

Emily Bronte's Potential Ecological Ethical Consciousness in Wuthering Heights

Liu Jia

School of English Language and Literature, Xi'an Fanyi University, China, 710105

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Abstract: Emily's "Wuthering Heights" has always been called the "Shinx Mystery" in the field of literature. It is a controversial novel, not only in the content of the novel, but also in the form of the novel. This paper studies Emily Bronte's ethical awareness of the potential in the "Wuthering Heights" to understand the author's intentions of writing Emily, and to understand the author of Emily's innovation. While breaking the tradition, she reconstructed the truth of the narrative in her own unique way, applied and improved the moral teaching function of the framework narrative, and highlighted the author's harmonious relationship between the establishment of man and nature, civilization and nature. The advocacy highlights the hidden ecological ethical consciousness contained in the works.

1. Introduction

British Victorian female novelist Emily Bronte has a forward-looking consciousness that transcends contemporary writers. As early as the 19th century, when the influence of the industrial revolution began to spread to the ecological environment, Emily carried out a reflection on the relationship between man and nature in his works. The so-called ecological ethics, "in a sense, is a reflection on the relationship between man and nature". The establishment of ecological ethics is generally marked by the publication of the French philosopher and Nobel Peace Prize winner Albert Schweitzer's book *The Philosophy of Civilization: Culture and Ethics* in 1923. According to Professor Zeng Jianping's book *"The Thinking of Nature: Exploring Western Ecological Ethics"*, before this, "thoughts related to this kind of thinking can be called 'potential ecological ethics' is more appropriate". Therefore, the moral meaning of the relationship between man and nature reflected in Emily's works, in the strict sense, should also belong to the category of "hidden ecological ethics".

Chinese ecological scholar Lu Shuyuan has proposed the "three-point method" of ecology in his book *"Ecological Literature"*, as shown in figure 1. Although Emily's creation is far earlier than the ecological definition and division, she has included these three aspects in her ethical awareness of ecological ecology. She explores the continuous development of human civilization in her novels. And in the case of beginning to endanger the nature, realize the meaning of harmony between man and nature, between man and man and between man and self^[1].

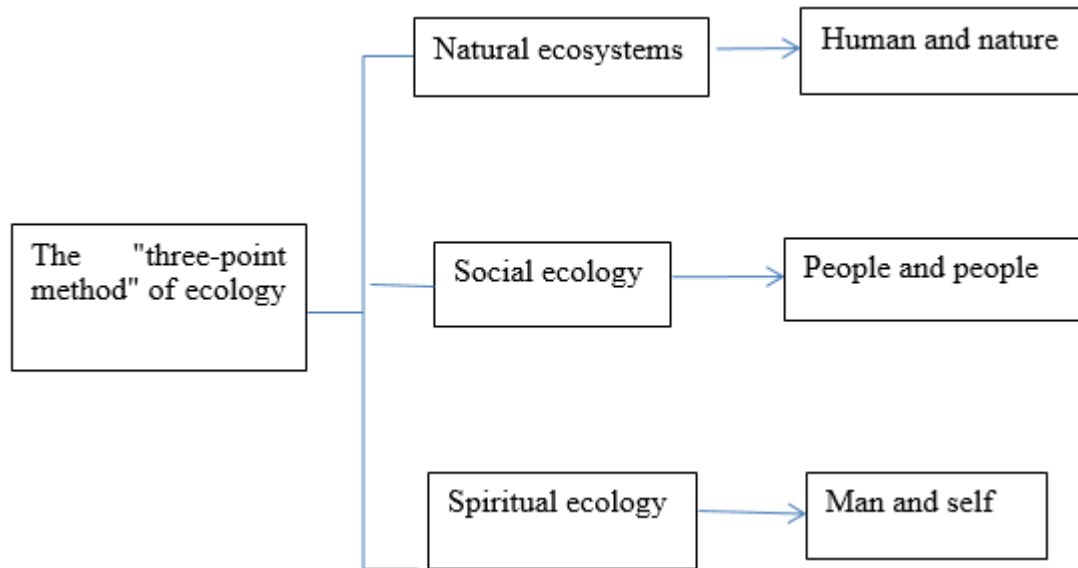


Figure 1: Definition and division of the "three-point method" in ecology

2. Natural ecology: nature as a mother's metaphor

Different from the social mainstream concept of the conquest of human conquest of nature at the time, in Emily's pen, nature is not the object of human utilization and transformation, but a mother who is connected with human mind. "Nature" makes the weak get rid of the weak position by becoming the source of the weak power, and finally achieves the harmonious coexistence between man and nature.

The source of the metaphor of nature as a mother can be traced back to ancient Greek mythology. However, in the long, male-centered society, both nature and women have become the targets of male conquest and domination. This situation has worsened with the development of human civilization. By the time the human society entered industrial civilization in the 19th century, nature and women have been completely and completely reduced to being enslaved. Since the mid-19th century, enslaved women have begun to fight for equal rights for themselves. But the feminists at this stage don't know what they are against. Later, the feminist movement was carried out, but the feminists at this stage clearly knew what they opposed, but did not know what they needed. Until more than a century later, ecofeminism emerged when women were able to face and accept their own femininity. As a product of the combination of environmentalism and feminism, ecofeminism emerges from the positive meaning of nature and women, especially with mothers. Comparing nature to the metaphor of raising mothers of all things, but in the deeper sense, it increases the meaning of women and nature working side by side against male power^[2].

From this perspective, in the "Wuthering Heights" created by Emily in the mid-19th century, the metaphor of nature is compared to the mother's metaphor has a positive meaning beyond the times. Because in Emily's writing, the natural alliance between the ruling "other" and "nature" in the patriarchal society has already had the meaning of rebelling against power. They communicate with nature through a unique language, and "nature" becomes the source of strength for the ruler to fight against the ruler and change the weak position.

In Wuthering Heights, almost all mothers died before their children died, and "nature" became a powerful mother to support and protect children who lost their motherly love. Women and the weak can gain strength from "nature" and thus win in the struggle against the ruler. When Catherine and Hicks were young, they became the "others" who were inferior because of their respective female

and colored ethnicities, and the brutal Schindler was the representative of the dominant white male. In the days when the body and mind were suffering, Catherine and Hicks worked together in the fields, playing on the wasteland, drawing strength from nature and competing with the ruthless rule of Schindler, as shown in Figure 2. In this relationship between the two masters and the "others", Catherine married Edgar and left the Wuthering Heights. Hicks first left home and returned home. Instead, Hindley died tragically in alcoholism and gambling. The status of dominating and "others" has been reversed^[3].



Figure 2 Catherine and Hicks play together on the wasteland

3. Social ecology: from confrontation to harmonious nature and civilization

In Lu Shuyuan's "Ecological Literature", the social ecosystem is defined as "the ecosystem formed by social people and their environment". Coordinating the relationship between nature and civilization is the key to maintaining social and ecological balance. Human beings are the main body engaged in various social activities. Only by coordinating the relationship between people can we construct a harmonious state between nature and civilization, thus contributing to the balance of social ecology. In this sense, Wuthering Heights can be regarded as a social ecological fable, in which nature and civilization are embodied as two distinct worlds, Wuthering Heights and Thrushing Grange. The transition from confrontation to harmony between nature and civilization is also carried out in the grievances of characters in two different worlds.

The conflict between the natural world and the civilized world began with the battle for love between Hicks and Edgar. In the temptation of the civilized world, Catherine, who was originally in harmony with Hick, gradually deviated from her nature and determined to marry Edgar. In order to promote the marriage between Catherine and Edgar, Hendley is even more ill-treatment and insult to Hick. Under such a double blow, Hicks left home. In the first contest between nature and civilization, the world symbolizing civilization has won a great victory. The relationship between civilization and nature here is a metaphor of social reality at that time, that is, human beings successfully carried out the use and transformation of nature through the industrial revolution, and made nature surrender to civilization. However, while human beings are complacent, they do not

know that the seeds of future worries have been buried. When Hicks returned to his hometown, he launched unscrupulous revenge for the humiliation and injury he suffered. This is the natural world's madness against the civilized world.

The progressiveness of Emily's ecological ethical consciousness is that she does not move from one end of the pole to the other. That is, while opposing the oppression and rule of nature by civilization, she does not advocate the establishment of a society that naturally governs civilization. The ideal ecological ethics model in her mind should be that nature and civilization complement each other and be harmonious. Therefore, Emily did not let Hicksley, who symbolizes nature, completely eradicate civilization, but realized the harmony between nature and civilization in the Karen symbolizing civilization and Hareton symbolizing nature. After the two fell in love, Karen taught Hareton to read and literate, and Hareton helped the card to open up the open space in the garden and plant flowers and trees. At the time of the night wind, the two will also go hand in hand to the wilderness to walk, nature and civilization in the two achieve a perfect complement and integration^[4].

4. Spiritual ecology: from the alienation to the nature of return

Alienation was originally a concept in philosophy. It refers to the object that the subject differentiates in the process of development becomes its opposite and its power, which in turn makes it a vassal of the object. With the completion of the industrial revolution, industrial civilization has increasingly become a dissident force created by man, and people are in a dominant position: the machine invented by man forces people to work day and night, and the material products produced by people promote endless consumption. The economic wealth created by human beings induces the possessive desire of people to expand. As a result, people step by step toward the path of alienation, deviating from their own nature, becoming a cold-blooded animal for the pursuit of interests, which leads to the ecological crisis in the human spiritual realm. It is also a matter of ecological ethics to make human beings lost in the return of the nature of the material world and to regain the harmony of the human spirit with the natural spirit.

In Emily's novels, the result of alienation of industrial civilization infiltrated this isolated town. In the novel, Hendry's annihilation of family, the pursuit of interests, and the horrendous revenge of Hicksley, who was harmed by the civilized world, are manifestations of alienation in industrial civilization. The most representative image of alienation is Katherine, because she has experienced a process from the free release of nature to the alienation of nature under the suppression of civilization, and then to the return of nature at the expense of life. Emily borrowed from Catherine's experience to tell readers that only by returning to the natural nature of man can the peace of the spiritual world be realized^[5].

For Emily, she foresaw the possible harm to the natural, social and human spiritual world in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution. She advocated the harmonious development of nature and civilization and proposed that only returning to nature In return to the true state of human beings, we can achieve harmony and tranquility in the natural, social and human spiritual world. Emily is like a heather flower blooming in the wilderness. Because it is rooted in the depths of the earth, she can stretch the flowers to the sky, and the works that have been passed down from her heart.

5. Conclusions

"Wuthering Heights" is a novel with rich and profound implications. It is because of Emily's deep love for nature that her immortal "Wuthering Heights" is created, and the latent ecological ethical consciousness beyond The Times contained in it. The nature in the work is the independent subject with life, and it is the spiritual shelter and spiritual habitat of people. It is full of vitality, in

various shapes and forms, and interlinked with human emotions. The work expresses the idea of returning to nature, maintaining childlike innocence and returning to nature. At the same time, it reflects the relationship between nature and civilization, which is both contradictory and harmonious. The ecological wisdom contained in the work has undoubtedly provided us with beneficial and profound enlightenment in the era of ecological crisis, and also made Emily shine with new luster, which is also the eternal "realistic" meaning of this novel.

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