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PATTERNS OF DOUBLES IN EMILY BRONTË’S POETIC WORLD

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The following paper is based on the analysis of ten poems by Emily Brontë which are representative of the poet’s tendency to employ dichotomic themes in the attempt to find a solution to them. This attitude affects Brontë’s lexical, syntactic, and metrical choices to the extent that she seems to favor the tetrameter as a meter for her poetry because it lends itself to rhetorical foregrounding along patterns of doubles, through the frequent use of such figures as chiasmus and parallelism. These binary patterns in Brontë’s poetry have a counterpart in Wuthering Heights, where characters and places are related by parallels and mirror-like oppositions. This reverberation of dichotomic themes and forms in both her poetry and prose finally shows that Emily Brontë was, in spite of herself, entrapped in an essentially dualistic frame of mind.

Stevie Davies calls Emily Brontë ‘the sole major English novelist with a full understanding of a dialectical philosophy’.1 Emily, in fact, was naturally sensitive toward the tensions and contradictions of the world. Since her childhood traumatic experience of homesickness at Law Hill, she had learned the incompatibility of dreams and reality; the bitter taste of disappointed hope echoes in the final lines of the poem written at the time, ‘A little while, a little while’ (40) 43–8 ‘... truth has banished fancy’s power | I hear my dungeon’s bar recoil — | ... My hour of rest had fled by | And given me back to weary care’.2 In this poem dated 4 December 1838, only two years after her first dated poetic manuscript, the twenty-year-old Emily already considers some of the dichotomies which will haunt her: truth and fancy, freedom and dungeon, rest and care. A few years later, in 1843, her stay at the Pensionnat Heger in Brussels revived those feelings and, at the same time, brought her closer to German Romantic philosophy, which was spreading throughout continental Europe. As Davies suggests,3 Emily must have been spontaneously inclined towards both German language and German thought thanks to Walter Scott with whose works she was intimate. From the German, a language which he felt somehow affiliated to the Scottish dialects, a sort of ‘primitive’, ‘originating’ language, Scott had translated Goethe, an author who was himself concerned with a quest for the original language, the Ursprache. It is significant that Emily used the Yorkshire dialect in Wuthering Heights; she thus paid homage to the sense of nostalgia and homesickness, which was inherent in Romanticism and which she must have felt was so much her own.

Once her natural interest for German language and thought had been stimulated by her short study in Brussels, Emily committed herself to it after her return to Haworth. Although we ignore the extent to which she approached German Romantic philosophers, we know that she was studying German — probably in order to read the texts in their original language — and that she must have read German works, because in Haworth’s

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library, a volume of Schiller’s *Collected Works*, some extracts from Richter and Goethe, and Herder’s dialogue, *Nacht und Tag* was found. In the latter case, the contrast between day and night is strikingly similar to how Emily draws the dichotomy of light/darkness in her poems ‘How clear she shines’ (95) and ‘Ah! Why because the dazzling sun’ (118). Emily could also regularly access the *Blackwell’s Edinburgh Magazine* where translations from Schiller’s works and essays on Schlegel appeared. They divulged notions of dualistic philosophy and split personality which must have sounded irresistibly appealing to her. All these, more or less direct, intellectual inputs obviously found a fertile ground in Emily’s poetic imagination.

I would now like to discuss how Emily’s spontaneous dualistic approach to the world is reflected in her poetry. On the basis of reference to a sample of ten poems,\(^4\) I would like to highlight those formal choices through which Emily Brontë gave poetic shape to her Weltanschauung. Finally, I intend to show the existence of a strong relation between, on the one hand, her management of ideas and meter in the poems and, on the other, her treatment of characters and plot in *Wuthering Heights*.

By the term ‘patterns of doubles’ I refer, firstly, to the paradigm of dichotomic themes around which most of Emily Brontë’s poems revolve — themes like life/death, reason/imagination, light/darkness, body/spirit, immobility/dynamism; and secondly, to the prosodic and rhetorical tools which she uses to enhance these themes (tetrametrical lines, use of chiasmus, and parallelism), which again involve the use of binary structures. These thematic and formal traits are extensively present in her poetry although she obsessively tries to solve dichotomies in the argumentative development of her poems. Emily Brontë is desperately looking for some kind of final harmonization — in her last pieces she seems absorbed with the idea of overcoming the limits of time and space through physical dissolution and the annulment of personal identity. Yet, in reading these poems we often feel trapped between contrasting perspectives. Some lyrics are painstaking yet consciously vain efforts to describe an alternative to a dualistic view of the world via the only means granted by the world, i.e. language. The poet is looking for a poetic language that may utter her feelings. However, language is by definition a twice oppositional structure — firstly, it opposes physical and mental perceptions to words; secondly, it opposes the form of words, the signifiers, to their meaning, the signifieds.\(^5\) This forces Emily Brontë into a prison of double-faceted tools of expression which further emphasizes the dichotomic nature of her themes. Therefore, in the end she seems compelled to acknowledge that the net of dichotomies she tried to disentangle was actually inherent in the very language she needed to write poetry which cohered with her essentially dualistic frame of mind.

The frequent dialogic structure of Emily Brontë’s poems, i.e. the implied dialogue between two voices, is often the first mark of the presence of a dichotomy — even though one of the two characters may remain silent.\(^6\) However, it is most often the choice of meter, or rather, of rhythm, which helps to throw emphasis on the two terms of the dichotomy. I would like to point out that, notwithstanding Emily Brontë’s definite preference for tetrameter — i.e. for a line consisting of eight syllables alternating four stresses or beats and four unstresses or offbeats — the actual length of her lines is very uneven; of the ten poems chosen, the line length varies from eight to eleven syllables.\(^7\) Consequently, for the sake of my argument, I will henceforth consider significant the
presence of a rhythm based on a fixed number of stresses per line (four) rather than the presence of a strictly tetrametrical line.

A four-beat line normally counts two two-beat hemistiches, which, in Emily Brontë’s poetry, often lend themselves to underlining oppositions or contrasts. The italicised lines in the stanzas below offer a few examples:

1.4 High waving heather ’neath stormy blasts bending (2)
Midnight and moon light and bright shining stars
Darkness and glory rejoicingly blending
Earth rising to heaven and heaven descending
Mans spirit away from its drear dungeon sending
Bursting the fetters and breaking the bars.

1.8 I die but when the grave shall press (19)
The heart so long endeared to thee
When earthly cares no more distress
And earthly joys are nought to me
Weep not, but think that I have past
Before thee o’er a sea of gloom
Have anchored safe and rest at last
Where tears and mourning cannot come

1.4 How clear she shines! How quietly (95)
I lie beneath her guardian light
While Heaven and Earth are whispering me,
“Tomorrow wake — but dream to night” —

The highlighted lines contain an opposition which is either inherent in the meaning of the words (‘rise’ vs ‘descend’, ‘tomorrow’ vs ‘tonight’, ‘wake’ vs ‘dream’) or implied by their connotations (‘spirit’ vs ‘dungeon’), or, finally, inferred by the use of negative constructions (‘no more distress’ means ‘peace’ as opposed to ‘care’: ‘Where tears and morning cannot come’ entails there is a place ‘where tears and mourning come’, ultimately ‘a place of peace’ vs ‘a place of pain’).

The examples above show that four-beat lines also offer an ideal ground for the use of the rhetorical devices of chiasmus or parallelism. In arguing for Emily Brontë’s likely lefthandedness, which might be a key to her ‘sinistral’ or ‘reversed’ view of reality, Stevie Davies remarks that ‘one of Emily’s favourite sentence-structures takes the rhetorical form of the chiasmus’. This is fully evident in ‘High waving heather’ (2) where the enactment of contrasting dynamic principles is foregrounded by iterated chiastic lines. Chiasmus is one of the simplest rhetorical means to suggest antithesis, and, besides lines 1 and 4, it also occurs in the final stanza of the poem (‘Roaring like thunder like soft music sighing’ and ‘Lightening bright flashes the deep gloom defying’). Another instance is line 4 of ‘How clear she shines’ (95).

The above quotations also show that the two hemistiches of a four-beat line can as much stress an opposition or dichotomy as they can reinforce an idea or a concept through parallelism. Parallelism is, in fact, a poetic device which Emily Brontë widely uses as a means of both intensification and argumentation. At times she uses it to stress semantic correspondence or equivalence, as in line 6 of ‘High waving heather’ and in the following examples from, respectively, ‘How clear she shines’ (95) and ‘Far away is the land of rest’ (12):
Yes — Fancy, come, my fairy love!
These throbbing temples, softly kiss,
And bend my lonely couch above
And bring me rest, and bring me bliss —

Thy love, I will not — will not share
Thy hatred only wakes a smile
Thy griefs may wound — thy wrongs may tear
But oh, thy lies shall ne’er beguile

Wasted worn is the traveller
Dark his heart and dim his eye
Without hope or comforter
Faultering faint and ready to die

At other times, Emily Brontë uses parallelism to highlight contrasts or dichotomies — in ‘High waveing heather’ (2) (‘Comeing as swiftly and faeining as soon’) — or climactic progression, as in the final stanza of ‘O, thy bright eyes must answer now’ (110):

And am I wrong, to worship where
Faith cannot doubt, nor Hope dispair
Since my own soul can grant my prayer?
Speak God of Visions, plead for me,
And tell why I have chosen thee!

Although the instances of parallelism and chiasmus so far considered are internal to a line, the same rhetorical use can also occur internally to a stanza and thus develop along three or more lines. ‘How clear she shines’ (95) (lines 13-6 quoted above) gives an example of how parallelism suggests the speaking I’s obsession with the threats of the world. Similarly in ‘Far away is the land of rest’ (12) the speaking voice is haunted by the diverse images of the suffering man:

Often he looks to the ruthless sky
Often he looks o’er his dreary road
Often he wishes down to lie,
And render up lives tired some load

In the following stanza from ‘Death, that struck when I was most confiding’ (117) the semantic reinforcement conveyed by the parallelism is further emphasized by various forms of phonological identity and repetitions (e.g. anaphora, the repetition of shifters in syntactic clusters):

Leaves, upon Time’s branch, were growing brightly
Full of sap and Full of silver dew;
Birds, beneath its shelter, gathered nightly;
Daily, round its flowers, the wild bees flew —.

Finally, an example of chiasmus extending over two lines occurs in the second stanza of ‘When weary with the long day’s care’ (108):

So hopeless is the world without
The world within I doubly prize
Thy world, where guile and hate and doubt
And cold suspicion never rise —
Where thou and I and Liberty
Have undisputed soveriengnty
A review of the above quotations suggests that while Emily Brontë tended to impart to her lines a four-beat rhythm, she also inclined towards writing in four line stanzas with alternating rhymes (e.g. in ‘How clear she shines’ (95) and ‘Far away is the land of rest’ (12) we respectively read: 1-8 ‘love’/‘above’, ‘kiss’/‘bliss’; 1-4.16 ‘share’/‘tear’, ‘smile’/‘beguile’; 5-11 ‘traveller’/‘comforter’, ‘eye’/‘die’). Phonetically, the quatrains with alternating rhymes regularly introduces new clusters of sounds within a fixed rhythmical structure. From a purely formal point of view, therefore, the rhythm finally resulting from the combination of four-beat lines in four-line stanzas with alternating rhymes tends to impart to poetry a smooth sense of cyclical recurrence. Robin Grove goes so far as to say that Emily Brontë’s ‘fascination with recurrences in nature and in human lives’ is reflected in ‘the repetitive chiming ballad-forms in which she mostly wrote [which] have the effect of holding the mind in a reassuring rhythmical order.’ In fact, this reassuring rhythm is consistent with the poet’s effort to harmonize her dichotomic view of the world.

As exemplified by ‘I’ll not weep that thou art going to leave me’ (75) and ‘Death, that struck’ (117), the impression of a smooth cyclical rhythm is preserved even when the poet neglects the systematic use of four-beat lines in favor of an alternation between odd and even lines within stanzas. Below is ‘I’ll not weep’ (75) quoted in its entirety:

I’ll not weep that thou art going to leave me
There’s nothing lovely here,
And doubly will the dark world grieve me
While thy heart suffers there—

I’ll not weep — because the summer’s glory
Must always end in gloom
And follow out the happiest story,
It closes with a tomb—

And I am weary of the anguish
Increasing winters bear —
Weary to watch the spirit languish
Through years of dead despair —

So if a tear when thou art dying
Should haply fall from me
It is but that my soul is sighing
To go and rest with thee —

In this poem the rhythm established by the first two stanzas is discontinued in the second two. An anaphora highlights the two longest lines (pentameters) which define the context of the dialogue, the death of the beloved one. They are thus preparatory lines to the speaking I’s lament in the second half of the poem which displaces a regular alternation of tetrameters and trimeters. Both in terms of prosody and content, this poem is divided into two. However, this formal division is infringed by the chiasmus-like semantic correspondence between the extreme stanzas (1 and 4) which focus on the I-thou relationship, and the central ones which refer to external circumstances. Such tensions at the level of form and structure are counterbalanced by the thematic dichotomy between life/death and pain/rest dramatized by the text.

‘Death that struck’ (117) also alternates odd and even lines ending on an unstressed and a stressed syllable respectively. However, as in a chiasmus, the two extreme stanzas
of the poem are brought closer to each other through formal and semantic foregrounding: they both end on the word ‘Eternity’, i.e. a polysyllabic word where a monosyllabic one would be expected:

1-4 Death, that struck when I was most confiding
In my certain Faith of Joy to be;
Strike again, Time’s withered branch deviding
From the fresh root of Eternity!

29-32 Strike it down — that others boughs may flourish
Where that perished sapling used to be;
thus at least, its mouldering corpse will nourish
That from which it sprung — Eternity —

Such formal emphasis gives circular completion to the poem and suggests a re-enactment of the life/death cycle which the poem itself celebrates.

The observations made so far concern two levels: a minor level relating to the internal organization of the line and stanza-units (four beat lines, four line stanzas, chiasmus and parallelism), and a major level relating to the structure of the poem as a whole which results from the dialectic interplay of the single units (impression of rhythmical smoothness vs various types of formal and semantic inter-stanzaic foregrounding). The conclusions I draw from the above observations are that Emily Brontë’s poems are usually tightened through the balance imposed by the juxtaposition of centrifugal forces, expressed by formal recurrences (four-beat lines, four-line stanzas, alternating rhymes) suggesting a virtually infinite cyclicity, and centripetal forces, expressed by symmetrical oppositions in both form and content which press the poems towards structural unity. Therefore, the recurrence of patterns of doubles in Emily Brontë’s poetry suggests that the poet recognized in binary structures a means of organizing and systematizing her approach to reality.

Emily Brontë had become popular as a misanthropic, solitude- and silence-loving individual who only felt at ease when she could mutely commune with animals in the natural world. Yet although she inclined towards silence in society, she cried out in poetry where she felt free to give vent to her restrained emotions. The evidence gathered here shows that she accomplished this by way of a linguistic usage which is the primary instrument of intensification — repetition.

The traditional descriptions of the strong, practical, and virile bent of her character bears out the claim that she believed that ‘saying is doing’, i.e., that since words are ineffective in changing the order of things, if someone intends to do something s/he had better do it immediately instead of issuing a declaration of intent. The resolution and determination of her actions echo through her poetry which aims, thereby, to be ‘performative’. In grammar, the referent of action is the verb; and verbs, of movement in particular, are dense in Emily Brontë’s poetry. Action, movement, and dynamism embody the vitality of Nature which is contrasted to the sticky rigidity and immobility of the means of expression provided by language. Accordingly, when vitality has to be performed in writing it has to be fixed by inked signs on a blank sheet of paper. In this restricted, dualistic, and artificial system of experience, these signs are correlated to patterns of sounds which are the elements closest to the actual world. Accordingly, the poet relies inevitably on the cumulative effect of sounds to produce a sense of dynamic
reality. This may go a long way toward explaining Emily Brontë’s keenness for rhetorical parallelism. I have come to consider that there are three factors present: repressed utterance, which needs to cry out; a claim to annul the breach between language and reality; and an inexorable and frustrating acknowledgement that this breach is the first of a series of dichotomies representing the only means of coming to terms with life and the world. In the light of this, parallelism is the simplest but most effective means of emphatic utterance, semantic coordination, and organisation of thought.

Since C. P. Sanger’s pioneering aesthetic work on Wuthering Heights, Emily Brontë criticism has been flooded with books and articles showing general agreement that parallelism and antithesis are the organizing principles of her novel. Repetition and opposition are actually inherent in the romantic theme of the alter ego or Doppelgänger, namely the other — evil — side of the self. The idea of the existence of a ‘double’ with characteristics opposite to the ‘original’ self was familiar to Emily Brontë through James Hogg’s Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner (1824) and E. T. A. Hoffman’s The Devil’s Elixir (1816), which might have actually been a source of inspiration for her novel.¹⁵

I will now proceed to discuss how the ‘patterns of doubles’ discussed in the poems also underlie the form and content of the novel, Wuthering Heights.

For David Daiches, ‘the most striking thing about Wuthering Heights is its combination of matter-of-fact precision in the telling and monstrous symbolic conflicts in the actual story’.¹⁶ This entails the existence of a natural and a supernatural setting which corresponds to the ordinary rhythms of the lives of the characters on the one hand, and on the other, to the extraordinary events caused by their behaviour or by the response of the natural world to human activity. The double setting is figuratively represented by the two houses of Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights, whose respective inhabitants — Isabella and Edgar, and Catherine and Heathcliff — embody the opposite poles of ‘storm’ and ‘calm’.¹⁷ However, Catherine’s marriage to Edgar Linton and Heathcliff’s elopement with Isabella bring about a sudden chiasmus-like reassessment of pairs with the birth of two children, a girl, Cathy, and a boy, Linton. In the following paragraph Cathy details their opposing attitudes:

He said the pleasantest manner of spending a hot July day was lying from morning till evening on a bank of heath in the middle of the moors, with the bees humming dreamingly about among the bloom, and the larks singing high up over head, and the blue sky and bright sun shining steadily and cloudlessly. That was his most perfect idea of heaven’s happiness — mine was rocking in a rustling green tree, with the west wind blowing, and bright white clouds flitting rapidly above; and not only larks, but thrrostles, and blackbirds, and linnets, and cuckoos pouring out music on every side, and the moors seen at a distance, broken into cool dusky dells; but close by, great swells of long grass undulating in waves to the breeze; and woods and sounding water, and the whole world awake and wild with joy. He wanted all to lie in an ecstasy of peace; I wanted all to sparkle, and dance in a glorious jubilee.¹⁸

As the italics highlight, Cathy retains some of the characteristics of the pole of ‘storm’ which are suggested by the use of dynamic (1) verbs (rock, rustle, blow, flit, pour out, undulate, sparkle, dance), (2) adverbs and adjectives (rapidly, on every side, awake, wild) and (3) nouns (jubilee). Linton, on the other hand, is portrayed as closer to the pole of ‘calm’ through static (1) verbs (lie, twice) (2) adverbs (steadily) and (3) nouns (peace).
Yet this opposition between Linton and Cathy is temporary and soon supplanted by the final harmonization of her match with Hareton. After Linton has been dispensed with through an early death, Cathy, who is ultimately seen in the novel more as a modulation of Earnshaw and Linton’s characteristics than explicitly as a ‘child of storm’, finds her counterpart in Hareton. He is the son of Catherine’s brother, Hindley, and has fallen under the influence of Heathcliff; this makes Hareton’s position somewhat parallel to Cathy’s: supposedly a ‘child of calm’ (Hindley) he replicates traits of the principle of storm (Heathcliff). In this light, Cathy and Hareton’s final marriage represents the achievement of a union in life which counterbalances the union in death between Heathcliff and Catherine.

*Wuthering Heights* ends at the beginning of the third generation of Earnshaws, so that the integrity of the original family remains ‘uncontaminated’ by Heathcliff’s blood. Heathcliff is, ultimately, a character who remains alien to the genealogy described in the text: he is an outsider, coming from the void and leaving no progeny. In this respect, Linton, his son, stands as his counterpart, having been pushed into an alienating environment which he finally leaves without affecting in any way.

It has been pointed out that the conclusion of *Wuthering Heights* re-establishes an earthly order which was originally upset by the interference of an extraneous element. Indeed, the story starts and ends with the Earnshaw family, thus suggesting a dynamic cyclical recurrence not unlike the poem ‘Death that struck’ (117), which begins and ends with the word ‘Eternity’ and celebrates the cycle of human life as part of the endless dynamism of universal life.

Another important feature of the novel is the presence of a double narrator. Lockwood is the ‘external’ narrator in two senses: firstly, because he is not a character in the main plot; secondly, because he is the first and last speaker in the novel. Nelly, on the other hand, is the ‘internal’ eye-witness narrator. Accordingly, *Wuthering Heights* can be said to offer a chiasmic structure in the very internal organisation of its narrative discourse.

Finally, the plot of the novel develops along dichotomies.19 There is an alternation of order/disorder in the family nuclei which is formed in the course of the story; this reflects a shift from anarchy, dominated by avarice and egotism, towards civilized society, where codified rules are a warrant for individual rights. This dichotomy is accompanied by the alienation/integration experienced by Hareton — and apparently by Heathcliff during his three-year-absence — in his gradual self-deliverance from Heathcliff’s dominance and approach towards Cathy’s influence. This is linked to yet another opposition, attraction/repulsion, which presides over the relationship between both the first and the second generation of lovers. Heathcliff does indeed love Catherine so desperately that he comes to hate her for letting him suffer the separation imposed by her marriage and later by her death. Similarly, Edgar is, for Catherine, both a source of physical attraction and, at times, sentimental repulsion. Hareton and Cathy also experience similar feelings towards each other.

In the treatment of narrative time Emily Brontë, again, manipulates a double level of discourse. The time of discourse in the novel is that of Lockwood’s first and last visit to Wuthering Heights and of Nelly’s report, but it does not coincide with the time of the main story, which dates back over thirty years. This temporal split is responsible for the contrasting perspectives between, on the one hand, the two narrators, who attach fundamental importance to historical progression or diachrony — they want to know
the sequence of events — and on the other, the main characters, who attempt to stop time in order to affirm the permanence of their feelings. Consequently, there is a discrepancy in the novel’s chronology between diachrony and synchrony, progression and permanence. Franco Marucci points out that this temporal clash results from the diachrony imposed by narrative discourse on the synchrony of the story.\(^{20}\) In fact, the characters enacting the story in a series of events do not acknowledge temporal evolution or progression, but assert themselves, or rather those feelings of which they are embodiments, in obsessive, repetitive unchangeableness. Theirs is a desperate attempt to slip from all the entanglements that a so-called civilized society imposes on human life and which tend to tame or repress the overflowing vital, instinctive dynamism of Nature.

I would now like to examine two examples of the same rhetorical device highlighted in Emily Brontë’s poetry that are found in Wuthering Heights.

Let us return briefly to the excerpt where Cathy draws a comparison between Linton and her own ideas of how to spend a ‘hot July day’. The paragraph is formally constructed as a parallelism with the intent of underlining a contrast. Cathy mentions the posture (‘lying ... on a bank of heath’), sounds (‘with the bees humming ... and the larks singing’) and views (‘and the blue sky and the bright sun shining steadily and cloudlessly’) which correspond to Linton’s idea of happiness. In depicting her own view, she respects the same sequence — posture, sound(s), view(s) — but makes much use of conjunctions (with, and, but), so that her image of nature is extensively dilated and strikes us as amplified and dynamic in comparison and opposition to Linton’s limited and static view (‘rocking in a rustling green tree, with a west wind blowing, and bright, white clouds flitting ... and not only larks, but thrrostles, and ... , and ... , and ... and the moors ... , but, close by, great swell ... and woods ... and ... , and the whole world awake and wild with joy’). This contrast is reiterated, by means of another parallelism, in the last sentence of the paragraph. Here the repetition of the same syntactic structure [subject + wanted all to + verb + in + (adjective) noun] but with verbs and nouns of opposite semantic connotations (lie/sparkle and dance, peace/glorious jubilee) serves to emphasize that the nature of the two characters is ultimately dichotomic and incompatible.

The final paragraph of the novel is too dense with meaning and suggestiveness to be discussed exhaustively here. I will only hint briefly at the formal presence of chiasmus and parallelism.

Lockwood is strolling around, the site of Catherine and Heathcliff’s grave:

I lingered round them, under that beign sky; watched the moths fluttering among the heath, and harebells; listened to the soft wind breathing through the grass; and wondered how any one could ever imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers in that quiet earth.

The repetition of the three past tenses (lingered, listened, wondered) shows again Emily Brontë’s propensity for parallelism. However, the paragraph suggests a wavering between an earthly — the moths, the hare-bell — and a heavenly perspective — the sky. Although the image of the ‘wind breathing through the grass’ momentarily levels this contrast by bringing the spirits of the sky close to the earth, the final chiasmus seems to me to reintroduce the dichotomy life/death and peace/sufference. Hence, Emily Brontë’s quest for a final harmonization is once again suspended.

I believe I have collected enough evidence here to safely conclude that Emily Brontë’s dualistic frame of mind pervades her novel as much as it does her poems. This is shown
by the extent to which her literary work reverberates with patterns of doubles, in spite of her efforts to achieve a dissolution of dichotomies. Therefore, her œuvre is ultimately the product of a sensitivity long used to filtering the incoherences of life along what Rosalind Miles calls:

[...] the ancient principle of contrasts; not, in her case, the gradations of tone or subtle shades of meaning, but that of stark opposition; extremes lent themselves readily to the presentation of her own intense and strongly-varied apprehension; extremes were her natural mode.21

References

2 All quotations from the poems are taken from the critical edition by Derek Roper with Edward Chitham The Poems of Emily Brontë (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995). Quotations, which preserve the sometimes unorthodox spelling of Emily, are referred to by the starting line of the poem followed by the progressive number given by the editors. The second number indicates the line's.
4 The poems I have considered are: 'High waving heather' 'neath stormy blasts bending' (2); 'Far away is the land of rest' (12), 'I die but when the grave shall press' (19), 'I'll not weep that thou art going to leave me' (75), 'Aye, there it is! It waketh tonight' (85), 'How clear she shone! How quietly' (95), 'When weary with the long day's care' (108), 'O, thy bright eyes must answer now!' (110), 'Death that struck when I was most confiding' (117), and 'I'm happiest when most away' (189).
5 This classic distinction was made by Ferdinand de Saussure (Course of General Linguistics, 1916).
6 For example in 'I die but when the grave shall press' (19) and 'I'll not weep that thou art going to leave me' (73).
7 Iambic meter — alternation within the metrical unit of beat and offbeat — is predominant in the poems selected in spite of some occasional trochaic inversions, i.e. lines starting with a beat-offbeat. 'Far away is the land of rest' (12) and 'Death, that struck when I was most confiding' (117) have a trochaic meter while 'High waving heather 'neath stormy blasts bending' (2) is the only poem written in spondees (metrical unit alternating a beat and two offbeats).
8 Stevie Davies, Emily Brontë, p. 13.
9 Out of the sample of ten poems I have considered, seven are written in four-line stanzas.
11 Metrically there are two stanzas alternating first a pentameter and trimeter and then a tetrameter and a trimeter and two stanzas with a regular alternation of tetrameter and trimeter. The first two lines in the first two stanzas (the pentametral lines) are syntactically similar; there is also a second anaphora 'And' in the third lines, but the actual structure of these sentences differs.
12 Robin Grove seems to bear out these remarks when he observes that in 'High waving heather' (2) 'dactylic rhythm betrays [...] a changing from state to state in endless cyclic return' while 'Aye, there it is! It waketh tonight' (85) is 'distinct from those poems which picture only cyclic alternations of power' because 'this lyric does suggest both the fixed condition of the "prisoned soul", and some sort of escape' (The Art of Emily Brontë, pp. 51–52). In fact, cycles can represent a form of dynamic escape or dissolution if they are conceived as endless repetitive processes of transformation, in which case they contain both an element of continuity — fixity, — and an element of change — evolution, dynamism.
19 I owe some of the following insights to Franco Marucci, 'Struttura, testo e inter textualità' in Wuthering Heights di Emily Brontë. La Notizia Corrente (1974), pp. 271–311. This is a very interesting close analysis of the dichotomies which fill the structure of Wuthering Heights.
20 Marucci, 'Struttura, testo e inter textualità', p. 284.