). These images are quite alien for a young English girl and demonstrate an unhealthy interest in the foreign, when Jane should instead be reading wholesome works like *Rasselas*. Nevertheless, Jane's interest in the serious girl who reads *Rasselas* continues when Helen is being punished, and she wonders what Helen can be contemplating so steadfastly, with her eyes "turned in, gone down into her heart" (44). Helen tells the younger girl that she often loses herself in contemplations of her eternal home in Heaven and that Jane should comport herself more according to such Christian principles. When Jane declares her doctrine of only loving

those who love her and submitting to punishment only when it is deserved, Helen admonishes her: "Heathens and savage tribes hold that doctrine; but Christians and civilised nations disown it" (49). According to Helen Burns, then, young Jane's philosophy is decidedly un-British and would more appropriately belong to one of the uncivilized countries in Britain's imperial holdings. Helen subsequently takes on the responsibility of showing Jane how a proper British woman should behave, which Jane acknowledges in her love for Helen's "pure society" (66). So far does Helen's calming influence extend that while Jane is distressed by the knowledge that Helen is dying, she quietly accepts her friend's death rather than violently protesting it.

In addition to her friend Helen, Jane is also heavily influenced by Miss Temple during her time at Lowood. While Helen teaches Jane acceptance and resignation, Miss Temple instills the principles of refinement, propriety, and neatness in Jane by virtue of her example (40). Miss Temple always has kind words for the girls at Lowood and gently corrects their faults, a behavior that Jane will later emulate in her interactions with Adèle. When Miss Temple leaves Lowood around eight years after Jane's arrival, Jane feels her absence sharply because, as she says, "[Miss Temple] had stood me in the stead of mother, governess, and, latterly, companion" (71). Not only did Jane learn most of her career skills from Miss Temple, but she also "imbibed from her something of her nature and much of her habits: more harmonious thoughts . . . better-regulated feelings . . . an allegiance to duty and order" (71). Jane describes herself at this point in her life as "quiet," "content," and "a disciplined and subdued character" (71). Miss Temple's sophistication, then, is markedly different from Georgiana Reed's. While Georgiana draws her sense of superiority from her elaborate dress and artificial manners, Miss Temple grounds hers in a moral ascendancy.

Jane's desire to be a moral Englishwoman is motivated by more than just her wish to emulate Miss Temple. Jerome Beaty takes note of how isolated Jane is from the rest of society; even as a young girl, she is alienated from her cousins and aunt by their cruelty to her (174). She thus learns that to be loved, she must behave in a manner acceptable to British society. Miss Temple shows Jane how to do this, but she also demonstrates how to adhere to proper British morals at the same time, morals which many British aristocrats had lost. Jane consequently becomes the epitome of a moral Protestant young woman, from her "Quaker trim" appearance (110) and her "genteel" bearing as "quite a lady" (78) to her valuing spiritual riches more than material ones. As Jane says after she has been at Lowood for some time, "I would not now have exchanged Lowood with all its privations, for Gateshead and its daily luxuries" (63), a sharp contrast to her earlier avowal that she "should not like to belong to poor people," no matter how loving they were (20). Moreover, Jane's wholehearted embrace of her new anglicized identity explains in part her terror at the thought of having to go to Ireland to "undertake the education of the five daughters of Mrs. Dionysius O'Gall, of Bitternutt Lodge, Connaught" (214). While she also hates the thought of being so far away from Rochester, the thought of moving to Ireland is all the more horrifying because the Victorian English would have seen Ireland as an 'uncivilized' and 'savage' country, to which no respectable English citizen would want to travel. It is hardly surprising, then, that Charlotte Brontë names the Irishwoman "O'Gall" and her home "Bitternutt Lodge," two monikers highly suggestive of the pain and unpleasantness that would accompany an English citizen who was forced to move to Ireland.

Jane will continue to struggle with her inherently passionate nature throughout the rest of the novel, but now that she has learned how to subdue it within herself, she continues to do so

and will in fact share this knowledge with Adèle and Rochester. The 'savage' Jane has embraced proper British behavior, and although she has been tamed by the examples of Helen and Miss Temple, her passion will still occasionally materialize, albeit briefly. For instance, when she scolds herself for believing that Rochester could love her rather than Blanche Ingram, Jane demands of herself, "Order! No snivel! – no sentiment! – no regret! I will endure only sense and resolution" (137). Later, a similar slip in Jane's firm control of her passion comes in her refusal of St. John's marriage proposal. She uses language that St. John characterizes as "violent, unfeminine, and untrue" (351). Overall, however, Jane adheres to her new quiet, subdued, and moral nature with the expectation of thus being more acceptable to British society. Parallels to Charlotte and Patrick Brontë's attempts to quell their own Irish heritage in order to fit better into English society would not be amiss.

With her new identity firmly in hand, Jane can now begin the process of reforming others who have been corrupted by non-British influences. Jane is already at an advantage in this goal due to her status as a woman, a gender associated at the time with a reforming influence, particularly in the domestic sphere (Colley, *Britons* 239). Women were also said to play an important role abroad, where their caring and motherly natures were believed to influence the 'savages' in imperialized countries, instructing them by example how to be 'more civilized' (Inboden 213). In their own homes, the influence that British women were believed to wield over their husbands and children was especially connected with religion. By possessing strong religious beliefs, a woman was believed better able to keep herself pure, better able to educate the next generation in proper English behavior, and better able to counter widespread male sexual immorality (Schneewind 113, 115). Jane will conform to this idea of being the

reforming woman in her interactions with the promiscuous Mr. Rochester, as well as in her tutorage of his ward.

The first character Jane encounters in need of a lesson in English morality, then, is Mr. Rochester's ward, Adèle Varens. From the first moment the reader meets Adèle, it is clear that she is no docile English girl. A "French dancer's bastard" (257), Adèle automatically has two traits working against her; she is illegitimate and at least half-French, her mother having been a less than respectable French opera-dancer. The fear of a subtle French influence encroaching upon England is thus made manifest in Adèle, a child who for most of the novel exhibits the characteristics so closely associated with the French: sloth, immorality, frivolity, and vanity. Indeed, Jane's first meeting with the little girl demonstrates both her vanity and her frivolity. The scene sees Adèle singing a rather scandalous song from an opera in which a woman has been betrayed by her lover. Not only is the subject matter inappropriate for such an "infant singer," but the very intonations of "love and jealousy warbled with the lisp of childhood" are, in Jane's opinion, "in very bad taste" (87). She has clearly been "carefully trained" by her mother in both song and dance, and this early assessment of Jane's prepares the governess for the difficulty of the task before her— the task of anglicizing Adèle.

Even Adèle's constant employment of French rather than English, despite the fact that she is now in England, signal the inherent corruption associated with her character. The heavy anti-French sentiment of many British extended to the use of the French language, as many of the British upper classes were known to favor the French language as a sign of sophistication (Colley, *Britons* 165). In *Jane Eyre*, this employment of the French language is evidenced not

only in the character of little Adèle, but also in the sprinkling of French words throughout the conversations among the Ingrams and others of Rochester's guests (151-3).

In addition to her insistence on speaking French in England, Adèle also exhibits a great degree of French vanity in her behavior. When Adèle is getting ready to meet the ladies among Rochester's guests, she arranges herself impeccably but decides that she needs to add a single flower to complete her look. Jane tells her, " 'You think too much of your 'toilette,' Adèle, but you may have a flower' " (145). Jane's acquiescence to Adèle's request suggests the governess's understanding that Adèle's vanity about her appearance is only the symptom of a deeper character flaw. Rather than treating the symptom, Jane realizes that she must address the root cause, and that is Adèle's French heritage. Adèle's vanity and self-concern can further be seen in her infatuation with "cadeaux," or presents. After Rochester returns to Thornfield for the first time since Jane has arrived, Adèle cannot focus on her lessons because she is so excited. Rather than her excitement stemming from joy that her guardian is home, however, she can only think of "what presents he had brought her" (101), a telling sign of her shallow character. That Rochester indulges his ward's vanity, of course, is of no small importance, but his own corrupted nature will be addressed later.

Nor is this the first time that Jane has encountered such French narcissism. The wife and daughters of the hypocrite Mr. Brocklehurst once visited Lowood School when Jane was still a girl there, and she was struck by their "velvet, silk, and furs," their "grey beaver hats, then in fashion, shaded with ostrich plumes," and their "false front[s] of French curls" (54-5). It is not to be lightly dismissed that the curls Jane refers to are a French style in addition to being called "false," both a styling term and a signal of French superficiality. Just as she understood the

difference when she was a little girl between true religion and the false Christianity of the Brocklehursts, so too does Jane now comprehend that for all Adèle's references to the "Holy Virgin" (87), she still lacks the true Protestant morality necessary to inspire modesty in dress and comportment. This want of morality must be remedied before the symptoms can truly be fixed. There is surely no more fitting individual to correct Adèle's conspicuous French vulgarity than the Protestant Jane, who habitually dresses herself in "Quaker trim, where there was nothing to retouch— all being too close and plain, braided locks included, to admit of disarrangement" (110).

The first fault that must be overcome in the French girl is her laziness. Jane notes immediately upon the commencement of their lessons that Adèle is "disinclined to apply [herself]: she had not been used to regular occupation of any kind" (88). Sympathizing with the girl, Jane starts their lessons slowly in order to build up Adèle's ability to concentrate for extended periods of time. Jane's empathy with Adèle's initially fickle nature is in many ways the result of her own childhood. In her interactions with Aunt Reed and Mr. Brocklehurst as a child, Jane demonstrated herself to be both witty and full of passionate feeling, two characteristics heavily associated with the French at the time (Wellington 36). Only through the somber influence of Helen Burns and Miss Temple was Jane able to overcome these childhood flaws, the result of growing up in a household where French artifice and superficiality dominated. Now a serious and thoughtful woman, Jane is still young enough to remember her own former faults, and she thus knows how best to correct Adèle's.

Just as parallels can be drawn between the Brontës' attempt to blend into English society and Jane's effort to anglicize herself, so too can similarities be seen in the behavior of governesses Charlotte Brontë and her creation Jane Eyre. In her biography of Charlotte Brontë,

Elizabeth Gaskell draws attention to the fact that no matter how frustrating her students were, Charlotte never lost her temper. By remaining calm, she ultimately won her pupils over where other, more volatile governesses tended to fail. Interestingly, Gaskell also points out that many of these volatile and ineffective teachers were French (272). Jane too is remarkable for her tranquility in dealing with the lively Adèle, and this quiet thoughtfulness, heavily associated with the English national character, is what ultimately redeems Adèle from her French corruption.

Jane thus recognizes that Adèle has been “spoilt and indulged, and therefore was sometimes wayward,” but she is able to begin the correction of her character because there are no external influences vying for Adèle’s loyalty. Thus, the girl “soon forgot her little freaks, and became obedient and teachable . . . [and] made reasonable progress” (92). Freed from the corrupting influence of France in general and her disreputable mother specifically, Adèle makes steady improvement under Jane’s sober tutelage. By the end of the novel, Jane can successfully record how “a sound English education corrected in a great measure her French defects,” as well as how she grew “docile, good-tempered, and well-principled,” all adjectives that can as easily be applied to the adult Jane as to the grown-up Adèle (383). The little Adèle who once pranced about from excitement over her “cadeaux” thus grows into a helpful and selfless young woman largely through the efforts of an equally selfless young woman, one who had previously navigated the path to a moral, dependable English identity.

Only a few pages after Adèle begins to improve and become “teachable,” Jane meets her next project: the master of Thornfield himself. While Adèle obviously still needs more work, she is beginning to acquire the moral English identity that Jane so desires to instill in her. With Adèle now having embarked on her process of anglicization, Jane is freed up enough to begin working

to redeem Rochester's corrupt moral character. Interestingly, prior to Jane's arrival at Thornfield, even Rochester had recognized the need for Adèle to receive a proper English education to prevent her from becoming a woman like her mother. He explains to Jane, "I e'en took the poor thing out of the slime and mud of Paris, and transplanted it here, to grow up clean in the wholesome soil of an English country garden" (124). He seems here largely unaware of his own immorality, even though he can see such wickedness in his ward. More importantly, however, Rochester does not initially realize that the same woman who will reform Adèle will eventually redeem him from his own corruption as well.

Whereas Adèle is inherently flawed due to her French nationality, Rochester is English by birth, but he has been corrupted by foreign influences. The most important among these foreign influences are his first wife, Bertha Mason, and his French mistress Céline Varens, though a number of other Continental European mistresses such as the German Clara and the Italian Giacinta also play a minor role. Although Rochester is a genuine Englishman, he has become contaminated through his sexual liaisons with his foreign wife and mistresses. The popular Victorian belief in the inherent superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race encompassed not only its perceived purity and whiteness but also implied that any miscegenation automatically corrupts, or taints, said Anglo-Saxon purity. According to this view, then, Rochester contaminates himself through marriage and sex with the West Indian Bertha, as well as through his extramarital affairs with his French, German, and Italian mistresses. The fact that Rochester is natively English must be remembered, however, because it implies the possibility of his redemption. The same cannot be said of Heathcliff, who is savage through and through (Eagleton, *Myths* 99).

While Rochester originally went to the West Indies and married Bertha for economic reasons, it is important to note that he finds his wife in the West Indies rather than in a wholesome English country estate. This decision is likely in large part due to the association of the West Indies with the fulfillment of sexual fantasies. Because the West Indies and other such colonies at the time allowed for a greater degree of anonymity than could be found in England, many Englishmen traveled there for this anonymity that led to more freedom—sexual, moral, or otherwise—than was possible in the Mother Country herself (Said 64). Furthermore, the very inhabitants of the West Indies, particularly the women of multiple ethnicities, were believed to possess greater sexual appetites than their European counterparts, a belief that made the colonies even more appealing to young Englishmen in search of easy sexual conquests (J. Adams 166).

However, while the women of the West Indies were often seen as sexually enthusiastic, this very trait also rendered them dangerous. Africa, and by association all those of African descent, was deeply connected to this threatening sexuality given the conventional image of unrestrained and savage African sexual behavior (McClintock 22). Sandra Gilbert points out that Bertha's Creole mother was likely French or Spanish, though her father's race and therefore her exact ethnic makeup is uncertain. It is nevertheless indisputable that Bertha is of multiple races due to her heavy association with the West Indies (360). It may thus be safely assumed that from at least one side of her family ancestry, Bertha possesses blood from one of the many Africans who were brought to the West Indies. The highly dangerous and sexual connotations of both African women and the West Indies are evidenced in Bertha's sexual appetites as described by Rochester. Although he admits she was once beautiful and charming, he mainly focuses on how frighteningly Other she soon revealed herself to be. He tells Jane, "I found her nature wholly

alien to mine . . . her cast of mind common, low, narrow," and he particularly emphasizes her "giant propensities" that caused him to suffer "all the hideous and degrading agonies which must attend a man bound to a wife at once intemperate and unchaste" (261). Thus, not only does his marriage to Bertha taint Rochester's purity as an Anglo-Saxon male, but her infidelity to him further disgraces his manhood. The union of Bertha and Rochester caused, in his words, "a nature the most gross, impure, depraved . . . [to be] associated with mine, and called by the law and by society a part of me" (261). Thus, not only is Rochester corrupted by Bertha during the time they live together as man and wife, but her polluting influence on him extends long after he has stopped considering her his wife due to the fact that her impurity has become "part of" him.

Bertha's excesses are seen in more than just Rochester's description of her. The first real sight of Bertha that Jane gives the reader is every bit as monstrous as Rochester later describes her to be. When Bertha sneaks into Jane's room to tear up her wedding veil, her identity at this point still unknown to Jane, the governess describes her as a woman with "a discoloured face— it was a savage face . . . the lips were swelled and dark; the brow furrowed; the black eyebrows widely raised over the bloodshot eyes . . . [like] the foul German spectre— the Vampyre" (242). The obvious racial otherness of this woman later reappears when Rochester shows the wedding party his true spouse. It seems only natural that such a "hideous demon" (269) would be associated both with acts of sexual indulgence and violent urges, as in Bertha's attempt to kill Rochester, her brother, and ultimately the whole household of Thornfield. It is no coincidence that the mixed race Bertha attempts to burn down the Thornfield estate as an echo of the numerous native rebellions that occurred against English imperial estates in places such as the West Indies.

Before we can examine how Jane redeems Rochester from the corruption that Bertha has engendered within him, we must first look at Rochester's European mistresses, as Jane saves him from their tainting influence as well. While Céline Varens and his other mistresses may lack the physical violence of Bertha, they are all nevertheless guilty of her same sexual indulgences. Just as the West Indies served as a backdrop for the fulfillment of many Englishmen's sexual desires, so too did Continental Europe represent a realm of greater moral freedom (J. Adams 73).

Céline's effect on her daughter Adèle has already been demonstrated, but her impact on Rochester is no less important. In addition to draining him of money and pawning her daughter off on him, Céline also seduces Rochester and, like Bertha, has liaisons with other men during her affair with him, thereby both emasculating and corrupting him. As Rochester says, she might have "deserved only scorn," but his own lapse in judgment in being "her dupe" makes him more worthy of contempt (123).

Besides his sexual indulgences and his often physical, bordering on violent, temper, Rochester's compromised character can also be seen in his use of deception. The French were characterized in the Victorian era as deceptive and manipulative, in contrast to the honest British, but many middle-class residents of England associated the same French use of deceit with the upper-class British (Moskal 180). One has only to recall the numerous occasions on which Rochester practices deceit to see this instance of the French corruption of his morals. From his perpetual lying to Jane about his supposed impending marriage to Blanche Ingram to his decision to dress up as an old gypsy woman to try to ascertain Jane's true feelings for him, Rochester employs the same manipulation of others that Céline Varens first used on him. The legacy of corruption that contaminated Adèle has thus also found perpetuation in Rochester. Interestingly,

Heathcliff too will practice deception throughout *Wuthering Heights*, lying most notably to Isabella Linton and the second Catherine. Nelly even chastises him for lying “so glaringly” to the second Catherine (205), but of course, Heathcliff lacks the ability to be redeemed while Rochester still possesses it.

The first glimmer of hope for Rochester, at least as far as the chronological events of the narrative are concerned, comes when he is still in the West Indies with his loathsome wife. He tells Jane of one particular evening wherein his wife was hurling especially foul curses at him. Coupled with the intense heat of the night, Rochester feels an overwhelming despair and contemplates killing himself. He describes how suddenly the following happened: “A wind fresh from Europe blew over the ocean and rushed through the open casement . . . the air grew pure” (263). Rochester feels a sudden renewal of hope— notably from the direction of Europe— that seems to encourage him to return to England, where he may alleviate himself from the trials he has endured during his marriage. Although he initially uses this hope to justify his dalliances with foreign mistresses, Rochester will eventually realize that the only true salvation for him is in the form of the moral and thoroughly English Jane Eyre.

Jane is clearly different from the other women of Rochester’s acquaintance, most distinctly in her appearance, behavior, and morality. Perhaps the most obvious manner in which Jane differs from Rochester’s foreign women is her refusal to become his mistress. She tells him she will not join his list of mistresses alongside Céline, Giacinta, and Clara, for she knows that he would ultimately lose his respect for her. As Rochester himself states, “Hiring a mistress is the next worst thing to buying a slave: both are often by nature, and always by position, inferior: and to live familiarly with inferiors is degrading” (266). Furthermore, before she realizes that

Rochester is already married, Jane still refuses to be put in the position of an inferior mistress. She does this by refusing the finery that Rochester wants to buy her, as well as by insisting upon continuing as Adèle's governess so that she is not entirely dependent upon Rochester but is instead autonomous enough that she earns her own money. She prefaces her demands by warning him, "I will not be your English Céline Varens" (230). Given her insistence upon the importance of her independence and character here, it almost seems odd how surprised Rochester is when she later refuses to be his actual mistress outside of marriage.

In the discussion of Rochester's numerous mistresses, as well as of how different Jane is from them all, the statuesque Englishwoman Blanche Ingram must not be forgotten. While Rochester's interactions with her seem primarily designed to inspire jealousy in Jane, Blanche nevertheless represents the direct alternative to Jane. To all outward appearances, Blanche is the ideal match for an English gentleman; she is beautiful, from a good family, and is worth a great deal of money. She is also, however, illustrative of the very type of woman Rochester does not need, meaning that she embodies the very French excesses and indulgences that have polluted so many members of the English aristocracy, including Rochester himself. In marrying her, Rochester would only have perpetuated his own contamination. Instead, he needs the genuinely English Jane to reform him.

Jane's untainted Englishness is further seen in her thoroughly Anglo-Saxon skin tone. She is repeatedly characterized as being "so pale" (84), a marked contrast to Blanche's skin, which "was dark as a Spaniard" (147), as well as to Bertha's own darkness that more resembles "some strange wild animal" than anything human (250). If we bear in mind Edward Said's explanation of ideas of racial purity and contamination through miscegenation during the Victorian era,

Jane's wholly anglicized character becomes all the more important if Rochester is to be redeemed from his corruption. Additionally, along with Jane's racial purity comes an emphasis on her sexual purity. While she clearly possesses passionate urges, Jane also represents a distinctly virginal state because she controls and represses her sexuality in a way that Bertha, Blanche, and Céline do not. For example, when Jane discovers that Rochester is already married, she longs to stay at Thornfield, perhaps even contemplating becoming his mistress as he desires. Because she has her passion firmly in control, however, she is able to resist and declare the following: "[C]onscience, turned tyrant, held passion by the throat, told her tauntingly she had yet but dipped her dainty foot in the slough" (254), and Jane subsequently knows that she must flee Thornfield before any further passion is made possible. Clearly, then, Jane has experienced passion, but she has only "dipped" her foot into it because she knows, as any good English virgin would have at the time, that to do anything but dip one's foot into passion prior to marriage was to compromise one's moral character.

In addition to her racial and sexual purity, Jane's superiority can also be seen in her lack of interest in material things. As the Victorian era began, many British citizens worried that the numerous changes occurring in the country would corrupt its inhabitants, especially its women. An increasingly materialistic outlook on life was believed to be steadily polluting the morals of young women, making them both greedy and conceited (Colley, *Britons* 241). Furthermore, the similarities between the state to which British women were falling and the already extant degradation of shallow French women suggests a connection between France's influence in England and the latter country's steady moral decline (Colley, *Britons* 251). That this threat had already wormed its way into England is evident in *Jane Eyre*, for both Adèle and Blanche Ingram

share this concern with material goods and their own appearances, though Adèle is ultimately redeemed from such a tainted worldview. Jane's ability to save Adèle from such vanity signals her as being above the petty concerns of a consumeristic culture.

Whereas John Reed represents a perversion of British masculinity into the hyper-masculine and despicable, Rochester presents a new side to this association of the British with masculine traits. In fact, he embodies the opposite dilemma. His time in France and his close connection with Céline have undermined his British masculinity and made him more feminine, which is how Victorians at the time perceived the French. While Rochester is to all appearances a brooding, masculine man, he is constantly placed in feminine positions throughout the novel to show how he has been feminized. His personality is not necessarily effeminate, but the situations and circumstances in which he continually finds himself signal him to be a kind of 'damsel in distress.' For example, the reader first meets Rochester when he sprains his ankle in falling from his horse and has to be helped by Jane. He goes on to nearly die in a fire in his bed, from which Jane also saves him, and he ultimately ends up blind and crippled, after which time Jane must care for and guide him like a little child. These situations hardly cast Rochester in the light of conquering British hero. Instead, they suggest that in his association with effeminate France, he has become feminized himself. Only through a process of re-anglicization can he also be re-masculinized. It is only after Jane has restored him to his rightful British identity that Rochester will be able to act as the man in their relationship.

Sandra Gilbert has pointed out two additional ways in which Charlotte Brontë places Rochester in a traditionally feminine position. By making him the second son of an English gentleman, she automatically deprives him of inheriting his wealth. He must instead earn it, and

the way in which his father and brother force him to do so is to place him on the "marriage market," an obviously feminine position at the time. Secondly, Charlotte creates the highly masculine Bertha Mason and allows her violent and physical maleness to dominate Rochester in such a way that he is seen as weak and passive by comparison (364).

To re-anglicize Rochester, then, will also require a renewal of his masculinity, and Jane takes on both tasks with enthusiasm. In light of the suggestion that Charlotte continually places Rochester in feminine positions, we should also examine how in these same situations, Jane plays the traditionally masculine role of rescuing him. The repeated ways in which she saves him physically will serve to echo the way in which she also saves him spiritually, morally, and emotionally. First, when Rochester sprains his ankle, Jane helps him back to his horse. The manner in which he receives this aid is important to note, for he certainly does not accept it willingly. After telling her repeatedly to stand aside, he finally consents to her stubborn offers of help only when he finds he cannot walk; he then tells her, "[N]ecessity compels me to make you useful" (98). His begrudging acceptance of Jane's help signals his larger resistance to aid in general, as he is too mired in his own despair to think that someone could or would actually help him, or metaphorically speaking, that someone could restore his youth and integrity. Rochester later tells Jane how profound this moment was for him when she offered her help, admiring her "strange perseverance" that marked a transition in his life, imbuing him with "something new—fresh sap and sense" (266-7).

Although he was initially resistant to her offers to help him, Rochester quickly comes to appreciate Jane's saving efforts. Her rescue of him after Bertha sets his bed on fire further endears her to him. Indeed, he can scarcely prevent himself from expressing his affection for her,

though he does allow the epithet "cherished preserver" to escape his lips (129). This is no stereotypically passive woman here. She personifies the logical and assertive traits believed at the time to belong to men, while Rochester remains in the traditional feminine roles of being helpless and emotional throughout the scene (Wellington 35). Jane may save his life in this instance, but even within this scene, Charlotte gives hints that Jane is saving his soul as well. The language Jane uses to describe this event reveal this spiritual salvation: "I . . . flew back to my own room, brought my own water-jug, baptized the couch afresh, and, by God's aid, succeeded in extinguishing the flames which were devouring it" (127). In saving his life, Jane simultaneously saves him from the fires of hell by 'baptizing' him with the help of God. Because a moral Protestant character was believed to be essential to the formation of a genuine English identity, Rochester's spiritual salvation must necessarily accompany the reclamation of his Englishness.

Not only is Jane powerful physically in her interactions with Rochester, but she also wields her influence over him emotionally, morally, and spiritually. Early in their relationship, Rochester seems to realize how much she helps him emotionally. He tells her of his relationship with Céline that led to Adèle being placed in his care, and her patient, considerate listening moves him to say, "[Y]ou may refresh me" (122). She listens to him pour his heart out, both here and later, and it seems to relieve him to express his emotions. Jane is well aware of this power of hers, as can be seen in her brief worry when she feels that she has "half lost the sense of power over him" (226). Interestingly, Rochester too seems to recognize her mastery of him, although he is perhaps initially unaware of just how influential she will be in his life. He states, "I never met your likeness. Jane: you please me, and you master me . . . I am influenced—conquered; and the

influence is sweeter than I can express" (222). He realizes that she is changing him, but only towards the end of the novel will he realize the full extent of her regenerative influence over him.

The final instance in which Jane physically saves Rochester is also the scene that witnesses his physical salvation combined with his spiritual, moral, and emotional salvation. When Rochester loses his sight and one of his hands, he becomes completely dependent on those around him. Jane will ultimately lead him out of the depression that stems from his crippled state, but she will also serve as his eyes and hands. As Jane says, "I was then his vision, as I am still his right hand" (384). She also saves him from wallowing in his emotions at the end, however, thereby rescuing him once more from his effeminate emotionality. With her witty banter with Rochester about her relationship with St. John, she induces jealousy in him so that his melancholy will cease. As Rochester tells her, "If Saul could have had you for his David, the evil spirit would have been exorcised without the aid of the harp" (373). Instead of exorcising an evil spirit from Rochester, however, Jane has in effect exorcised the evil influence of foreign immorality and impurity from within him.

Nowhere is Jane's beneficial influence in restoring Rochester's true self better seen than in her spiritual and moral redemption of him. He tells her before their final reunion that she is his "sympathy," his "better self," and his "good angel" (269), and she also ultimately restores him to the Protestantism that he has been lacking. Rochester confesses that it is through her influence that he rekindled his relationship with God, something the various women in his past never had an interest in doing. As Rochester informs Jane, he has ceased to be an "irreligious dog" and thanks to her example, he says, "I began to see and acknowledge the hand of God . . . I began to experience remorse, repentance; the wish for reconciliation to my Maker" (380). As evidence of

his desire for a reformed life, he also states, "I humbly entreat my Redeemer to give me strength to lead henceforth a purer life than I have done hitherto!" (382). Because he believes that "God had tempered judgment with mercy" in allowing Jane to return to him (385), Rochester believes it will be possible to live this purer life with Jane by his side as his "good angel."

The result of all this, in other words, is that not only has Jane saved Rochester physically multiple times, but she has also helped to redeem his soul from the irreligious influences by which it was once surrounded. Her marriage to him at the very end also signals the restoration of his Anglo-Saxon purity, as Jane's own Anglo-Saxon purity is able to regenerate that which he lost through his various foreign affairs. Jane herself has declared her intent to "rehumanise" him, and her restoration of his Englishness is the final result of this effort. After all, to rehumanise someone implies that they were once civilized but have degenerated through some means. Considering the fact that the English saw themselves as the pinnacle of civilization, Jane's attempts to rehumanise, or re-civilize, Rochester can easily be translated as her efforts to restore his original English identity. The moral, Christian Rochester that appears at the novel's end suggests the success of Jane's efforts. As Rochester's servant John says, Jane will "do better for him nor any o' t' grand ladies" (383), for reasons we have already explored. The servant's colloquial language here suggests that his opinion is representative of a solid, moral English class. When Anne Longmuir declares in her article that Jane is the only protagonist in all of Charlotte Brontë's works to marry a fellow Briton (182), we may safely say that this is only the case because Jane has reformed and indeed re-formed Rochester into a fellow national again. With Jane, Rochester, and Adèle firmly in possession of their English identities, Charlotte at last allows them all to achieve happiness, thereby demonstrating that the only way in which

happiness can be found is through the formation or reclamation of a civilized, moral, and superior British identity. Adèle becomes an obedient English schoolgirl, a position similar to the one in which Jane once found herself, but Adèle has a loving family in a way that the young Jane did not. This suggests that the reforming influence of Jane has not only been passed onto the next generation in Adèle, but that it will continue to be transmitted as a source of stability in an ever-changing world. Rochester, in addition to regaining a moral character at the end, finally starts to recover sight in one eye. Keeping the idea in mind of how Rochester had become feminized through the corruption of his character, the restoration of his eyesight suggests that he will once more be able to take control and be the active, distinctly British man that he was meant to be. Jane's guidance of him—both literally and figuratively—while he was still blind was only temporary training until he could resume his rightful role as a masculine British man and the head of their household.

CHAPTER V

“Scum Condensed of Irish Bog”: Heathcliff’s Corrosive Presence in *Wuthering Heights*

Although her own sister Charlotte avowed that Emily Brontë was largely naive concerning the realities of the world, it is difficult to conceive of the creator of forces like Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw as ignorant of life’s evils. Charlotte asserted that Emily’s literary creations were derived entirely from her own imagination but that, “[h]aving formed these beings, she did not know what she had done” (qtd. in Gaskell 2:38-9). Given how aware of her surroundings Charlotte was, however, it seems unlikely that her sister would not have shared some of this consciousness. Although there are clearly numerous differences between Charlotte and Emily Brontë’s fiction, this sensitivity to their historical context is one factor that their works have in common. Just as the sources of foreign influence and corruption are fairly obvious in *Jane Eyre*, so too is it not left ambivalent that the most pervasive corrupting influence in Emily Brontë’s text is the foreigner Heathcliff. Finding, along with several other critics, that Heathcliff is Irish, I argue that Heathcliff’s Irishness makes him both the driving force behind the novel and the character whose influence causes the downfall of the Lintons and the Earnshaws. In order to understand the full extent of Heathcliff’s influence on these families, we must first examine why Heathcliff is Irish and the full implications of this theory. Then, after a brief look at the state of the Lintons and the Earnshaws prior to Heathcliff’s arrival at the Heights, we can see just how pervasive his influence over them is. Only afterwards will I turn my attention to those characters who manage to retain, or at least regain, their anglicized identity in the presence of the foreign Heathcliff.

First, however, let us examine why Heathcliff should be read as an Irishman who comes to England. Because Emily Brontë never clearly delineates Heathcliff's racial makeup or national origin, critics have seized any one of a number of pieces of evidence in the novel to argue for their specific interpretations. There are thus multiple theories that argue for Heathcliff being Mr. Earnshaw's bastard and perhaps, through maternal inheritance, a gypsy or of African descent. While these theories are all supported by various textual references, I find Eagleton's assessment of Heathcliff as an Irish immigrant to be the most convincing. The argument of Heathcliff simply being Mr. Earnshaw's bastard is too shallow a reading, for it does not adequately address the question of his race, but the theories of Heathcliff being a gypsy or of African descent are also overly superficial. There may be clear references in the text to his resembling a gypsy, but there are also frequent suspicions raised of his possible alternate origins. Even as the novel is about to close, Nelly still knows nothing of Heathcliff's roots, wondering from where "the little dark thing" originated (293). Edgar Linton's father suggests early in the novel that Heathcliff may be "a little Lascar, or an American or Spanish castaway" (44), and Nelly encourages Heathcliff to imagine lofty origins for himself, telling him that he could pass for a Chinese or Indian noble (50). Significantly, she also informs readers in her descriptions that Heathcliff is not "a regular black" (50), thus throwing doubt onto Maja-Lisa Von Sneidern's assertion that he is of African descent.

Despite this textual ambivalence, however, Terry Eagleton proposes in his book *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger* that Heathcliff is an Irish immigrant to England, and his argument is quite convincing when considered in the historical context of *Wuthering Heights*'s composition. The English view of the Irish as racially and socially inferior, as well as the English

fear of Irish collaboration with the Chartists, is vital to a proper understanding of all the implications that Eagleton's theory raises. The earliest knowledge readers are given of Heathcliff's origins is that he mysteriously appeared to Mr. Earnshaw in Liverpool, which has led Von Sneidern to speculate that he is of African descent. However, his connection with Liverpool instead signals that he is an Irish immigrant, as Eagleton argues. Liverpool may have been the highest slave-trafficking city in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century (Von Sneidern 171-2), but it was also the site of waves of Irish who flooded into England during the Potato Famine in much greater numbers than had previously trickled into Liverpool. Most Englishmen were not as sympathetic with these starving immigrants as was Mr. Earnshaw, and many could only see the possible threat these new immigrants posed rather than note their dire situation (Michie 126). Furthermore, Heathcliff's dark and frightening appearance when he first arrives at the Heights as a child is highly reminiscent of Victorian depictions of Irish immigrant children that came to England during the Famine (Michie 129). Eagleton agrees with the assessment that young Heathcliff's mien indicates him as an Irish immigrant, but he also notes Heathcliff's eventual working of the Heights's land for little real compensation, another sign of his Irishness and his exploitation by the English (*Heathcliff* 19). Eagleton points out another parallel between Heathcliff's Irish nature being exploited by and rebelling against the patronizing English when he dubs Catherine Earnshaw a "perfidious little Albion" (*Heathcliff* 18) who is cruel to Heathcliff as often as she tries to be his friend.

In addition to Heathcliff being found in Liverpool, several pieces of textual evidence that Von Sneidern uses to support her theory of his African origins can be flipped on their head to buttress the argument of Heathcliff's Irish parentage. For example, Von Sneidern notes how

Heathcliff speaks only “gibberish” when he first comes to the Heights, which she sees as a foreign, African language (186). It can just as easily, however, be Irish Gaelic. After all, Nelly describes Heathcliff’s voice as “foreign in tone” (82), suggesting a non-English influence on his accent even after he ceases to speak “gibberish.” Although Irish Gaelic was still widely spoken in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it declined significantly following the Potato Famine, after which point many towns in Ireland ceased speaking Irish Gaelic—despite knowing how to—because it was viewed as an unlucky language that would only bring more trouble (Eagleton, *Heathcliff* 12).

Besides his language and his appearance, Heathcliff’s personality can also be interpreted as an indication of his Irish background. Victorians would have viewed Heathcliff’s ardent yet vicious bond with Catherine, as well as his mercurial temperament, as strong signs of his Irish nature (Michie 130). If a stubborn and childish refusal to listen to anyone or to change one’s behavior is indicative of an Irish racial makeup, as Eagleton argues it was in the eyes of the Victorian English, then Heathcliff possesses an Irish character in abundance (*Heathcliff* 21). In this view, Heathcliff’s obstinate pursuit of both Catherine and revenge doom him simply because he lacks the English intelligence necessary to show him how futile both quests are. Furthermore, Nelly’s description of him as “a sullen, patient child; hardened, perhaps, to ill-treatment” (32) hints further at his Irish roots, as one hardly needs to be reminded of the centuries of mistreatment that Ireland endured under English rule to note the parallels.

With all of these factors in mind, it may seem confusing why Emily Brontë created Heathcliff to be at times a sympathetic character while she also presented him as deeply dangerous. This can, of course, be explained by the Brontës’ mixed feelings concerning their

own Irish heritage. While the transplanted Brontës did everything to cut their ties with Ireland and to assume an English identity, their Irish roots always lingered in the background. Adopting an English identity would necessitate a certain disdain for those whom the British perceived as belonging to other races, including the Irish, as well as a fear of such races and the potential revolutionary threat that they posed. Emily Brontë may indeed have sympathized with Irish immigrants, but her creation of Heathcliff suggests that she also understood the need to abandon her affinity with her father's homeland if she was ever to belong in England. Thus, Heathcliff is at times pitiable, but his creator makes certain to cast him as a frightening foreign influence so that her own loyalties will not be suspected.

Eagleton further outlines the danger of Heathcliff's foreign presence in his assertion that Heathcliff "dramatizes . . . a ruling-class fear of revolution from below" (*Heathcliff* 19-20). The kind of revolutionary threat that Heathcliff poses is indeed remarkably similar to the type that the English believed was posed by the influx of Irish immigrants into the nation, whether on their own or through collaboration with Chartists. This similarity is clearly no accident. Although Heathcliff dies before he fully realizes this threat, Eagleton points out that he does first gain control of both the Heights and the Grange, representative of English society itself. He simply dies before the Grange is past saving (*Heathcliff* 20). I will detail his eventual downfall later, but for now, it is important to note that interpreting Heathcliff as an Irishman anticipates his inevitable defeat. As Eagleton observes, the English have centuries of experience regarding how to suppress "foreign brat[s] who grew too big for [their] boots" (*Heathcliff* 20).

In addition to Heathcliff's Irish roots representing a potential revolution, they also help explain the eerie nature of the Heights. Emily Brontë's constant inclusion of unearthly

occurrences, such as Lockwood's odd dreams and the ghostly hauntings of the first Catherine, points to a kind of pagan superstition heavily associated with both Ireland and Catholicism. Furthermore, the inhabitants of the Heights are all impulsive, destructively passionate, and strange when viewed by normal English citizens like Lockwood. Although it might be tempting to blame the bizarreness of this world simply on the inhabitants of the moors themselves, their passions do not explode until the Irish Heathcliff arrives. As soon as he appears, the Heights become nearly irreparably warped, transforming into a sort of mini-Ireland. Just as Lockwood feels alienated from the populace of the Heights, despite the fact that they are all British citizens, so too did Englishmen who traveled to Ireland feel out of place even though the Irish were technically British citizens. Like Ireland, the Heights may have been part of Great Britain, but it was nevertheless a foreign and terrifying place.

Another way in which Heathcliff's Irish nature destroys the Heights is in the house's interior appearance. During the Victorian era, the English felt themselves superior to the Irish in the cleanliness and order of English domestic abodes. Anne McClintock has observed that Irish households, by contrast, were associated with domestic disorder (52-3). Indeed, the domestic chaos so frowned upon by the Victorian English was less associated with the lower classes, as might be expected, but instead with the Irish race. It was feared that the perceived lackadaisical attitude of the Irish towards the appearance of their homes could spread to the English, thereby adulterating the English 'civilized state' with mere animal concerns rather than with "artificial" needs that "distinguished man from beast" (Hall 209-10). The very first look at the interior of Wuthering Heights given in the novel, then, must be noted for being a picture of such an unkempt domestic abode. Lockwood notes that the roof is visible from inside the house, writing

that it "had never been underdrawn: its entire anatomy lay bare to an inquiring eye" (3). He goes on to describe the presence of "sundry villainous old guns, and . . . by way of ornament, three gaudily painted canisters" (3). Even his description of the "huge, liver-coloured bitch pointer, surrounded by a swarm of squealing puppies" (3) seems to evoke the domestic disarray that the Victorian English associated with Irish households, a disarray that grows to characterize the Heights more and more as Heathcliff resides there.

Now that it has been established that Heathcliff is an Irish character who brings his Irishness with him to the Heights, we must turn our attention to the situation of the Lintons and the Earnshaws prior to Heathcliff's arrival. Only then can we comprehend how deeply Heathcliff changes both families with his Irish influence. The Earnshaws and the Lintons are indisputably isolated when the text begins, and we only see their seclusion truly invaded by one outside character, Heathcliff. As Lockwood himself remarks upon the solitude of the area, "In all England, I do not believe that I could have fixed on a situation so completely removed from the stir of society" (1). Indeed, so distant are the Heights from the rest of the English population that Lockwood notes how "time stagnates here" (23), quite possibly a reference to the English belief that the 'un-evolved' Irish were stuck in the past. Not only does this enhance the dreamlike quality of the narrative, but it also makes the isolation of the characters placed here temporal as well as physical. This extreme seclusion will become of immense importance, for when the inhabitants of the Heights and the Grange face Heathcliff's foreign presence, they will have few fellow civilized Englishmen upon whom to fall back. It is as though the Earnshaws and Lintons have been transported to one of Britain's imperial holdings, such as the West Indies, where they are largely segregated from Mother England. It is entirely in their hands, then, whether they will

succumb to the temptations offered by such isolation or whether they will resist and attempt to remain true to their English roots. Like the British abroad, they will stand or fall based on their own decisions either to guard their anglicized identity or to abandon it when surrounded by new and foreign peoples and customs.

Despite the distance between themselves and the rest of English civilization, the Lintons for the most part resist the urge to abandon their English identity. They consciously conform to English societal standards, even more so precisely because of their isolation. Feeling the precariousness of their seclusion, the Lintons might even be said to adhere excessively to an anglicized identity, just as certain Irishmen such as Oscar Wilde were said to become exceedingly English. Terry Eagleton reads the Lintons as representatives of the "landed gentry," but he also acknowledges that they are intended to illustrate "culture . . . Nature worked up, cultivated and thus concealed" (*Heathcliff* 4). The British indeed prided themselves on being able to control their passions in a way that the French and Irish could not, as well as being able to take care of their persons and domestic abodes in a way that the Irish could not. This was, of course, due to their supposed superior civilized state—that is, their ability to control their less than desirable traits. The Lintons uphold this state in their personal lives, as can be seen in the first real description given of Thrushcross Grange: "a splendid place carpeted with crimson, and crimson-covered chairs and tables, and a pure white ceiling bordered by gold, a shower of glass-drops hanging in silver chains from the centre, and shimmering with little soft tapers" (41-2). This little stronghold of Britishness in the wild moors of North England, while initially holding fast to an anglicized identity, will ultimately be tested in its interactions with Heathcliff, not unlike a colonial great house beset by foreign influences.

Wuthering Heights is just as isolated from the rest of England as is Thrushcross Grange, but its inhabitants will suffer significantly more as a result of the foreign Heathcliff's encroachment. An anglicized identity is not an innate trait, as *Jane Eyre* demonstrated. Rather, it must be consciously constructed, as in the case of the Lintons. While neither the Lintons nor the Earnshaws have a positive example of proper British comportment in the area near them, the Lintons at least make an effort because they seem to know what is expected of them. The Earnshaws, on the other hand, allow their vices to continue unchecked; whether they realize their flaws is uncertain, at least until they grow old enough that Catherine's behavior may be constantly compared with the Lintons'. Thus, when a dangerous foreign element arrives at the Heights, the Earnshaws will be particularly susceptible to its influence because, like young Jane in the Reed household, they have not created an English identity that is stable enough to resist Heathcliff's degeneracy.

That the Earnshaws are already flawed prior to Heathcliff's entrance is without question. To begin with, Mr. Earnshaw decides to bring a child of unknown origins home with him instead of protecting his family from foreign influences, as any proper Englishman should. The theory that Heathcliff is Mr. Earnshaw's bastard may even be, in one light, preferable to the alternative of his being a rootless street urchin. As Mr. Earnshaw's bastard, Heathcliff would be a moral disgrace to the family, but at least he would not be a wholly foreign influence come to corrupt the Earnshaw family. Hindley and Catherine Earnshaw are also blemished prior to Heathcliff's arrival. Hindley's immediate abuse of Heathcliff demonstrates that the latter did not introduce violence into the Earnshaw household, just as Nelly's affirmation that Catherine was always a

"mischievous and wayward" child illustrates the fact that Heathcliff alone did not make her wild and willful (32).

Because the Earnshaw family is insufficiently anglicized before being introduced to Heathcliff, it may seem inaccurate to blame him for all their subsequent misfortunes. Von Sneidern maintains that the Heights are an isolated world of Anglo-Saxon purity and perfection until Heathcliff is introduced (175), but as has just been pointed out, the Earnshaws possessed their own set of problems. What Heathcliff does, however, is exacerbate their existing flaws and preclude any possibility of their growing past them (Eagleton, *Myths* 106). Alternatively, Ruth Adams has suggested that the moors surrounding the Heights are responsible for the violence of all the characters who come in contact with them. Pointing out the vengefulness of Catherine and Hindley Earnshaw, Isabella Linton, Joseph, and Heathcliff, she also draws attention to how violent the gentleman Lockwood becomes in his interaction with the ghost or dream of little Catherine (60-2). Although the only common factor she finds is the moors around Wuthering Heights, she fails to see that the worst violence and corruption do not simply stay at the Heights indefinitely. Instead, they travel with Heathcliff, whether he is at the Heights or the Grange, because he is the source of poison to the Englishmen and women around him.

A brief comparison here of Heathcliff and Bertha Mason may be helpful to understand fully the poisonous foreign influence that Heathcliff is intended to represent. Both characters are clearly described in terms of the foreign Other, though their exact racial makeup may be open to interpretation. Indeed, Jane's comparison of Bertha to "the foul German spectre—the Vampyre" (242) is remarkably similar to Nelly's contemplation of Heathcliff being "a ghoul, or a vampire" (293). Heathcliff is also as frightening in his actions as Bertha is in hers, though

Heathcliff does not have to sneak out of the attic in order to terrorize the inhabitants of the Heights and the Grange, including his own son. Even Catherine Earnshaw, over whose life Heathcliff seems to have such control, declares him to be “an unreclaimed creature, without refinement— without cultivation; an arid wilderness of furze and whinstone” (90). She also cautions Isabella not to be enthralled by Heathcliff, telling her, “Pray don’t imagine that he conceals depths of benevolence and affection beneath a stern exterior! He’s not a rough diamond” (90). In *Wuthering Heights*, then, the Other appears as the Irish Heathcliff, a more familiar and therefore perhaps more frightening foreign presence than the West Indian Bertha. Isabella may be taken in by his gentlemanly demeanor, but this behavior only signals why he is all the more treacherous.

While both Heathcliff and Bertha serve as menacing presences in their respective novels, the danger from the foreign elements in *Jane Eyre*, including both Bertha and Céline, is always kept in check. Adèle and Rochester are both corrupted when readers are introduced to them, but the corrupting influences have largely disappeared, having either been left behind in France or shut away in an attic. Charlotte Brontë concerns the majority of her novel, then, with the lingering effects of the Other rather than with its continued presence. Emily Brontë, on the other hand, allows the threat of the Other to be fully realized by keeping the foreign element, Heathcliff, present along with the characters he taints for almost the entire novel. One similarity between the two sisters, however, is that both of them ultimately expunge these foreign components in order to provide the Anglo-Saxons with renewed stability and happiness (Michie 139). Just as Bertha and Céline must disappear before Adèle and Rochester can fully be

redeemed, so too must Heathcliff die before Hareton and the second Catherine can be free of his influence.

With a better understanding of Heathcliff's Irish roots, the implications of his influence, and the state of the Lintons and Earnshaws prior to his arrival at the Heights, it is now appropriate to move onto a study of how the English families interact with this Irishman. Because Catherine Earnshaw is the character most obviously connected to Heathcliff, I will begin with her before moving on to the other principal characters. Interestingly, Catherine and Jane Eyre share many similarities when they are young children. The difference, however, is that at young, pivotal ages, Jane and Catherine receive contrasting influences that decide both their fates, destining the former for happiness and the latter for disaster. Although young Jane is no shining pearl of Englishness, she is sent to Lowood at an early enough age that her encounters with Miss Temple and Helen save her character. Unfortunately for Catherine, the strongest influence she receives at this young age is Heathcliff. She may have been willful and impetuous before Heathcliff's arrival, but so was Jane prior to her introduction to Miss Temple and Helen. As Nelly tells Lockwood, young Catherine even without Heathcliff "put us past our patience fifty times and oftener in a day . . . we had not a minute's security that she wouldn't be in mischief" (36). There can be no salvation for Catherine as there was for Jane, however, because the influence that arrives in her life at this pivotal age is Heathcliff, an Irish presence that undermines any possibility of her forming a solid English identity.

In fact, when Heathcliff arrives, Catherine feels a remarkable affinity with him, further deepening the danger that he poses to her. Nelly remarks that after Catherine's initial cruelty to Heathcliff, she suddenly becomes very close to him, noting that "Miss Cathy and he were now

very thick" (32) and that she "was much too fond of Heathcliff" (36). This kinship has been attributed to the fact that Catherine and Heathcliff are in a very similar position socially. Neither Catherine nor Heathcliff begin the novel possessing any land or money of their own, and until Heathcliff's mysterious disappearance for several years, neither of them have the possibility of gaining any (Vine 345; Eagleton, *Myths* 103). Thus Catherine, like Heathcliff, begins the novel outside of society to a degree, due to her status as a woman. While this kind of partial outsider status leads Jane Eyre to adhere even more strictly to stringent standards of Britishness in the hopes of eventually being accepted into society, it leads Catherine to rebel—under Heathcliff's influence—rather than conform to a British identity.

From the beginning of their relationship, Heathcliff's influence further removes Catherine from the possibility of an anglicized stability. Thanks to his influence, she pledges with him that they will both "grow up as rude as savages" (40), a term that was in fact often used by the English to describe their Irish neighbors. One of the principal ways in which they do this is to flout one of the foundational necessities of a British identity, and that is Protestant Christianity. At one point, Catherine takes her Bible and "hurl[s] it into the dog-kennel" while Heathcliff does the same (17). Heathcliff's corruption of her only grows worse as Catherine gets older, with Nelly admitting that her mistress turned into "a haughty, headstrong creature . . . [whom] I own I did not like . . . after her infancy was past" (58). Nelly also notes that Catherine "never had the power to conceal her passion, it always set her whole complexion in a blaze" (62). Let us not forget how similar this display of passion is to many of young Jane Eyre's tantrums. Jane, however, learns how to control her passion and her temper in a way that Catherine is never able

to imitate because she can never break free of Heathcliff's influence on her, whereas Jane escapes to the reforming school of Lowood.

However, although Catherine and Heathcliff both behave like heathen 'savages,' Catherine is still treated differently, escaping much of the discrimination that Heathcliff faces even though their characters are remarkably similar. Part of this is explained by Nelly when she declares that Catherine has "adopt[ed] a double character without exactly intending to deceive anyone" (59), behaving one way around the genteel Lintons and another way in Heathcliff's company. This duplicity is not incidentally related to the same kind of deception that Rochester so frequently employs in his interactions with Jane. It is, as the Victorians would say, the duplicity of the foreign. Another reason for the difference between the ways Catherine and Heathcliff are treated can be seen in the scene when the Lintons take Catherine in after their dog bites her. Heathcliff notes that Mr. and Mrs. Linton are shocked that "Miss Earnshaw [is] scouring the country with a gipsy" and "grow[ing] up in absolute heathenism." At the same time, he observes that "she was a young lady and they made a distinction between her treatment and mine" (44). Despite Catherine's wildness, the Lintons still treat her as an English lady because that is what she is, at heart. She has been influenced badly by Heathcliff, but she is still naturally English, just as Rochester retains an English interior that has simply been corrupted by numerous foreign women.

At times, Catherine's corruption seems so complete that readers wonder if she can ever be redeemed. When Edgar begins to fall in love with her, for instance, and she loses her temper in front of him, Nelly thinks to herself, "Take warning and begone! It's a kindness to let you have a glimpse of her genuine disposition" (63). Only a few moments later, when Nelly realizes Edgar

has already fallen under her spell, she almost mourns him: "[T]here will be no saving him— He's doomed, and flies to his fate!" (64). The threat that Heathcliff has posed to the Heights thus begins to work its way into the household at the Grange, spreading the contamination first from Heathcliff to Catherine and next from Catherine to Edgar.

For a time, however, Edgar seems as though he might be a reforming influence on Catherine. He is, after all, the epitome of an English gentleman. He may seem to lack Heathcliff's passion, but this is precisely what makes him 'civilized'— namely, that he is in control of his emotions. Nelly avows that Edgar is "kind, and trustful, and honourable" (94), and his loving care for Catherine when she falls ill confirms this. Nelly remarks, "No mother could have nursed an only child more devotedly than Edgar tended her. . . his health and strength were being sacrificed to preserve a mere ruin of humanity" (118). Hence, although Edgar's kindness appears to Heathcliff to be weakness, it is in fact how a proper Englishman should behave.

This anglicized behavior does indeed impact Catherine temporarily. When she is confined to the Grange following the dog attack, the Lintons have a remarkable civilizing influence on her. She stays there only five weeks, but when she returns, she is utterly changed: "[I]nstead of a wild, hatless little savage jumping into the house, . . . there lighted from a handsome black pony a very dignified person, with brown ringlets falling from the cover of a feathered beaver" (46). Eagleton maintains that Catherine is entirely assimilated into the English civilization epitomized by the Lintons, abandoning Heathcliff in her quest for anglicization (*Myths* 108). Her seemingly sudden awareness of the fact that Heathcliff is a contaminating influence on her suggests the truth of Eagleton's argument, at least initially. After her return to the Heights, for instance, she remarks upon Heathcliff's dirtiness in a way that she never has before. After telling him that he

needs to clean himself up, Catherine “gazed concernedly at the dusky fingers she held in her own, and also at her dress, which she feared had gained no embellishment from its contact with his” (47). Now believing that he can taint her, Catherine instinctively draws back from his presence. She also realizes how infantile her early fascination with Heathcliff was, noting that he “is no company at all” because he “know[s] nothing and say[s] nothing” (61). In the oft-quoted passage wherein Catherine contrasts her feelings for Heathcliff and Edgar, she admits to Nelly, “It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff, now” (71). Although she declares her eternal love for Heathcliff in this same passage, she has now been made aware that her status as an Englishwoman implies the impossibility of union with the ‘corrupt’ and ‘inferior’ Other.

Catherine’s marriage to Edgar, however, is precisely what normal English society expects of a young genteel lady. Because she has already been tainted by Heathcliff, however, Catherine will be unable to find happiness and lasting stability in her marriage.

For a time, Catherine’s marriage does seem as though it will redeem her character. Nelly notes that after Heathcliff vanishes, Catherine and Edgar appear to be “really in possession of deep and growing happiness” (81). Edgar becomes such a stabilizing influence on his wife that Catherine’s passion grows quite tame: “[T]he gunpowder lay as harmless as sand, because no fire came near to explode it” (81). She may experience occasional bouts of depression, but overall, she seems to grow calmer and more peaceful. As soon as Heathcliff reappears, however, the “gunpowder” again becomes dangerous, as the explosive Heathcliff intends to set it off once more. Heathcliff has outwardly gained a veneer of gentility, looking “intelligent . . . [with] no marks of former degradation,” but Nelly senses a “half-civilized ferocity” hiding underneath this façade (84-5). Indeed, our first introduction to Heathcliff through Lockwood’s eyes declares him

to be "in dress and manners a gentleman" (3), but at the same time one who speaks "so savagely that . . . [it] revealed a genuine bad nature" (9). Eagleton has made an interesting declaration that I believe should go one step further. He writes, "You can take Heathcliff out of the Heights, but you can't take the Heights out of Heathcliff" (*Heathcliff* 8). I argue that this is precisely owing to the fact that the Heights are not what make Heathcliff 'savage'; rather, Heathcliff makes the Heights 'savage' through his threatening Otherness. Thus, Nelly's prediction that Catherine will make Edgar's life miserable comes true after Heathcliff's return because of the latter's profound influence on her. She begins to behave "petulantly" and "angrily" (138), saddening her husband who only desires to make her happy.

Edgar too changes in response to Heathcliff's return, although the way in which he reacts to the Irishman can be interpreted in multiple ways. One way is to view Edgar as a relatively weak character who only gains strength and defines himself through confrontation with the Other, and the other most convincing interpretation is to view him as a normal anglicized male who becomes corrupted by this confrontation. Adhering to the first interpretation necessitates a belief in Catherine's view of him as a "spoiled child . . . who "fanc[ies] the world was made for [his] accommodation" (87). Because Catherine and her perception of the world have been tainted by Heathcliff, however, her view of Edgar is consequently suspect. Nelly, for example, differs greatly from her mistress in her beliefs about Edgar's character. As she is largely immune to Heathcliff's influence, her declaration that Edgar "humour[s]" Catherine, being kinder than she deserves, is more convincing. If we do accept that Edgar is initially weak, then his response to Heathcliff can be seen as highly reminiscent of an anecdote related by Linda Colley. Colley writes of the first British ambassador party to China, who felt so overwhelmed by the foreign

culture surrounding them that they “felt all of a sudden intensely British, brought together . . . by confrontation with the Other” (“Britishness” 310-11). When Heathcliff provokes Edgar, the latter delivers to the Irishman “full on the throat a blow that would have levelled a slighter man” (102), causing Heathcliff to choke for a few moments and signaling Edgar as suddenly stronger.

This violence on the part of Edgar, however, is perhaps better explained by the second interpretation, that even the English gentleman Edgar is polluted by contact with Heathcliff. Even though Edgar recognizes Heathcliff’s corrupting influence, he cannot necessarily free himself from it because Heathcliff continues to haunt the Grange. As Edgar tells him, “Your presence is a moral poison that would contaminate the most virtuous— for that cause, and to prevent worse consequences, I shall deny you, hereafter, admission into this house” (101). Heathcliff does not leave the house quickly enough, thus resulting in the blow that nearly knocks him down. Edgar’s sudden violence proves that he is no “milk-blooded coward” as Heathcliff supposes (102). Instead, he is a proper Englishman who maintains constant control of his passion and his emotions until the continued presence of the Other adulterates this English resolve.

Just as Heathcliff refuses to leave the Grange, so too does he spurn the idea of relinquishing Catherine. He eventually leaves Edgar alone for long enough that the latter is able to regain control over his emotions, but he holds tightly to Cathy so that she is never able to escape his influence. Catherine soon dies, torn apart by the two competing forces in her life— anglicization as represented by her husband and her corrupted nature as caused by Heathcliff. Even after her death, however, Heathcliff refuses to let her go and instead demands that she “wake in torment” and “not rest” but “haunt” him even if it drives him insane (147-8). He is so

determined that she be a part of him that he cannot give her up even when her death should instruct him to abandon his scheme of controlling her.

Heathcliff's influence is seen in more than his relationships with Catherine and Edgar, as the effect he has on Isabella Linton is also of high importance when considering his corrupting influence. Isabella begins the novel demure and ladylike, but after her marriage to Heathcliff, she quickly degenerates. Through his abuse of and cruelty to her, Heathcliff makes it impossible for the disheveled Isabella to return to English society (Pike 364). Not only does Isabella decline in her physical appearance, her "pretty face . . . wan and listless, her hair uncurled" (129), but her character also changes, growing vicious and 'uncivilized.' Heathcliff declares that Isabella "degenerates into a mere slut" (132), and even Isabella shows her sudden coarseness when she admits, "The single pleasure I can imagine is to die, or to see him dead" (134). Isabella is not oblivious to the fact that she has greatly moved down in society, becoming more of a servant than the wife of a gentleman (Pike 360). Isabella even asks Nelly how she resisted the perverting influence of the Heights when she lived there, as she cannot seem to find this same strength. It is not, as Pike has suggested, the fact that Isabella is surrounded by rough men at the Heights that so corrupts her character (359). Instead, it is because Heathcliff has poisoned the Heights—and its inhabitants—by his foreign presence.

Emily Brontë gives more hope for Isabella, however, than she does for Catherine. Isabella eventually escapes from the Heights and moves far away from Heathcliff's corrupting influence, but it is the manner of her escape that is so noteworthy. She is calm and affectionate in her final interaction with Nelly, and she once more makes her appearance meticulous by donning a bonnet and shawl (Pike 379). We are given few details about the remainder of her life aside

from the fact that she moves to the south of England and raises her son by herself until her death. That she moves to southern England, near London in fact, should not be dismissed lightly. Not only does Isabella move away from Heathcliff and the isolation of the Heights and the Grange, but she also moves towards London, the alleged center of civilization in the Victorian era. It is also no accident that her move to the south of England takes her further away from Liverpool and the Irishness associated with it. This suggests a realization that she needs the kind of 'purifying' influence that only 'civilized' England can provide.

With Isabella and Catherine absent from the world of the Heights, the number of individuals over whom Heathcliff can exercise his influence diminishes. Because he still possesses the desire to control someone, however, he must find new persons in his isolated world. His obsessive desire for Catherine, thwarted by her death, converts itself into a quest for vengeance on all the remaining inhabitants of both the Heights and the Grange (Williams 116). The easiest victims to fall into this plan are, of course, Hareton Earnshaw and the second Cathy.

Hareton, the rightful heir of the Heights, is a naturally sweet child initially when Nelly is allowed to act as his nurse. Nelly must leave Hareton when he is almost five years old, however, to move to the Grange and continue to serve the first Catherine. Although she declares it was "a sad parting," she is assured that the curate will teach him what she would have if she had remained (79). This will prove to be a lie, and being entrusted to Heathcliff's influence at almost the exact pivotal age his aunt Catherine was, will prove as disastrous for Hareton as it was for her. Indeed, Heathcliff unashamedly declares his intent towards the boy, saying to him, "Now, my bonny lad, you are *mine*! And we'll see if one tree won't grow as crooked as another, with the same wind to twist it!" (165). This speech suggests that Heathcliff is proud of having been

instrumental in the decline and death of Hindley Earnshaw, and now he plans to corrupt Hindley's son in the same way. The "same wind" referred to here is undoubtedly Heathcliff's own influence. Heathcliff's desire to "twist" Hareton's character stresses the boy's inherent anglicized identity that must be forcibly warped to become corrupt. Later, Heathcliff tells Nelly he sometimes wishes the strong and masculine Hareton was his son, despite "all his degradation" (192). No matter how desperately Heathcliff wishes to corrupt Hareton, then, admirable qualities still remain in the boy.

To assure readers of this fact—namely, that there is still an Englishman beneath the rough exterior cultivated by Heathcliff—Emily Brontë continues to give some hints of Hareton's true character even after he has fallen under Heathcliff's spell. For example, Hareton at one point attempts to comfort a distraught Cathy, for he is "moved by her distress" and places a terrier puppy in her hands to try to quiet her crying (173). Hareton also volunteers to accompany Cathy across the moors back to the Grange so that she will not have to journey alone, and Nelly acknowledges that he "is not bad-natured, though he's rough" (186). For the majority of the novel, however, Hareton exhibits the precise traits that Heathcliff attempts to instill in him. He is violent, ignorant, "deaf to . . . his sense of justice or compassion" (245), and employs "frightful Yorkshire pronunciation" in his speech (194). Before Hareton can be restored to his proper English roots, a reforming and re-anglicizing influence must first be introduced to counteract the perverting sway held over him by Heathcliff. To act as this anglicizing force, young Cathy Linton enters the world of the Heights.

This second Cathy is as naturally good and sweet as her mother was wild and willful, largely due to the fact that she is raised by Nelly and her father Edgar, both of whom typify

normal English society. Nelly describes her character as "soft and mild as a dove" and declares that "her anger was never furious; her love never fierce; it was deep and tender" (167). Her devotion to her father is also evident throughout the text, including her decision to lie to him that she is happy in her marriage to Linton in order to avoid causing him further pain. She is often possessed of such goodness that she cannot believe the worst of people such as Linton, though his despicable nature may seem more obvious to readers.

When she first comes to live at the Heights, however, Cathy begins to spiral downwards, tainted by Heathcliff's foreign presence. Indeed, the first introduction to Cathy that Emily Brontë gives us is after she has lived too long under Heathcliff's influence. Upon first coming to the Heights, Lockwood notices that Cathy is beautiful, but he also calls her a surly "little witch" (12) who behaves as anything but a young English lady. She grows harsh thanks to Heathcliff's cruelty and callousness so that even when the servant Zillah tries to be kind to her, she finds "her attempts at increasing kindness . . . proudly and promptly repelled" (261). The longer she is around Heathcliff, the more she resembles not only him but also her mother when she was under Heathcliff's influence. For instance, she at one point rejects the entire household at the Heights, declaring, "I despise you, and will have nothing to say to any of you!" (263). Obviously, Zillah's assessment of Cathy is correct: "[T]he more hurt she gets, the more venomous she grows" (264). She could just as easily have said that the more abuse and control Heathcliff wields over Cathy, the more she becomes his parallel in spite and brutishness.

Young Cathy's natural roots, nurtured by her English gentleman father Edgar, eventually resurface late in the novel to repair both herself and Hareton. It is important, however, that Cathy is the one to re-anglicize Hareton rather than being the other way around. The first reason for this

is simply the fact that Hareton has been under Heathcliff's influence significantly longer than Cathy. So long has Heathcliff exercised control over Hareton that the latter is in fact wholly "ignorant that he has been wronged" (166). The second reason, and perhaps the more important one considering the Victorian context of the novel, is that Cathy is the female in their relationship. Because the female gender was seen at the time as a reforming influence, especially within the home, and one which was expected to correct men who behaved immorally or incorrectly, it is therefore Cathy's responsibility—as it was Jane Eyre's—to counteract the adulterating influence of the foreign. Furthermore, she must restore a moral, respectable anglicized identity to herself and Hareton. Nor should we ignore the fact that Cathy starts to recover this identity, behaving more nicely to those around her and even teaching Hareton how to read, around the same time that Heathcliff begins acting strangely and having a premonition of his impending death. As Heathcliff's influence lessens, then, Cathy's grows.

Cathy's presence first begins to have an effect on Hareton in his appearance. Longing to abandon the 'untidiness' associated with the Irish nationality for Cathy's sake, Hareton starts attempting "to be presentable" (262). He also tries to overcome his ignorance, for he does not like being mocked for it (267). Although Cathy initially laughs at his attempts, it is nevertheless her presence that inspires this desire in him. As Emily Brontë writes, "He had been content with daily labour and rough animal enjoyments, till Catherine crossed his path— Shame at her scorn, and hope of her approval were his first prompters to higher pursuits" (268). Cathy eventually realizes the role that she must play to better Hareton so that Heathcliff will not win, and the effects of this realization can be seen when Lockwood returns to the Heights about a year after his first visit. Lockwood describes Hareton as "a young man, respectably dressed, and seated at a

table, having a book before him" (273). This picture of an educated gentleman forms a sharp contrast to Hareton's appearance during Lockwood's first visit, wherein he is described as a "clown . . . drinking his tea out of a basin and eating his bread with unwashed hands" (10), while "his dress and speech were both rude" (8). In Cathy's presence, however, Hareton loses "all his rudeness and all his surly harshness" (279). Even the at-times dense Lockwood notices that Hareton's "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" (286). Hareton regains the "spirit and nobility" that is rightfully his (286), as even Lockwood cannot fail to admit that Hareton's true nature is "honest, warm, and intelligent"—not the adulterated character that Heathcliff sought to engender within him for so many years.

Cathy's anglicizing influence thus triumphs over Heathcliff's foreign one, and Heathcliff himself cannot refrain from declaring it to be "a poor conclusion" to all his "violent exertions" (287).

With Cathy and Hareton safely moving back towards a well-bred and respectable English identity, there remains only one significant problem in *Wuthering Heights* that must be addressed. This problem, namely, is the existence of Linton Heathcliff. An "ailing, peevish creature" from birth (161), Linton possesses none of the admirable traits of the family after which he is named. Although I disagree with Von Sneidern's premise that Heathcliff is of African descent, her point regarding Linton as the product of miscegenation cannot be overlooked. She postulates that the reason Linton is such a despicable character is because he is the result of a relationship that should never have happened, one between a white Englishwoman and the Other. According to Von Sneidern, Linton's personality reads like a Victorian description of a person of mixed race; he is cruel, faint-hearted, deceptive, and sickly (184). Furthermore, she points out

the fact that neither of his parents alone can be blamed for his character. Isabella may not begin the novel as a spirited character, but she transforms herself into a strong woman both physically and mentally. If she had not, she would not have been able to escape from Heathcliff and raise her son by herself in a town far from her home. Even Heathcliff, with all his reprehensible qualities, is far from being the weak and womanish man his son is. It is only their union that causes the creation of such a contemptible creature (Von Sneidern 185-6).

Von Sneidern's theory of Linton's character being the direct result of miscegenation can just as easily be applied to the case if we read Heathcliff as an Irishman. After all, the Victorian British consistently characterized the Irish in their cartoons and writings as heavily resembling monkeys. Although they possessed the same white skin as the English, they were considered to be more on the level of primates, as were the Africans (Saville 38). The product of the union between an Englishwoman and an Irishman, then, would according to this theory yield the "pale, delicate, effeminate boy" with a "sickly peevishness in his aspect" that we find in Linton Heathcliff (177). The boy who clings to Cathy one minute for protection, and the next criticizes her for crying into his teacup (235, 240), may lack the strength to abuse Cathy physically as his father abused his mother, but "the inclination is there" (254).

We must remember, however, that Adèle Varens is also the product of mixed blood. She is transformed into a respectable young English lady, whereas Linton's character only worsens over time. A look at their differing circumstances can explain the contrast. Although she is initially wayward and spoiled, Adèle leaves the corrupting influence of France behind early enough that she has the chance to forge a new identity under the tutelage of Jane. Linton, on the other hand, does not meet the corrective influence of Cathy until it is too late. In addition, any

possible sway she could hold over him is negated by Heathcliff's continual presence around the boy. After Linton moves to live with Heathcliff permanently, Emily Brontë writes of the profound influence Heathcliff has on his son: "An indefinite alteration had come over his whole person and manner. The pettishness that might be caressed into fondness, had yielded to a listless apathy; there was . . . more of the self-absorbed moroseness of a confirmed invalid" (231). Thus, if Linton had remained a resident of the Grange alongside Edgar and young Cathy, he may have been "caressed" into an admirable individual. Instead, any possible hope for him vanishes when he moves to live under Heathcliff's persistent influence. Hareton too lives in Heathcliff's constant presence, but Cathy can still reform him because he is ethnically entirely English and therefore closer to an anglicized identity than his cousin Linton. Linton, however, becomes not only a "confirmed invalid" thanks to Heathcliff's influence, but he also becomes a permanently weak and contemptible individual.

While Linton may be lost to the influence of the Other, Hareton and Cathy escape back to Thrushcross Grange and English civilization. It is no coincidence that their wedding day will fall on New Year's Day; it is in fact rather blatant symbolism on the part of Emily Brontë that their new life together away from the Heights will also begin a new year. However, their happiness and re-anglicization are only fully realized after Heathcliff's death. With Heathcliff vanished, *Wuthering Heights* is able to return to a more natural English state, which Lockwood notices in the "fragrance of stocks and wall flowers," "homely fruit trees," and "[open] doors and lattices" (273). The eerie and gloomy atmosphere has been replaced by new life, just as Cathy and Hareton's formerly sour relationship has been transformed into a loving and respectable relationship between two British citizens.

Many readers notice the supernatural and frightening nature of *Wuthering Heights* without fully considering the source of this unearthliness. Whereas in *Jane Eyre* the threat of the foreign—that is, Bertha—is kept largely confined to the attic of Thornfield, Heathcliff's foreign presence in *Wuthering Heights* pervades the entire novel. The threat in *Jane Eyre*, then, repeatedly materializes itself in Bertha, Céline, and Rochester's other foreign mistresses, but the danger is always reined in just enough to prevent characters such as Adèle and Rochester from being wholly lost to the corruption of the Other. Conversely, *Wuthering Heights* allows for the full realization of this foreign threat, as Heathcliff's influence swiftly spreads from one individual to the next. Some characters will succumb to his power as do Linton and the first Catherine, but others will escape back to English civilization. Both novels, however, effectively illustrate Victorian fears regarding the encroachment of foreign elements upon Britain. From sexual dangers to social revolution, the Irish, French, and West Indian presences in the Brontë novels demonstrate the acute English anxiety about foreign influences on the native populace, an anxiety that would lead to the solidifying of a wholly anglicized identity.

Conclusion

In a discussion so thoroughly centered around the British relationship with perceived alien races in the Victorian era, it may seem strange that St. John Rivers and his voyage to India in *Jane Eyre* have been neglected. Quite simply, this is due to the fact that St. John represents a sharp departure from any other characters in either *Jane Eyre* or *Wuthering Heights*. Whereas both novels are primarily concerned with British interactions with foreigners who come to England itself, St. John actually leaves England to go live among foreigners. Jane declares that he remains "[f]irm, faithful, and devoted" to the end of his life, illustrating that he clings tightly to his English Protestantism even when surrounded by the unfamiliar (385). Although he may remain steadfast morally, however, living in India weakens him physically to the point that he dies after approximately ten years in the country. He never returns to England and instead dies surrounded by foreigners whose race and religion differ so markedly from his own. Although Jane does not say whether St. John's missionary efforts enjoy any success, it may be safe to assume that based on the Englishman's severe and unsympathetic tendencies, he likely did not win many converts.

His situation, then, is the same as that of so many other Englishmen and women who moved to any one of Britain's imperial holdings and died there, and it shows the precariousness of the English position during the Victorian era. When St. John goes to India, not only must he preserve his own English identity, but he must also attempt to instill an anglicized identity within the natives. If the natives are more anglicized, they will be less threatening to the British and less likely to revolt because they will identify with their English colonizers. Victorian politician and

historian Thomas Babington Macaulay wrote this on the subject: "We must at present do our best to form a class . . . of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect." While Macaulay was a firm proponent of teaching Indians the English language because he considered English to be the language of education, it was also because he believed English to be the language of civilization ("Macaulay's Minute"). Viewing St. John's mission as one of anglicization, then, clarifies Jane's statement that the Englishman "labours for his race," which is otherwise an odd choice of words considering the fact that St. John is supposed to be working for his religion, regardless of race (385). If we see St. John's goal as an anglicizing mission rather than only a religious one, then he does indeed work for his own race and for its preservation in a country dominated by un-anglicized peoples. Charlotte Brontë's decision to end *Jane Eyre* with a reference to St. John's death, however, suggests that his mission was ineffective.

Jane may have subdued the French and West Indian influences that supposedly corrupted Rochester and Adèle, but the novel ends with an examination of the English situation abroad, not in England itself. This conclusion hints at the deep-seated, albeit little acknowledged, British fear that England's power and influence would be superseded either by the natives who dominated their imperial holdings or by the ideals emanating from revolutionary France. Whether physical and violent or cultural and idealistic, the potential of the Other rising up and overpowering the English and their carefully cultivated anglicized identity frightened Britain. After all, Emily Brontë demonstrated in her creation of Heathcliff the dangers of foreign elements infiltrating Britain. How much more, then, did the British perceive these dangers to exist abroad in lands far from Mother England?

The British may have felt a real superiority over the Other during the Victorian era, but the Brontë sisters' novels demonstrate that the English also experienced a real sense of fear and insecurity. Jane and Rochester, as well as Hareton and Cathy, may have escaped the influence of the Other in England, but the situation abroad—both in fiction and in real life—remained much more perilous for the Englishmen and women who were attempting to retain their anglicized identities in the presence of the alien.

- Adams, James Eli. *A History of Victorian Literature*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. Print.
- Adams, Ruth M. "Wuthering Heights: the Land East of Eden." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 13.1 (June 1958): 58-62. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Bardon, Jonathan. "'Scum condensed of Irish bog!.'" *A Short History of Ireland*. BBC of Northern Ireland. Web. 18 February 2012.
- Barker, Juliet. "The Haworth Context." *The Cambridge Companion to the Brontës*. Ed. Heather Glen. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002. 13-33. Print.
- Beaty, Jerome. "Jane Eyre at Gateshead: Mixed Signals in the Text and Context." *Victorian Literature and Society: Essays Presented to Richard D. Altick*. Eds. James R. Kincaid and Albert J. Kuhn. Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP, 1984. 168-196. Print.
- Brantlinger, Patrick. *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1988. Print.
- Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. Ed. Richard J. Dunn. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2001. Print.
- Brontë, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1976. Print.
- Burke, Edmund. *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. London: J. Dodsley, 1790. *Google Books*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Carlyle, Thomas. *The French Revolution*. Vol. 1. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1837. *Google Books*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Chapman, Raymond. *The Sense of the Past in Victorian Literature*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986. Print.

- Colley, Linda. "Britishness and Otherness: An Argument." *Journal of British Studies* 31.4 (Oct. 1992): 309-329. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- ... *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*. London: Yale UP, 1992. Print.
- Eagleton, Terry. *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger*. London: Verso, 1995. Print.
- ... *Myths of Power: A Marxist Study of the Brontës*. London: The MacMillan Press, 1975. Print.
- Gaskell, Elizabeth Cleghorn. *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*. Vol. 1. London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1857. *Google Books*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- ... *The Life of Charlotte Bronte*. Vol. 2. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1857. *Google Books*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Gilbert, Sandra M. "Jane Eyre and the Secrets of Furious Lovemaking." *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 31.3 (Summer 1998): 351-72. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Hall, Catherine. "The Nation Within and Without." *Defining the Victorian Nation: Class, Race, Gender and the Reform Act of 1867*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000. 179-233. Print.
- Hammond, J. L., and Barbara Hammond. *The Age of the Chartists 1832-1854: A Study of Discontent*. New York: August M. Kelley Publishers, 1967. Print.
- Higman, B. W. *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean 1807-1834*. Mona, Jamaica: U of the West Indies P, 1995. Print.
- Inboden, Robin L. "The 'Valour of Delicate Women': The Domestication of Political Relations in Tennyson's Laureate Poetry." *Victorian Poetry* 36.2 (Summer 1998): 205-222. *JSTOR*. Web. 1 February 2012.
- Krupat, Arnold. "The Strangeness of Wuthering Heights." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 25.3 (Dec. 1970): 269-280. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 January 2012.

- Longmuir, Anne. "'Reader, perhaps you were never in Belgium?': Negotiating British Identity in Charlotte Brontë's *The Professor* and *Villette*." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 64.2 (Sep. 2009): 163-188. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Macaulay, Thomas Babington. "Macaulay's Minute on Indian Education." *History of English Studies*. September 2002. University of California, Santa Barbara. Web. 20 March 2012.
- McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. New York: Routledge, 1995. Print.
- Michie, Elsie. "From Simianized Irish to Oriental Despots: Heathcliff, Rochester and Racial Difference." *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 25.2 (Winter 1992): 125-140. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Moskal, Jeanne. "Napoleon, Nationalism, and the Politics of Religion in Mariana Starke's *Letters from Italy*." *Rebellious Hearts: British Women Writers and the French Revolution*. Eds. Adriana Craciun and Kari E. Lokke. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001. 161-190. Print.
- Pearce, Joseph. *The Unmasking of Oscar Wilde*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004. Print.
- Pike, Judith E. "'My name was Isabella Linton': Coverture, Domestic Violence, and Mrs. Heathcliff's Narrative in *Wuthering Heights*." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 64.3 (Dec. 2009): 347-383. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Ryals, Clyde de L. "Carlyle's The French Revolution: A True Fiction." *ELH* 54.4 (Winter 1987): 925-940. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993. Print.

- Saville, John. 1848: *The British State and the Chartist Movement*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987. Print.
- Shorter, Clement King. *The Brontës: Life and Letters*. Vol. 1. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1908. *Google Books*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Thompson, Dorothy. *The Chartists: Popular Politics in the Industrial Revolution*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984. Print.
- Vine, Steven. "The Wuther of the Other in *Wuthering Heights*." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 49.3 (Dec. 1994): 339-359. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Von Sneidern, Maja-Lisa. "*Wuthering Heights* and the Liverpool Slave Trade." *ELH* 62.1 (Spring 1995): 171-196. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 January 2012.
- Wellington, Jan. "Blurring the Borders of Nation and Gender: Mary Wollstonecraft's Character (R)evolution." *Rebellious Hearts: British Women Writers and the French Revolution*. Eds. Adriana Craciun and Kari E. Lokke. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001. 33-61. Print.
- Williams, Anne. "Natural Supernaturalism in *Wuthering Heights*." *Studies in Philology* 82.1 (Winter 1985): 104-127. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 January 2012.

Beaty, Jerome. "Jane Eyre at Gateshead: Mixed Signals in the Text and Context." *Victorian Literature and Society: Essays Presented to Richard D. Altick*. Eds. James R. Kincaid and Albert J. Kuhn. Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP, 1984. 168-196. Print.

Beaty's article analyzes the character Jane Eyre by tracing her development from childhood to maturity. He argues that although we are allowed to experience Jane's maturation alongside her, this by no mean simplifies the story. Instead, the novel is a complex work wherein various themes and events, which at times seem to contradict each other, work together to create a unified whole. His assessment of Jane as a young child proved particularly helpful in the composition of my thesis.

Brantlinger, Patrick. *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1988. Print.

Patrick Brantlinger has created a unique treatment of Victorian literature in this book, as he analyzes not only the literature that arose in the wake of imperialism but also the historical events and attitudes associated with said imperialism. His explanation of commonly held ideas during the Victorian era is helpful to any scholar seeking more information about novels written during this time period, as the Brontës' works were.

Burke, Edmund. *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. London: J. Dodsley, 1790. *Google Books*. Web. 30 January 2012.

Written while the French Revolution was just beginning, Edmund Burke's analysis of the Revolution thus far included a condemnation of its beginning in the first place, as well as an anticipation of the waves of violence that would come not long after Burke's work was published. One of Burke's critical points, and one which proved especially helpful in the formation of my thesis, concerns his worry that the French Revolution would have a devastating and disturbing effect on the British people and the British state.

Carlyle, Thomas. *The French Revolution*. Vol. 1. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1837.

Google Books. Web. 30 January 2012.

Carlyle's history of the French Revolution was immensely important to the Victorians who first read it, but it is equally important to readers today. It is an epic retelling of the events of the Revolution, and it brings a sense of immediacy, as well as urgency, to these historical events.

The French Revolution served as a cautionary tale to the Victorian British who saw political turmoil facing both Continental Europe and their own realm. As this was the environment in which the Brontës lived, it cannot be overlooked.

Colley, Linda. *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*. London: Yale UP, 1992. Print.

Linda Colley traces British history from the early eighteenth century until the beginning of the Victorian era. She devotes the majority of her book to an examination of how Britons created an identity during these years that could unify all the disparate peoples within the British Isles. Although her thorough treatment of the topic ends as Queen Victoria takes the throne, the

81
information her book provides is vital to understanding the historical background that led to the Victorian era and its literature.

Eagleton, Terry. *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger*. London: Verso, 1995. Print.

Terry Eagleton addresses a number of different authors and events in this treatment of Irish literature coupled with Irish history, but the section with the most relevance to my argument concerns his chapter that proposes Heathcliff is meant to be read as an Irish immigrant to England. He goes on to examine all the various ways in which this reading of Heathcliff affects the plot and the other characters of *Wuthering Heights*, all while maintaining a clear Marxist stance towards the text.

... *Myths of Power: A Marxist Study of the Brontës*. London: The MacMillan Press, 1975. Print.

Eagleton's treatment of the Brontës in this work is, as the title suggests, an examination of all the Brontë sisters through the lens of Marxist criticism. In order to understand the social circumstances surrounding the Brontës, it is necessary for Eagleton to delve into the historical context of their works. Both this historical information and his insights into *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* proved invaluable as I examined the historical context of these novels, as well as their implications for Victorian social classes.

Gaskell, Elizabeth Cleghorn. *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*. Vol. 1. London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1857. *Google Books*. Web. 30 January 2012.

Elizabeth Gaskell was close friends with Charlotte Brontë, and her biography of the latter is essential to a thorough understanding of *Jane Eyre*. Not only does Gaskell provide an array of helpful information concerning Brontë's background and influences, but she also offers a surprising number of anecdotes that give insight into Brontë's mind. While knowledge of Brontë's biography certainly does not explain every facet of *Jane Eyre*, it does help establish the novel's historical and biographical context.

McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. New York: Routledge, 1995. Print.

In her book, McClintock examines the British Empire and the complicated relations between different races and genders within it. Her study of such relations in places as far from England as the West Indies, as well as in countries as close to England as Ireland, was immensely helpful as I studied the Brontës' own Irish background and the presence of racially 'Other' characters in their novels.

Michie, Elsie. "From Simianized Irish to Oriental Despots: Heathcliff, Rochester and Racial Difference." *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 25.2 (Winter 1992): 125-140. JSTOR. Web. 30 January 2012.

Michie's argument is similar to Eagleton's in that she theorizes that Heathcliff is intended to be an Irish character. However, she expands this argument to assert that Rochester is meant to be read as an Irishman as well, while she also explains that there are no distinctly Irish references to either character. Instead, their Irish tendencies are couched in more obviously foreign terms

relating to the West Indies, the Far East, or the Middle East. Although her argument fails in many respects, her knowledge of Victorian perceptions of the Irish proved helpful as it related to Heathcliff.

Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993. Print.

Edward Said examines in this book the complex relationship between British imperialism and culture. Not only did a certain culture arise as a product of this imperialism, but this culture also perpetuated imperialistic views and tendencies. His assessment of racial and sexual relations proves important to an understanding of the threatening characters in both *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*.

Saville, John. 1848: *The British State and the Chartist Movement*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987. Print.

Saville's book is an in-depth examination of Chartism and the British government's response to it, particularly in the year 1848. It also takes into account the numerous revolutionary movements that occurred in Continental Europe this same year. While the events of 1848 occurred after the composition and publication of both *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*, the spirit leading up to these events is nevertheless essential to understand if readers are to grasp fully the implications of the historical context of both novels.

Thompson, Dorothy. *The Chartists: Popular Politics in the Industrial Revolution*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984. Print.

Dorothy Thompson's treatment of Chartism is a thorough study of the working-class movement, though it is at the same time a helpful introduction to it. Her book explains the factors that gave rise to the movement, the events that characterized it, and its eventual decline. As my thesis argues for a connection between the Brontës' novels and revolutionary movements such as Chartism, Thompson's book proved crucial to the formation of my reasoning.

Wellington, Jan. "Blurring the Borders of Nation and Gender: Mary Wollstonecraft's Character (R)evolution." *Rebellious Hearts: British Women Writers and the French Revolution*. Eds. Adriana Craciun and Kari E. Lokke. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001. 33-61. Print.

Although she focuses her study particularly on Mary Wollstonecraft's response to the French Revolution, Jan Wellington also conducts a more generalized treatment of British perceptions of the French before, during, and after the French Revolution. Her analysis of stereotypes that more or less equated the French with femininity is an important critique of perceived gender roles in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England, as well as providing an insightful backdrop for my argument concerning French roles of effeminacy in *Jane Eyre*.