<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>著者</th>
<th>東北大学大学院文学研究科 英文学研究室</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>集合</td>
<td>東北大学大学院文学研究科 英文学研究室</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>集合</td>
<td>集合</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>集合</td>
<td>集合</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>集合</td>
<td>集合</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>集合</td>
<td>集合</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Synopses

“In Mediis Rebus”: The Ending of Wuthering Heights

YOSHIAKI SHIRAI

Page 1

Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë has allowed us diverse interpretations, most of which, however, have been centred on Catherine and Heathcliff without paying much attention to Cathy (daughter of the first Catherine) and Hareton in spite of the fact that the novel consists of the two generations. Of course there have been such studies as to connect the two generations: One critic writes that Cathy and Hareton accomplish the unaccomplished love of the first generation, while the other tries to explain that the author gives us two quite opposite types of love. These readings are apt to tone down the passionate love between Catherine and Heathcliff. In order to eliminate the defects of these readings, some critics have tried to read the work as a revenge novel in which Heathcliff who fails to win Catherine’s love revenges himself on Cathy and Hareton, but this reading does not give us a satisfactory answer to the question why Cathy and Hareton are going to get married and live happily. The key to the right reading of the masterpiece lies in grasping its narratological structure.

Wuthering Heights is “in mediis rebus” (in the midst of things) in four aspects. Firstly, Cathy, being sandwiched between the Earnshaws and the Lintons, acts as a vertical axis over which the two family structures overlap each other. Wuthering Heights is axially symmetrical in structure. Cathy belongs to both families, which means she is “in mediis rebus”. In other words, she is ubiquitous. Her ubiquity extends to her mother Catherine who, born as a daughter of the Earnshaw family, becomes the member of the Lintons after her marriage to Edgar Linton. She belongs to both families, comes and goes between them and never settles in either of them.

Secondly, a peculiar, telescopic narrative or meta-narrative appears in Wuthering Heights: Lockwood narrates to the reader what he has heard from Nelly, who narrates to him her own experiences and other stories she has heard from Isabella and other characters. Isabella’s narrative appears just in the
middle of the whole story of *Wuthering Heights* and acts as a vertical axis over which the former part of the narrative of *Wuthering Heights* and its latter part overlap each other. Lockwood shows himself opportunistically to remind the reader that he, not Nelly, is the main narrator. He is “in mediis rebus” as a narrator, and is ubiquitous in this narrative structure.

Thirdly, Heathcliff is “in medii rebus”, as he is “between names”, “between families”, “between in and out”, “between a slave and an emperor”, “between god’s and devil’s son”, between “a strong man and a weak man”, “between a brother and a lover”, “between nature and culture” and importantly between “life and death”. He lives between past and present. He is “in mediis rebus” and ubiquitous.

Lastly, *Wuthering Heights* is constructed by three layers of parts; the first about the love between Catherine and Heathcliff, the middle about the disappearance and reappearance of Heathcliff and the death of Catherine, the last about the love between Cathy and Hareton. The window scene in the first part where Catherine implores Lockwood to let her in and that in the third part where Heathcliff is found dead with his one hand grazed by the lattice overlap each other, which indicates that *Wuthering Heights* is axially symmetrical because the middle part acts as a vertical axis.

The present paper shows that there exists the condition of being “in mediis rebus” or ubiquity in *Wuthering Heights* and that there is no ending in the story. The love of Catherine and Heathcliff is “in mediis rebus”. There exists only a dynamic cyclical recurrence.
Graham Swift’s (1949–) novel, *Last Orders* (1996), is the story of three men aged about 70 traveling from London to the Kentish coast in order to fulfill Jack Dodds’s (their common friend) last wish, namely, to scatter his ashes at Margate Pier. They travel in a fancy car provided by Jack’s foster child, Vince Dodds, who is in his forties and who drives them to the coast. This journey gives them a precious chance to become temporarily free from their everyday, repetitive lives, thus explaining their happiness at the beginning of the trip. However, during this journey, they need to come to terms with their friend’s death in order to resume their ordinary lives.

Their initial happy mood is disrupted every time they remember their mission, that they are carrying their friend’s ashes. They carry a cardboard box that holds the plastic jar with Jack’s ashes inside it. Interestingly enough, their identification of the cardboard box fluctuates between two extremes. On the one hand, they often personify the box as if Jack were the fifth passenger while on the other they puzzlingly consider it as being nothing more than an ordinary box.

An analysis of the friends’ monologues and their conversations leads the reader to see that their perception of the box as a thing causes them to think about their own deaths. Throughout the journey, for instance, Ray Johnson, the protagonist, is constantly aware of the box’s presence. He is worried about who should carry it and how long one person has to carry the box; no rule has been established among the friends. His concern seems to prevent him from personifying the box as Jack and most of the segments in his narratives are based on the recognition of his own death. For instance, at some point in the journey he narrates the scene where his relationship with his wife went fatally wrong, as if to express his last apology to her. Takashi Nibuya, an esthetic analyst, writes that things around us actually exist without us; things do not need our stories. He contends that when we realize that things will survive us we get a glimpse of a world in which we do not exist. This contention might help us to understand why Ray’s identification of the box as a thing makes him think about his own
Swift mentions some edifices that might help human beings assure themselves of existence after death; for instance, the naval memorial in Chatham, the pyramids in Egypt and Canterbury Cathedral. To Ray it appears that the Cathedral’s offer of doctrine might give some people some hope of eternal existence. However, he cannot believe in such doctrine on the occasion of his friend’s death because he strongly feels a huge gap between the Cathedral’s presence and Jack’s presence while he was still alive.

Ray thinks it ideal for the friends to share equally holding the box or the bag in which Vince has placed the box mid-journey. Ray’s ideal, however, is not easily achieved until they reach the Cathedral, where Lenny Tate, the friend who has not previously held the bag, finally assumes it. Now that all the four hold the bag relay style, Ray can regard the container of ashes as Jack without thinking much about it from a material perspective. He can prepare himself for scattering the ashes before they reach their final destination. If the container were not considered to hold Jack, there would be no sense in their scattering the ashes.

The purpose of scattering Jack’s ashes seems to relieve him entirely from the material world, allowing him to inhabit only the minds of the bereaved. What Ray glimpses at Margate is old, derelict in contrast to the Cathedral’s threatening presence. Ray’s recognition that things are also destined to disappear not only facilitates the act of scattering Jack’s ashes because it weakens their threatening material presence; it also gives him a sense of the present disconnected with the future. Ray’s narrative of the Margate Pier scene does not include any details about what happened to the men after the scattering act. He seems to be emphasizing the idea that the ritual gives him a sense of the “now.”

This paper analyzes, throughout the friends’ journey, a trajectory of change in Ray’s perception of the container with ashes. The journey concludes successfully not only because, by the time the friends actually scatter Jack’s ashes, Ray is completely able to personify the ashes as Jack, but also because he has come to terms with his friend’s death by experiencing
and narrating the event of scattering the ashes as that which gives him a sense of the "now," the feeling that with it he can cheat death.