
RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Distortion and Restoration of Human Nature: The Imagery of 'Windows' and 'books' in *Wuthering Heights*

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ABSTRACT

Emily Brontë, the renowned British novelist, employs rich imagery in *Wuthering Heights*, imbuing everyday objects with profound symbolic significance to illuminate and deepen character development. This study focuses on two pivotal symbolic images in the novel 'windows' and 'books' and examines their roles in exploring the themes of human nature's distortion and restoration. The 'window of the soul' symbolizes internal conflict, reflecting the tension between primal instincts and civilization, while the 'window of reality' represents societal oppression and emotional isolation. These images are crucial for understanding the fractured realities of characters like Heathcliff and Catherine. Meanwhile, books symbolize the transmission of knowledge, emotion, and reconciliation, serving as a bridge for characters to transcend hatred and rediscover their authentic selves. By comparing the experiences of two generations, the study reveals how love triumphs over hatred, ultimately restoring suppressed and distorted human nature. Through her masterful use of imagery, Brontë not only enriches the narrative's thematic depth but also interrogates the complexities of freedom, societal constraints, and love's transformative power within the human condition.

KEYWORDS

Wuthering Heights; Human nature; Image; Windows; Books

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1. Introduction

Emily Brontë's only novel, *Wuthering Heights* "has been consistently and seriously misread" (Hafley, 1958) in terms of its purpose since its publication in November 1847. Distinctly set apart from mainstream 19th-century novels, it significantly differs from the romantic works typical of the Victorian era. While it partly inherits the Gothic tradition of depicting terror, violence, and the supernatural, it transcends the Gothic genre by a considerable margin. It was not until half a century later that the multitude of values embedded within the novel began to be recognized. Numerous scholars have examined its theme in dedicated essays. For instance, the Belgian critic Maurice Maeterlinck viewed it as a romantic work portraying a thrilling love story. The British writer and critic W. Somerset Maugham interpreted it as an outburst of the author's repressed desires. British critic David Cecil believed the theme primarily explained Emily's mystical philosophy. A. C. Swinburne saw it as a symbol of Brontë's pursuit and cry for freedom, while Arnold Kettle argued that the novel artistically reflects the spiritual oppression, tension, and conflicts of individuals in 19th-century capitalist society (Lan, 2000).

A close reading of *Wuthering Heights* reveals the unique role of imagery in enhancing the expression of its thematic depth. According to Ezra Pound (1913)'s definition, "An 'Image' is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time". Imagery is closely tied to human experiences and memories; its recurrence serves as a recollection of certain life events, reflecting an ongoing, complex psychological process. By tracing the life trajectories of the characters in *Wuthering Heights*, we can uncover the rich meanings of its 'window' and 'book' imagery, thereby exploring the theme of 'the distortion and restoration of human nature' that permeates the novel.

2. Literature Review

Wuthering Heights, often regarded as the 'Sphinx of literary history', has drawn the sustained attention of countless scholars, whose research can be broadly divided into two categories. The first category focuses on genre criticism, which traces the developmental trajectory of Western literary theory. This approach spans traditional criticism, New Criticism, structuralism, and deconstruction, reflecting a progression from macro-level analyses to micro-level examinations, and culminating in an emphasis on the polysemy of the text. Traditional criticism prioritizes the social context and authorial intent, investigating the philosophical and social dimensions embedded within the narrative. However, it often neglects the intrinsic features of the text itself. New Criticism and structuralism shift the focus toward textual analysis, emphasizing language and structure, thereby addressing the shortcomings of traditional criticism. Nevertheless, these approaches tend to disregard the broader political and cultural contexts. Deconstruction, on the other hand, challenges notions of textual unity and foregrounds its inherent fragmentation and indeterminacy. For instance, Miller argues that the thematic core of *Wuthering Heights* is fundamentally ambiguous. While deconstruction offers innovative perspectives, it risks veering toward nihilism by entirely rejecting textual coherence and wholeness.

The second category of research adopts a more localized lens, employing specific theoretical frameworks to analyze the novel. Studies grounded in Freudian psychoanalysis, for example, interpret Catherine's journey as a psychological progression through the stages of the id, ego, and superego. Archetypal criticism, by contrast, views Heathcliff's revenge narrative as emblematic of humanity's quest for the restoration of innate humanity. Feminist criticism, drawing on the sociocultural context of the Victorian era, explores Catherine's marriage as a reflection of female consciousness awakening and a reversal of gendered power dynamics. This approach interprets her choice to marry Edgar as both a rebellion against her subordinate status at *Wuthering Heights* and a means of achieving dominance within the institution of marriage. Such studies frequently integrate analyses of Emily Brontë's personal background, offering additional support to their interpretations.

As Ghent (1952) suggests, *Wuthering Heights* "exists for the mind as a tension between two kinds of reality, a restrictive reality of civilized manners and codes, and the anonymous unregenerate reality of natural energies". The study of imagery is a crucial aspect of interpreting *Wuthering Heights*, with a particular emphasis on the analysis of natural imagery. Storms and calm weather symbolize the opposition between nature and society. Storms, representing the wildness and passion of nature, are closely associated with *Wuthering Heights* and Heathcliff, while calm weather symbolizes societal norms, reflected in Thrushcross Grange and the Linton family. Additionally, the moors serve as a space of freedom, symbolizing the possibility of escaping societal constraints and deepening the bond between Catherine and Heathcliff (Hanger, 2014). Through the use of natural imagery, the novel not only highlights the conflict between nature and society but also explores the core tension between individual freedom and societal restrictions. Similarly, the window imagery is perceived as a boundary or meeting point between interior and exterior spaces, symbolizing the tension between humans, nature, and society.

For instance, Iftimie (2020), focusing on the boundaries between inner and outer spaces, considers windows as "the elements that act as meeting points or interfaces between various inner and outer spaces". This analysis highlights the symbolic significance of windows in the narrative. Similarly, Fiducia, drawing on psychoanalytic and feminist perspectives, explores the window as a medium of gaze and examines the power dynamics it implies. Gillman, on the other hand, approaches the subject from the broader structure of nature and freedom, emphasizing the central role of natural imagery in the text. These studies, through different perspectives, interpret natural and window imagery, thereby deepening the understanding of the novel's thematic complexities.

3. Methodology

This study focuses on the symbolic significance of the 'window' and 'book' imagery in *Wuthering Heights* and their role in uncovering the central themes of the novel. By combining close textual analysis with theoretical interpretation, the research seeks to elucidate how these images function in portraying the distortion and restoration of human nature. First, the analysis of the 'window' imagery categorizes it into two types: the 'window of the soul' and the 'window of reality'. Using narrative and psychological theories, the study examines Heathcliff's psychological development, exploring how the 'window of the soul' reflects the inner conflict between primal instincts and the constraints of civilization. Additionally, through the symbolic portrayal of glass windows, the research investigates how the 'window of reality' represents the repression and isolation imposed by societal norms on the characters' emotional relationships.

Second, the study integrates semiotic and cultural theories to analyze how the 'book' imagery serves as a bridge for the restoration of human nature within the novel. Particular attention is given to the interactions between the younger generation of characters, Catherine and Hareton, examining how books symbolize the transmission of knowledge and emotions, acting as a mediator in their journey from animosity to reconciliation. By contrasting the choices made by two generations, the study highlights the novel's depiction of love triumphing over hatred and the restoration of humanity from a state of repression.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 The Distortion of Human Nature: Window Imagery

In Emily's view, humans and nature are both living entities, coexisting and thriving in the same way. Thus, both Emily and Charlotte frequently invoke the power of nature. They both feel the need for a more powerful symbol to convey the vast and slumbering passions in human nature than words or actions alone. "Their storms, their moors, their lovely spaces of summer weather are not ornaments applied to decorate a dull page or display the writer's powers of observation—they carry on the emotion and light up the meaning of the book" (Woolf, 1925, p.64-65). In *Wuthering Heights*, window imagery recurs throughout the novel, playing a pivotal role in advancing the plot. It serves as a key entry point for understanding the novel's central themes and marks a dividing line between emotional realms.

In *Wuthering Heights*, windows are divided into two categories: the 'window of the soul' and the 'window of reality'. Through the 'window of the soul,' Emily Brontë conceptualizes a deeper, symbolic window—the description of Heathcliff's eyes—revealing the protagonist's inner turmoil: a conflict between primal instincts and human civilization. The 'window of reality,' symbolized by the transparent yet obstructive glass, underscores the origins of the novel's intricate relationships of love and hatred.

4.1.1 The Distorted Reality: The Window of the Soul

Heathcliff is introduced through the narration of the tenant, Lockwood. His black eyes, glinting with the embers of hatred and rebellion, peer suspiciously from beneath his brows. His upbringing, marked by discrimination, inhumane treatment, and numerous hardships, leaves irreparable damage on his psyche. Perpetually separated by an invisible societal window, Heathcliff stands alone outside, unable to integrate into the larger family as a marginalized figure. As an orphan picked up by old Earnshaw from the streets of Liverpool, Heathcliff faces discrimination and rejection from the outset. He is described as dirty and dark-skinned, with no parents, homeland, or even a clear racial identity.

Hindley views Heathcliff as a threat, as old Earnshaw's affection for Heathcliff far exceeds his love for his own son. This jealousy drives Hindley to frequently beat and mistreat him. After Earnshaw's death, when Hindley takes over the household, he reduces Heathcliff to the status of a servant and tenant farmer, often whipping him brutally. The housekeeper of *Wuthering Heights*, Nelly Dean, remarks that Hindley's "treatment of the latter was enough to make a fiend of a saint" (Brontë, 1847, p.83).

Heathcliff grows up in a highly peculiar environment. While his master, Mr. Earnshaw, shows him great affection and becomes furious whenever anyone bullies him, this protection proves fragile due to Mr. Earnshaw's frequent absences and advancing age. Living in such an abnormal situation, Heathcliff's pride and inferiority develop side by side. Similarly, the residents of Thrushcross Grange, neighboring *Wuthering Heights*, look down on him. They openly judge him as a bad child, deeming him entirely unsuitable for a respectable family. These acts of discrimination and abuse leave an indelible mark on Heathcliff's soul, one that could never be erased: "that couple of black fiends, so deeply buried, who never open their windows boldly, but lurk glinting under them, like devil's spies" (p.71). When Nelly says to him, "and change the fiends to confident, innocent angels, suspecting and doubting nothing", he flatly rejects it, saying, "That won't help me to them" (p.71). The rejection he faces from others not only forges his stubborn and resilient character but also cultivates his relentless desire for revenge.

Catherine's love serves to emphasize the depth of Heathcliff's affection, while her betrayal intensifies his desire for rebellion. His world was not always shrouded in darkness, there was a time when he had Catherine's love. As childhood companions, Heathcliff and Catherine, the daughter of the manor's owner, grew up together, running freely across the heather-covered, thorny moors. To others, the windswept wilderness and rugged cliffs might have seemed inhospitable and joyless, unfit for human habitation, let alone happiness. But for them, it was a paradise - a refuge from tyranny, a sanctuary where their hearts and souls intertwined in complete freedom. However, Catherine ultimately succumbed to societal prejudice, choosing to marry Linton because of Heathcliff's low social standing. This decision shattered Heathcliff. The happiness that once seemed vividly within his grasp was lost, leaving him perpetually excluded, as though he were living outside the window of life. For him, happiness became unattainable, and his once bright black eyes transformed into windows to a tormented hell, clouded with grief and despair. Silently, resentfully, and consumed by hatred, he left *Wuthering Heights*, the place that had raised him into adulthood.

Catherine's betrayal dealt a devastating blow to Heathcliff, igniting flames within the 'window to hell' of his soul that consumed everything around him. After a mysterious disappearance, Heathcliff returned to *Wuthering Heights*, transformed into a refined and dignified gentleman. His meticulously planned revenge began to unfold. Exploiting Hindley's gambling addiction, he spent countless nights playing cards with him, eventually seizing control of all *Wuthering Heights'* property. Heathcliff manipulated the naive affections of Isabella Linton, luring her into marriage to claim a portion of Thrushcross Grange's estate. He then coerced his dying son into marrying Catherine's daughter, ultimately driving his son to death through relentless abuse. Additionally, he ensured that Edgar Linton was unable to amend his will before passing, thereby securing full ownership of Thrushcross Grange.

Heathcliff's vengeance did not end there. Ruthlessly, he extended his wrath to the next generation of those who had wronged him. He showed no mercy to Cathy, Linton's daughter, even though she was also the child of his beloved Catherine. Heathcliff stripped her of her freedom, turning the once gentle and lovable young woman into someone arrogant, cold, and resentful. Furthermore, he mirrored Hindley's treatment of him by subjecting Hareton to the same cruelty, depriving him of an education and reducing him to an illiterate savage. Through these brutal methods, Heathcliff exacted his revenge on two families and across two generations.

Emily skillfully employs the 'window to the soul' as a powerful metaphor to illustrate the spiritual oppression and internal conflicts endured by individuals in 19th-century capitalist society. She vividly portrays the extreme harshness of life's cruel elements, emphasizing that such behaviors and passions do not stem from an inherently destructive nature. Instead, they become destructive only when forced to deviate from their natural trajectory (Cecil, 1983). The yearning for genuine happiness, Emily argues, is an intrinsic and reasonable aspect of human nature. However, society's suppression of this longing distorts these natural desires, forcing them to manifest in unhealthy ways. The result is a transformation of the healthy and positive facets of human nature into pathological and negative traits, ultimately inflicting harm upon both individuals and society at large.

4.1.2 The Cause of Distortion: The Window of Reality

The tragic love between Heathcliff and Catherine ultimately led to Heathcliff's complete emotional breakdown. Why did their seemingly unshakable love fail to blossom into the purple heather on the moors? The answer lies in Emily Brontë's symbolic use of the 'window of reality'. The large glass window of Thrushcross Grange emerges as a significant image. Although the glass is merely a thin, transparent sheet, it represents an insurmountable barrier, separating the interior from the exterior, humanity from the 'other', and dividing the two worlds of human existence entirely.

Despite Hindley depriving Heathcliff of an education and forcing him into hard labor, Heathcliff and Catherine still shared close companionship before their fateful visit to Thrushcross Grange. They were children of the storm, longing to grow wild and free, like savages unbound by societal norms. Their greatest joy was running across the moors at dawn and spending entire days immersed in its untamed beauty.

One evening, after being expelled from the house for a minor misdeed, Catherine and Heathcliff wandered toward Thrushcross Grange, drawn by the flickering lights of the estate. Peering through the sitting-room window, they saw "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" (p. 60). They were astonished to behold this paradise-like world of upper-class refinement, so utterly different from the windswept, rugged Gothic-style house they knew. With the appearance of the glass window, the harmony they once shared began to fracture, symbolizing the growing divide between their worlds.

However, Catherine and Heathcliff were treated differently by the inhabitants behind the grand windows due to their differing social statuses. Catherine was welcomed as a guest and invited into the parlor, while Heathcliff, regarded as an unwanted outcast, was deemed unworthy of entering a respectable household and left standing outside the door. As he stood observing from outside the window, he resolved, "if Catherine had wished to return, I intended shattering their great glass panes to a million of fragments, unless they let her out" (p. 63). Catherine, however, was reluctant to leave. Deeply captivated by the elegance and comfort of Thrushcross Grange, she readily accepted the warm hospitality of Edgar's family and ended up staying for five weeks. By the time she returned to Wuthering Heights, she had transformed into a polished and graceful young lady: "instead of a wild, hatless little savage jumping into the house, and rushing to squeeze us all breathless, there lighted from a handsome black pony a very dignified person, with brown ringlets falling from the cover of a feathered beaver" (p. 65).

Through the shattered windows of Wuthering Heights, Thrushcross Grange emerges as a tranquil and harmonious material world, laden with temptations. It offers everything that satisfies Catherine's vanity and encapsulates all the privileges society can provide. The large glass window, therefore, symbolizes separation. It not only transforms Catherine from a wild child into a polished and graceful lady but also alienates her from the childhood bond she once shared with Heathcliff. When considering Linton's proposal, Catherine reflected, "It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now" (p. 102). She further justified her choice by thinking, "And Linton? He will be rich, and I shall like to be the greatest woman of the neighbourhood, and I shall be proud of having such a husband" (p. 99). Ultimately, Catherine abandoned Heathcliff, with whom she had formed a deep connection on the moors, and married Edgar Linton, the young master of Thrushcross Grange. This decision marked the onset of Catherine's tragedy - a narrative that extends far beyond a simple love story. It reflects the profound conflict between an individual who grew up amidst the untamed, heather-covered moors and one who surrenders to the comforts of refined, carpeted luxury. This conflict unfolds not only between characters but also within the innermost recesses of the human heart.

Four years later, when Heathcliff returned, Catherine found herself attempting to lead a dual life. On one hand, she sought to uncover the true essence of humanity through her connection with Heathcliff. On the other, she endeavored to reconcile this profound awareness - forming the foundation of her inner world-with the demands and expectations of societal norms. This internal conflict is poignantly expressed in Catherine's thought-provoking monologue: "My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods: time will change it, I'm well aware, as winter changes the trees. My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath: a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, I AM Heathcliff! He's always, always in my mind: not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself, but as my own being" (p.104). These words are not merely a defense of her choices; rather, they reveal Catherine's profound self-awareness and the existential significance of her dilemma. However, how can one who has betrayed their own essence still uphold the true meaning of their existence? The forces embodied by Heathcliff and Linton are fundamentally irreconcilable. With Heathcliff by her side, Catherine could no longer avoid confronting the devastating truth: her union with Linton was a profound betrayal of her authentic self. Alienation is not experienced as the positive affirmation of one's own strength and inherent richness, but rather as a powerless 'object' dependent on forces external to oneself (Lu & Cheng, 1986) Faced with the realization that she had lost the value of her existence, Catherine could only move tragically toward death. She came to understand that the world she once rejected had, paradoxically, given meaning to her life. The open window symbolizes the collapse of the barrier separating her from that world. Even Nelly could sense the eternal peace Catherine found in her final moments: "She lies with a sweet smile on her face; and her latest ideas wandered back to pleasant early days" (p.212).

Heathcliff also embraced death as his ultimate destination. When his conscience overcame violence and his thirst for vengeance was exhausted, he lost all attachment to life and the will to survive. Simultaneously, his profound longing for love resurfaced with greater intensity-he yearned to reunite with Catherine and soothe her restless spirit. Consumed by this deep yearning for Catherine and an overwhelming desire for death, Heathcliff grew remarkably calm. Gradually, he relinquished his basic physical needs, such as eating and drinking, and on a snowy night, he departed from the chaotic and sorrowful world that had caused him so much suffering. At the moment of his death, his "window swinging open, and the rain driving straight in"(p.424), symbolizing the removal of all barriers.

Through death, Heathcliff achieved union with nature. The invisible window that had separated Heathcliff and Catherine in life became an insurmountable obstacle, preventing their reunion. Only in death could they transcend this boundary and find eternal peace and happiness.

4.2 The Return of Human Nature: Book Imagery

If the story concluded here, it would be difficult to fully grasp the novel's purpose or understand why Emily chose to write such an oppressive and suffocating tale. Would it simply be a revenge story? A tragic love story? If so, it would lose much of the enigmatic charm and captivating power that define *Wuthering Heights*. Emily Brontë was "a greater poet than Charlotte," and "there is love, but it is not the love of men and women"(Woolf, p.65). Emily's brilliance lies in her ability to transform an ordinary and seemingly mundane subject into something extraordinary through her remarkable creativity. The recurring imagery of 'books' in the novel reveals that even within the hate-dominated world she constructs, the seed of 'love' endures under the harshest conditions. This 'love' ultimately dismantles the world of hatred, replacing it with a paradise where birds sing, flowers bloom, and humanity begins to heal.

Emily's belief in love is not confined to the novel's conclusion. Even during the harshest winter, when *Wuthering Heights* was buried under snow, a faint glimmer of humanity persisted, albeit briefly. Humanity, though subjected to the most severe trials, was not entirely extinguished. This resilience is symbolized by the row of thin, crooked trees on the moors. Despite being relentlessly battered by the fierce north wind, these trees retained their essence. No matter how savagely the wind ravaged them, it could not strip away their inherent nature. They still yearned for sunlight, stretching their bent forms toward the light as if pleading for its warmth. In this way, the recurring imagery of 'books' in the novel serves as a metaphorical bridge to reach that sunlight, symbolizing hope and the restoration of humanity.

The relationship between young Catherine and her cousin Hareton begins poorly. They are vastly different in terms of education and personality. Catherine is intelligent and lively, having received a good education, whereas Hareton is coarse, arrogant, and ignorant to the point of not even recognizing his own name. When Catherine deliberately quizzes him about the inscription on the manor's front door, he can only stammer and scratch his head in confusion, unaware that it bears the name of his ancestors: Hareton Earnshaw. Despite this, Hareton secretly admires Catherine, viewing her as an angel-beautiful and unattainable. Her angelic presence disrupts Hareton's crude world, awakening him from his state of ignorance and dullness. For the first time, he becomes aware of his many shortcomings and feels a deep sense of pain over his illiteracy.

This realization sparks a desire for self-improvement-he begins secretly learning to read. Hareton dreams of one day being able to read the same 'books' Catherine has read, yearning to quietly approach her intellectual world. As a result, he steals Catherine's

books one by one and studies them in secret. After much turmoil, Catherine and Hareton eventually reconcile. The symbol of their newfound friendship is a beautiful 'book' tied with a ribbon—a gift that ultimately bridges the gap between them. As McKibben (1960) notes, "She places her love not within a self-created environment, the glorification of the will, but within human society, the modification of the will; and Hareton in his turn endows her existence with purpose. The bond which joins them is imaged by the book". The two of them ultimately overcome the numerous barriers set by "hatred," conquer their prejudices, and learn to respect each other.

The love that sprouted with great difficulty in the frostbitten soil, once rooted, became an enduring treasure of the spirit, never to be taken away from the hearts of these two young individuals. Young Catherine, a passionate yet firm mentor, wholeheartedly helps Hareton reopen his once-closed heart, instilling in him the same intellectual yearning she herself possesses. Once touched by genuine affection, Hareton, a child of inherently simple nature, strives to prove himself a diligent and hardworking student. Enriched by the nourishment of knowledge, he becomes radiant—his manners refined and his thoughts increasingly wise.

The transformative potential of 'books' is boundless, serving as a bridge that unites Catherine and Hareton. As McKibben (1960) eloquently observes, "from these books comes a world of eternal summer where the individual is reconciled to himself and to reality. Catherine and Hareton both attain their true natures and resolve their animosities to others".

Emily connects pure love with the most profound and beautiful emotions of humanity, portraying love as an inspiring force that drives individuals toward self-improvement. She views 'love' and 'hate' as two opposing yet interdependent elements within a unified whole. As Virginia Woolf aptly remarks, "Emily was inspired by some more general conception. The impulse which urged her to create was not her own suffering or her own injuries. She looked out upon a world cleft into gigantic disorder and felt within her the power to unite it in a book" (p.65). The novel's conclusion encapsulates a profound belief: 'love' symbolizes the highest virtue of human nature, whereas "hatred" signifies its distorted and fallen state. Though hatred may attempt to dominate the world with its apparent strength, its ultimate victory is unattainable. Instead, love prevails, reviving humanity from a frozen and desensitized condition, and restoring suppressed and distorted human nature to its original purity. The message Emily conveys is unmistakable: humanity, no matter how dark the times, is always imbued with hope.

5. Conclusion

Wuthering Heights, a masterpiece by Emily Brontë, stands out not only for its thematic depth but also for its innovative narrative techniques and profound engagement with universal human struggles. Brontë's use of 'windows' and 'books' as central symbols is not merely a stylistic choice but a means to delve into the enduring conflicts between love and hatred, nature and civilization, freedom and social constraints. Through these symbols, she offers a timeless exploration of human emotions, emphasizing how distorted desires can transform into paths of redemption. Beyond its narrative brilliance, the novel reflects a bold fusion of romanticism and realism, challenging the conventions of Victorian literature and leaving an indelible mark on the literary canon.

However, this study has its limitations. The scope of analysis was restricted to two symbolic images, 'windows' and 'books,' which, although central, do not exhaust the wealth of imagery in the novel. Other recurring symbols, such as the moors and storms, remain unexplored here but hold significant potential to further illuminate the themes of freedom, isolation, and human resilience. Additionally, the study focused primarily on textual analysis and theoretical interpretation, leaving room for empirical or cross-disciplinary approaches that could enrich understanding, such as reader-response studies or comparative analyses across cultures.

Future research could build upon these findings by examining how Brontë's use of other natural and architectural imagery contributes to the novel's themes of identity and human nature. Studies could also explore the reception of these symbols in different cultural contexts or investigate their influence on later literary works. Additionally, practical applications of this research might include integrating Brontë's symbolic imagery into pedagogical strategies, offering students innovative ways to engage with complex literary texts.

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