

# A Comparative Study of the Causes of the Tragic Love in A Dream of Red Mansions and Wuthering Heights

**Xiaobin Tang**

*Tianjin College, University of Science and Technology Beijing, Tianjin 301830, China*

**Abstract:** *A Dream of Red Mansions is universally believed to be the most capacious work classical Chinese literature has ever presented, depicting vividly a good number of maidens that bear almost every possible charm traditional Chinese culture has ever endowed its earlier maidens with. Among all the maidens, Lin Dai-yu is most widely loved and sympathized with, whose ever shedding tears and steadfast love undoubtedly have accounted to a good degree for their love's tragic feelings. Wuthering Heights comes as a cursing surprise to Victorian English literature, and turns to be gradually appreciated and still cherished and relished even today. The love story between Catherine and Heathcliff it has dedicated the whole of itself to can be a very good counterpart to that between Dai-yu and Bao-yu, which is as well founded upon long-term companionship from childhood and loyal oaths, only that no happy matrimony has been gained as wished and expected. This paper means no ambitious novelty, but to draw comparison between the two works and love stories, to trace every clue possibly accessible within the works themselves, and to compare and analyze those picked clues from angles of social and family background as well as personal character. Through such comparison and analysis, the paper attempts to present a clearer perception into the similarities and differences of the two love stories and the negative roles the social and family background and the character of the heroes and heroines have played for the tragic endings.*

**Keywords:** *A Dream of Red Mansions, Wuthering Heights, Tragic Love, Social and Family Background, Personal Character*

## 1. Introduction

That all lovers shall gain their happy matrimony has long been our wish. Yet as is quite against it, the failure to accomplish the wish has never been of rare eventuality. Consequently, as there are always poets poetizing happy love stories, so sad love stories have ever made an inexhaustable source for poets' inspiration, among which *A Dream of Red Mansions* and *Wuthering Heights* are two widely recognized achievements.

In *A Dream of Red Mansions*, the heroine, Lin Daiyu, after suffering her mother's death, is sent by her father to her grandma's house, where she is well received and meets the hero, Jia Baoyu. Quite similarly, the hero in *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff is picked up on a street and received into the heroine's house. The day they meet each other, between the cousins Baoyu and Daiyu, close and unusual friendship is established and that to be sustained, while from the heroine Catherine, only "grinning and spitting" (p.50) [1] is what Heathcliff receives. But he is not long winning over her, and they become close friends that would suffer no separation. Gradually the friendship of the two little pairs develops into love even quite before they are themselves aware, when another girl intrudes into Baoyu and Daiyu's harmonious life and another boy into Catherine and Heathcliff's. With the intrusion upsetting quarrels begin. The hero Baoyu's confession of love in his lover's face assures her and ends their quarrels, while the heroine Catherine's confession of love in her maidservant's face only ends with her lover's disappearance. Both of the intruders succeed in breaking the union of the lovers. The heroes and heroines fail to gain their happy matrimony as expected. The hero Baoyu marries while the heroine is dying; the heroine Catherine marries while the hero Heathcliff has vanished. Marrying someone that he is not in love with, Baoyu finally decides to be a monk, deserting his wife; Catherine dies in pain and anxiety, leaving her lover behind to suffer his loneliness and "relish" his life-long revenge.

Why cannot they carry on with their love and marry? Why is such deep and passionate love coming to such sad and tragic endings? Do the similar sad love endings share as well similar causes? As can be seen,

not only have the authors of the two novels endowed their novels with quite similar tragic love stories, but critics have been attributing their tragic endings to quite similar causes in light of social and family background and personal dispositions. Yet little study work has been done to compare and discuss their similarities and differences, and that would be the reason why this paper is written.

Attention both from Chinese and English scholars has been widely and consistently drawn to the two novels and to the tragic lovers therein, so a good many of different explanations for their tragic endings have been brought forward by generations of scholars. Yet usually it is the case that the explanations brought forward are for one of the two novels only and few attempts have been contributed to the work of putting both of them together and make a detailed comparison. And that exactly would be the pure attempt and purpose of this paper in which questions would be posed and discussed such as how the social and family background, their character and disposition, their adventure of love pursuit and their psychological alterations have contributed to the tragedy, what similarities they might happen to share, and what differences they would inevitably be bestowed upon by their different cultural backgrounds.

This paper is to draw parallels between those explanations that have been proposed upon *A Dream of Red Mansions* and those upon *Wuthering Heights*, and meanwhile to attempt to bring forward some more explanations that have not been proposed yet. Parallels are mainly to be drawn from such aspects as their social and family background, the heroes' and heroines' character and personalities and their adventure of love pursuit. Through such detailed and parallel comparison the paper is expected to show the similarities and differences of those causes proposed.

This paper consists of four parts. The first part opens the paper with summing and reviewing what relevant explanations have been arrived at and what more there is left for further discussion and study. In the second part a brief review of the love stories would be made to put down what's to be talked about as well as to acquaint possible readers with what is to be talked about. The third part is the main body of the paper, carrying out detailed analysis and comparison of the causes of the tragic love, from the aspects of family and social background, love adventure and psychological alterations, and character of the heroes and heroines. The last part is to conclude the whole paper.

## **2. Review of the Love Stories in *A Dream of Red Mansions* and *Wuthering Heights***

How shall a novel be defined? No definite definition can possibly be given. Yet generally, the two books in question here, are most of the time labeled as novels, and the authors novelists. But the two novels are so different, we shall doubt if it is appropriate to call them both novels. The first one, whatever can be possibly found in the then society, you can as well expect to find there. It is more an encyclopedia than a novel. While the second one is dealing with stories of a quite limited number of people, a much narrower one, which might deserve the label far better. Nonetheless, despite their disparity of capacity, they have something in common: the tragic love stories of the heroes and heroines.

The two love stories, upon which all the following discussions, analyses and comparisons are based, shall be first delivered here in a most detailed and concise form. Now that discussions and analyses shall be immediately offered in the next chapter, discussions and analyses shall be avoided in this chapter as much as possible, and a narration as objective and factual as possible shall be its pure aim. Yet some comparisons shall be occasionally inserted though they shall be retold respectively, so that a clear parallel shall be drawn between them and a clear comparison for their similarities and differences shall be produced.

### **2.1. *A Dream of Red Mansions***

The hero is the incarnation of the attendant Shen Ying in the Palace of Red Jade, who, before his incarnation into the world of men, waters with sweet dew every day the Vermilion Pearl Plant growing beside the Stone of Three Incarnations on the bank of the Sacred River in the west. Later the plant casts off its plant nature and takes the form of a girl, who, upon hearing that the attendant is going down to the world of men, decides to go with him and repay his kindness with all the tears she can shed in her lifetime. So she is born to be the heroine.

With such a fairy tale the author begins his story which can be well expected to be a sad one that the heroine is predestined to shed her tears for the hero all her lifelong stay in the world of men. The best warrantable reason that a girl shall shed sad tears for a boy, is beyond suspicion that the girl is in passionate and steadfast love with the boy and yet the love fails to bring her a good marriage and a happy

life. And such is the very lot designed for them from the very beginning, as is predicted to the hero in his dream in the fifth chapter.

The heroine, Lin Dai-yu, is the only offspring her old parents have, and therefore is well loved and educated as how a son would have been loved and educated. When she is five years old, a tutor for her is invited. A year later, her mother falls ill and passes away, and her grandmother sends for her. Leaving her father, Dai-yu goes to her grandma's with her tutor's company, where she is to meet the hero, the one for whom she is predestined to shed tears for her lifetime in the world of men.

They have been seeing each other long before they come down to the world of men, so the first time they see each other in her grandma's house both of them think they have met each other before. The hero, Bao-yu, learning that she's got no courtesy name, gives her one as Pin-pin; learning that she has got no jade like his, flings his jade on the ground frenzily and rouses a stir. Yet like old friends meeting again after a long separation, they soon become good friends, sharing supper on the same table and bed in the same apartment.

Then another maiden, Xue Bao-chai intrudes into their peaceful life. She appears better than Dai-yu at dealing with interpersonal relationships and wins the hearts of the elders of the house, the sisters, as well as the maids. This rouses in Dai-yu fits of jealousy. Yet what's even more provoking for Dai-yu is that Bao-chai has a gold locket, which bears the rumor that she is bound to marry one with a jade. And as far as Dai-yu's scope goes, Bao-yu is the only one with a jade.

So with Bao-chai's appearance, stirs and quarrels between Bao-yu and Dai-yu are simultaneously introduced, and that is exactly what causes the heroine to shed much of her sad tears. Bao-yu has been making all oaths and efforts to assure Dai-yu of his love, but then from his elder sister, an Imperial Consort, Bao-yu receives the same presents for the Dragon-Boat Festival with Bao-chai, but different ones from Dai-yu.

Yet the heroine has got more reasons to shed her tears than all the above-mentioned. A third maiden, Shi Xiang-yun comes, who wears a gold unicorn. Bao-yu happens to get a similar one from a Taoist, cherishes it as a great treasure and can't wait to show it to her. This is too much for Dai-yu. A fierce quarrel follows and for a second time, the jade is flung upon the ground. It is also this unicorn that forces out Bao-yu's love avowal in Dai-yu's face, which settles her hanging heart and renders the two lovers in a fruitless and torturing wait until the heroine sheds her last drop of tear and the hero marries Bao-chai. Not long after his marriage, Bao-yu deserts his wife and becomes a monk.

## 2.2. *Wuthering Heights*

*A Dream of Red Mansions* begins its love story with a fairy tale and a fate prediction, and *Wuthering Heights* begins its story with a ghost and by exposing the ending of the story to its readers. The hero, Heathcliff, appears as the host of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, a cold, sullen, and jealous black man, visited by Mr. Lockwood, his tenant. The Heroine, Catherine, makes her first appearance in the guest's dream as a waif ghost, who, having lost her way and wandered on the moor for twenty years, has come back home, and asks to be let in through the window, snow and wind howling outside. Learning of this, Heathcliff, bursting into passion of tears, cries to the open lattice to implore Catherine, his "heart's darling" (p.38)[2], to come in once more. Confused and curious, the guest Mr. Lockwood, after returning to Thrushcross Grange, learning that Nelly the maidservant knows all about the story, requests to be informed of it all.

Nobody knows where the hero is born, or who are his parents. As a starving and houseless waif, the hero is picked up by Mr. Earnshaw, the heroine Catherine's father, on a street of Liverpool, and brought back home at Wuthering Heights. Yet except the master, none of the family shows any hospitality towards the little black intruder: for Mrs. Earnshaw, it is that they have got their own bairns (the heroine Cathy and her elder brother Hindley) to feed and fend for; and for the heroine Catherine and her brother Hindley, it could be of little wonder that they should show no better hospitality now that the little intruder has deprived them of their long expected presents which their father has promised them before his visit to Liverpool.

The hero is given the name Heathcliff, and he's not more than two or three days winning over the little heroine to his side, while from Hindley the only thing he receives is hatred and ill-treatment. Lucky for him, Mr. Earnshaw takes to him enormously, even pets him "far above Cathy, who was too mischievous and wayward for a favorite" (p.51) [3].

The little hero and heroine soon become too thick and intimate to bear separation. About two years after Heathcliff's introduction into the house, Mrs. Earnshaw finishes her laboring journey in this world. Then Hindley is sent to college under his curate's advice. It is not long, about another three years after, Mr. Earnshaw follows his wife and ends his custody for his two bairns, and especially for Heathcliff. And then Hindley is about twenty years of age, back home from college with a wife, Cathy about twelve, and Heathcliff about thirteen.

Hardly has Hindley become the young master of Wuthering Heights when Heathcliff is driven from their company to the servants, deprived of the instructions of the curate, and ordered to labor out of doors as hard as any other lad on the farm. But the heroine is drawing only nearer to the hero, and they enjoy each other's company so that they often run away to the moors and stay there all day long, disregarding whatever punishment is to come from the tyrannical master.

Yet one of their wanderings brings Cathy away to Thrushcross Grange, where she stays five weeks and comes back a dignified and graceful lady, bringing with her another lad, Edgar Linton. Yet Heathcliff is only being dirtier and blacker, which Cathy exclaims out in the presence of the crow. She might mean no mockery, but her friend feels hurt and insulted. He runs away sullenly and comes back to Nelly when the family are departed for the church the next morning, asking to be made decent. Yet he is denied the opportunity to sit among them for lunch by the master, and gives vent to his bad temper by flinging hot apple saucer upon the intruder, his rival Edgar Linton, for which immediate punishment is inflicted by the master. He is flogged and locked up. The rest of the day for Cathy is nothing but torture, for what has been inflicted upon her old lad, and secretly she steals away and sneaks into the chamber where Heathcliff is locked up. In case they might be discovered, Nelly brings them out and gives some food to Heathcliff who has been fasting since the night before.

The summer when Cathy is 13 witnesses the decease of her sister-in-law, and that leaves Hindley the master a son Hareton and a life of reckless dissipation.

About some three years, Cathy's affection has remained in the hold of Heathcliff unalterably, which is unfortunately only one side of the coin. Intentionally or not, she has won young Edgar, heart and soul. And she is adopting a double character, in the Lintons' company playing a lady and retaining her unruly nature when she is with Heathcliff.

Then another visit of Edgar Linton brings an end to the suspense among the three. He proposes to Cathy, and she accepts his proposal. Her confidence to Nelly that it will degrade her to marry Heathcliff happens to be overheard by Heathcliff. So he vanishes into air, and has not been heard of all the following three years. Then the heroine, at the age of 18, marries Edgar Linton.

It is not long after Cathy gets married that Heathcliff, now a fully-grown, rich and well-educated gentleman, comes back. His frequent visits to Thrushcross Grange bring great stir into the peaceful and happy family: Cathy too delighted to think of anything else, her sister-in-law, Edgar's sister Isabella too infatuated with him to be convinced of anything, and Linton too jealous for his wife's sake and too furious and worried for his sister's to suffer any of his rival's visits more. Cathy is taken irrecoverably ill for the conflicts between her husband and lover, and with Heathcliff Isabella elopes. Heathcliff's coming back for the second time forces an earlier end to the heroine's doomed fate, and downright suffering and torture and endless missing for his lost lover is what has been left for him for the rest of his life.

Either in the eyes of the people living with them, or in the expectation of the generations of readers, no separation for them should be allowed or thought of, and they are destined to live happily together, and they should do so. Yet that is not what the people living with them have witnessed nor the ending all the generations of readers have been given to read. Isn't that what we label as love, or shouldn't to a happy marriage what we label as love naturally lead? That we regard the love story sad and tragic is only that the love fails to end with a happy marriage, for which we ourselves shall often lament and have our tears shed. However, we shall not stop there. We must ask: why? Why hasn't such steadfast and passionate love led to a happy marriage? Why haven't the lovers as expected lived happily together? Hundreds of scholars have tried and been trying to find the answer, and a variety of causes has been offered. But for the two with different cultural, social, and historical backgrounds, could there be possibly any similarities, and how do they differ from each other? With an attempt to offer some clues, we shall move onto the next section.

### 3. Comparative Analysis of the Causes of the Tragic Love

#### 3.1. Social and Family Background

History is almost a must for those who want to read and comprehend literary works, and when a piece of literary work is being studied, history can be well worth consulting for background clues. Likewise, literature is generally viewed as the production of its specific era, and is therefore said to be the best record and proof any historian can possibly resort to for the then social, cultural and political situations and customs. And within this paper, all those clues for social and family background shall be traced within the literary works themselves instead of consulting related historical record.

This paper shall first try to trace some clues about the customs of love and marriage of the society *A Dream of Red Mansions* is set in. Xiao-hong and Jia Yun shall serve as an example and a close look shall be taken into what they have done to express their love to each other.

Jia Yun is coming to see Bao-yu who happens to be out. Impatiently waiting in Bao-yu's house, he hears a sweet voice outside and looking out, catches sight of a maid who at the sight of him shrinks back hurriedly. "On learning that Jia Yun belonged to her master's clan, the maid didn't avoid him as she had before but shot him one or two penetrating glance" (p.350)[4]. Here we can see clearly that it is their practice that a maid should avoid direct encounter with any man that is a stranger, as can be further proved that the doctor sent for for Qing-wen's sake "could only feast his eyes on the Garden – not a single young woman did he see on his way out"(p.171) [5]. Nothing of the sort yet has ever been mentioned or suggested at all in the society of *Wuthering Heights*.

And after the encounter with Jia Yun, Xiao-hong finds her handkerchief lost. What is noteworthy is that it is no one but Jia Yun, the lad she has just met, that she dreams to have found her handkerchief for her, which indicates that she has evidently fallen in love with the lad she has just met and dreamed. From the fact that the maid Jia-hui, when she has been given some coins, gives them to Xiao-hong and asks her to look after them for her, it is not indiscreet for us to conclude that she must be on very intimate terms with Xiao-hong. Yet when Jia-hui finds Xiao-hong depressed for days and talks quite a while with her to console her, Xiao-hong releases nothing of what is going on within her heart. Instead, when it comes to a similar situation in *Wuthering Heights*, Cathy confides all the love for Heathcliff and Linton that is within her heart to Nelly her maidservant, and Isabella has made little efforts to conceal her passion for Heathcliff, whom she has met no more than a few times.

When Jia Yun and Xiao-hong meet again, though they both cherish some admiration, or rather adoration for each other, yet to show this, Jia Yun "casts a sidelong glance at Xiao-hong, who stole a glance at him too under cover of talking to Zhui-er. When their eyes met she blushed and turned abruptly away" (p.375) [6]. Zhui-er is the maid who's to see Jia Yun more, so Xiao-hong, furtively hoping that her handkerchief has been found by Jia Yun, asks Zhui-er several times whether she has seen her handkerchief. Being told of this, Jia Yun is delighted, takes a handkerchief of his own, instead of the one he has found, and asks Zhui-er to give it to Xiao-hong. When Xiao-hong is asked whether the handkerchief is hers she says "Of course it's mine" (p.390) [7], offers another one of hers to be delivered to Jia Yun to thank him and requests Zhui-er to swear to tell it to nobody else, for which Zhui-er has got to swear by her life. When they realize what they have said might have been overheard by someone else, Xiao-hong gets extremely upset.

Here we can see in their time, how difficult it is for lovers to exchange gifts and to express their love and how dangerous it is for them to do so. And this has been better indicated by Si-qi and her cousin Pan You-an's affair: when they are dating in the garden, Yuan-yang happens to pass by; the lovers think that Yuan-yang must have caught them out, drop to their knees begging: "Our lives are in your hands, sister. Do, please, let us off" (p.539) [8]! Although Yuan-yang's promise that she will not tell anyone has been given, Pan You-an skedaddles and is nowhere to be found while Si-qi is heavily taken ill to her bed. Later, when their love letter is found out by Xi-feng during the research, Si-qi is kept an eye upon for fear that she might kill herself that night and the evidence is taken back to Xi-feng's place to be used for further questioning. So such is the society the hero and heroine live in that any secret dating before marriage might lead to scandals and shames and even death.

Without knowing all these, never shall we fully see how much courage it must have taken for Bao-yu to bare his heart to Dai-yu and how hard it must have been for him to summon up so much courage. And if it were not that Dai-yu's health has been undermined, her heart tortured, and her body pined, he would

quite probably never find occasion and warrant enough that shall merit such boldness. The listener of the avowal Xi-ren's response can well testify to this.

A look at Bao-chai's cousin Xue Ke and Lady Xing's niece Xing Xiu-yan's betrothal shall be given to see how two get betrothed then.

When it occurs to Aunt Xue that Xue Ke and Xiu-yan might make a perfect match, she broaches the subject to Xi-feng, and Xi-feng broaches the proposal to the Lady Dowager who is only too willing to play the go-between to propose to Lady Xing for consent, and then Lady Xing informs her brother and his wife, Xiu-yan's parents, who are also only too happy with the match. So the match is made and the two younglings are betrothed, even quite before they themselves are informed of the betrothal.

Clearly we can see that for a girl or boy, be her/his parents alive, her/his marriage is not the business of herself/himself, but their parents are in total charge and have the final say. And they take it for granted that the match is necessarily the best for their children, never taking any of the children's opinions into consideration. With the parents' consent, a go-between shall be asked to propose to win the consent of the other's parents, and then the match is made.

So there lies the obstacle for Dai-yu that is almost insurmountable. She has got no parents that shall know her heart and invite a go-between. Dai-yu herself has only seen the opportunity once, and that is from Aunt Xue. Having just professed to be Dai-yu's foster-mother, she teases: "Since the old lady is so fond of Bao-yu and he's such a handsome boy, she'll never agree to a wife from outside for him. Then why not engage him to Dai-yu? Wouldn't that please everyone" (p.286) [9]? Hearing this, Zi-juan, Dai-yu's maid, gets very excited and urges her to propose it to the mistress. Yet it would but turn out an empty promise and never shall the idea be proposed by the kind foster-mother who has got her own daughter's match to worry about.

However, since she has come to her grandma after her mother's decease, the Lady Dowager must be the one to bother about Dai-yu's marriage. Let's first cite what the Lady Dowager says after the commotion caused by Bao-yu and Dai-yu in the 29th chapter: "Not a day goes by without something to worry about. How true the proverb is that 'Enemies and lovers are destined to meet.' Once I've closed my eyes and breathed my last, they can quarrel and storm as much as they like. What the eye doesn't see the heart doesn't grieve for. But I'm not at my last gasp just yet" (p.438) [10].

So it is obvious that the old lady knows only too well the "enemies and lovers" of the two and Bao-yu's reaction to Zi-juan's joking words that Dai-yu's going back home must have dissolved all of her doubt about it, be she still in any doubt. But Dai-yu's health is so worsening off day by day while she is still of such a young age. Will her health stay with her till the day she is old enough to be betrothed? Or who knows it will not just happen as the old lady has prophesied, as can be further proved by what Zi-juan says to Dai-yu when she comes back from Bao-yu's house: "I was thinking of you. I've felt worried for you all these years with no father, mother or brothers to care for you. The important thing is to settle the main affair of your life in good time, while the old lady's still clear-headed and healthy. The proverb says, 'The healthiest old people last as long as a chilly spring or a hot autumn.' If anything should happen to the old lady your marriage might be delayed, or else not turn out in the way you hoped" (p.278) [11].

Even though Dai-yu's health shall stay with her and allow her to marry and the Lady Dowager can sustain "clear-headed and healthy" till Dai-yu is old enough to marry, yet the old lady is not the only one that is to decide the betrothal of the two. Bao-yu's parents also have to be taken into consideration, especially his mother Lady Wang. Now that she is Aunt Xue's sister, it is just natural that she will bear great partiality for Bao-chai if she is to choose one from the two for her daughter-in-law. Besides, Lady Wang, reminded of Qing-wen by Mrs. Wang's ill words of the maid, depicts Qing-wen to be "with a willowy waist, sloping shoulders and eyes and eyebrows quite like Tai-yu's" (p.579)[12], and then sneers at the little maid as a beauty really like an ailing Xi Shi. Coincidentally or intentionally, the author in the eye of Bao-yu, describes Dai-yu as more delicate than Xi Shi and by the mouth of Xing-er calls her ailing Xi Shi. Lady Wang dislikes the sort of girl like Qing-wen, and Dai-yu is unquestionably of the sort. Another important one worth mentioning here is Bao-yu's elder sister Yuan-chun, an imperial concubine, who must have even more say. For a Dragon-Boat Festive, it is Bao-chai, rather than Dai-yu she has given the same presents with Bao-yu, by which she has clearly and unquestionably hinted her will who will be her choice.

Yet for the young lovers, passionate love as they can cherish for each other, they are never entitled to release that to their parents or to interfere with their parents' arrangement for their marriage. Therefore, although Bao-yu loves Dai-yu only, and determines in his heart that she is the girl he is to marry, yet to

nobody that is to decide his marriage he is entitled to tell that directly. When receiving the same gifts with Bao-chai instead of Dai-yu from his elder sister Yuan-chun, who is considered to have much say, Bao-yu is not to stand up against his sister, nor to refuse the gifts or whatever the like, but what he can do is nothing but to console Dai-yu by assuring her that in his heart she is the only that counts.

And the only choice left for them is only to wait, however hopeless and torturing that may be, until the day those that have the right to decide their marriage decide who they are to marry. Can they do as Isabella does, that when her brother prohibits her to marry Heathcliff, she can elope with him? Or will the society allow them to make a living after they elope? Or can they manage to survive in their society by themselves?

Comparatively speaking, for the tragic love the society they live in is much less to blame than that Bao-yu and Dai-yu lives in, judging from the facts that Hindley can come back home from college with a wife even without informing his father beforehand, Edgar is free to propose to Catherine who likewise can decide whom to marry of her own will, and Isabella can elope with Heathcliff as she pleases when she cannot obtain her brother's approval who is then the only one alive that is possibly to have any say in the matter.

However, it is not to say that the society they live in has nothing that has acted the role of obstacles on their way to a happy union. Cathy has been to Thrushcross Grange twice before accepting Linton's proposal. The first time she comes back home, her manners are much improved; "The mistress visited her often in the interval, and commenced her plan of reform by trying to raise her self-respect with fine clothes and flattery, which she took readily; so that, 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..." (pp. 69-70)[13]. And "Hindley lifted her from her horse, exclaiming delightedly, "Why, Cathy, you are quite a beauty! I should scarcely have known you; you look like a lady now" (p.70) [14]. So from these words quoted it is obvious that the mistress, her sister-in-law's influence upon her manners and dignity and the concept of a lady of their society is drawing Cathy away from nature and from Heathcliff. The second time when she comes back she has become even saucier and more passionate, and haughtier. Every time she comes back from there, she is only more haughtier and fashionable, which is to blind her and draw her further away from her true love and nearer towards materialistic fancy which is to blind her and delude her into the snare of a matrimony she is to repent of.

And there still lie some more obstacles for them from outside, most of which shall be attributed to Catherine's brother Hindley. After the death of his father, he is the master of Wuthering Heights, and very soon Heathcliff shall receive the bitter result of his hatred he has been ever bearing for Heathcliff; yet that is not all the motivation Hindley has got to degrade and persecute Heathcliff, and he wishes that his sister can marry Edgar Linton so that she can bring honor to the family. Therefore, "He drove him from their company to the servants, deprived him of the instructions of the curate, and insisted that he should labor out of doors instead; compelling him to do so as hard as any other lad on the farm" (p.62)[15]. Though the degradation is not separating Catherine away from him directly, yet its effect is not long to be proved. Being driven to the company of the servants, he has got lots of house and farm work to do which is definitely to reduce his time that he used to spend with his love. And it is exactly these laboring work he is to be bothered with that is making him dirtier and lower. Being deprived of the instructions of the curate will undoubtedly add to his savageness and lowness, which directly leads to the conflict when Cathy comes back after her five-week linger in Thrushcross Grange and indirectly leads to Cathy's declaration that it would degrade her to marry Heathcliff.

The analysis above has shown clearly how their society, their family background and their family members have been playing the role of obstacles and leashes against their wish to obtain a happy union and maintain a lifelong love. If the society Bao-yu and Dai-yu live in directly forbids free love and marriage by destroying it when found out, the society of Heathcliff and Cathy forbids it indirectly by teaching Cathy the idea that it might degrade her to marry Heathcliff. And if it can be concluded that what Cathy's family members have done has directly degraded Heathcliff and successfully distinguished out Cathy and gradually separated the passionate lovers, it should not be injudicious to say that what Bao-yu's might have done, if they have done so, have relentlessly isolated and fatally deserted Dai-yu at the last moment. Yet that has not accounted for all why their love fails to achieve a happy ending.

### **3.2. Characters of the Heroes and Heroines**

As discussed above, what their family members have done has contributed a lot to the adventure of their love, but contrariwise, what they have done must have to a certain degree influenced their family

members as to what to do with them and their love. In this chapter, their personal characters shall be the focus of the discussion which might bear some clues for the failure of their love. Taking all this into consideration, this section shall discuss and analyze the characters of some main figures that have contributed to the result of their love, Bao-chai, Dai-yu and Bao-yu of *A Dream of Red Mansions*, Linton, Heathcliff and Catherine of *Wuthering Heights*.

About Dai-yu and Bao-yu's love, there have been three possible endings popularly accepted that have been as fiercely argued: the first possible ending is that great disaster falls upon the Jia family, and Bao-yu and some other family members get banished from home. Dai-yu pines away and finally dies waiting for and worrying about him day and night before he comes back. The second is after the Lady Dowager dies, scandals spread by some of the family members about her and Bao-yu go beyond her toleration, which drives her to death. And the third goes that those who have the final say in Bao-yu's marriage have chosen Bao-chai instead of Dai-yu for Bao-yu's wife, which unquestionably forces the poor maiden to her last drop of tear.

For each of the possible tragic endings some clues of causes shall be traced within the first eighty chapters of the novel and according to these abductions offer some deductive analyses.

For the first possible ending. When Bao-yu is banished from the house and no news of him is ever heard, Dai-yu worries about him, waits for him to come back, pines away, and finally sheds her last drop of tear before Bao-yu comes back. Why is it possible that Dai-yu dies like this, only from worries about Bao-yu? To know this, it is necessary to take a close look at Dai-yu's disposition.

Dai-yu is dearly cherished and doted upon by her parents when her mother's death to her befalls when she's only six years old, and immediately she is delivered by her father to her grandmother's house, where to the little delicate girl must have been out of question a most difficult transference as is by herself sobbed out "Each year for three hundred and sixty days the cutting wind and biting frost contend" (p.399)[16], and further expounded during her intimate talk with Bao-chai who has just won her confidence: "After all, I'm not a daughter of the house, I'm here because I've nowhere else to go. They resent me enough as it is" (p.70) [17], "But I have nothing. Yet all I eat, wear and use, down to the least blade of grass or sheet of paper, is the same as their own girls get. Naturally those petty-minded people dislike me" (p.70) [18]. In spite of all those affection lavished upon her by the Lady Dowager, such is the very truest situation and deepest feelings the heroine is in, as is carefully traced and exposed by the author, something aching she is now and then reminded of all through her stay there: when she comes to see Bao-yu, seeing Bao-chai just admitted, she knocks twice on the door, only to be refused by Qing-wen's cross words: "I don't care who you are, Master Bao's given orders that no one's to be admitted" (p.386)[19], she reflected that she was after all an outsider here and tears ran down her cheeks; when she sees so many people, old or young, crowd into Bao-yu's house after he is beaten by his father in the 35th chapter, she nodded and tears ran down her cheeks thinking that her parents were both dead; and when Bao-chai rests her head against her mother's breast in Dai-yu's face in chapter 57, tears came into Dai-yu's eyes. All the abductions above tells that the heroine is highly self-dignified and extremely sensitive, and whatever little coincidences or happenings that might or might not arouse sentimental associations would come into her eye, pierce into her heart and appropriate trickling of her precious limited tears. This, as well as her difficult situation and her delicacy, would definitely account a lot for her sentimentality, and Bao-yu's banishment being too overwhelming for her.

Furthermore, according to what she says when first received into the Rong Mansion: she has been taking medicine ever since a baby and according to the monk's crazy talk, if she wants to live quietly and healthily she has got to be kept from hearing weeping and from seeing any relatives apart from her parents. Yet she has been exposed to the acquaintance of so many relatives other than her parents, and among them a man she is predestined to shed her tears for. In order to see how concerned she is with Bao-yu, we take here two examples. When Bao-yu is flogged, after every one has been to see him and left, Dai-yu comes with her eyes swollen and her face bathed in tears. Hearing from Xi-ren that Bao-yu's more dead than alive because of what Zi-juan has said to him, so Dai-yu reacts: "With a cry she threw up all the medicine she had just taken, and was racked by such dry coughing that her stomach burned and it seemed her lungs would burst. Red in the face, her hair tousled, her eyes distended, limp in every limb, she choked for breath and could not lift up her head" (pp.271-272) [20]. And when Zi-juan makes haste to massage her back while she lies gasping on her pillow, she cries and pushes Zi-juan away: "You'd far better fetch a rope to strangle me" (p.272) [21]. Such is her reaction when Bao-yu is near in her eye, so it is little wonder what shall happen to her when Bao-yu is out of sight and she knows nothing about what is happening or will happen to him.



For the second possible ending, first take a look at some comments about Dai-yu concerning her impression on others. In chapter eight, when Bao-yu insists on drinking two more cups of wine and gets hindered by Nanny Li, Dai-yu says something with a snort, which earns her a comment from Nanny Li: that every word Miss Lin says cuts sharper than a knife. In chapter 27, when doubting that they might have been overheard by Dai-yu, Xiao-hong gives a comment on Dai-yu's disposition as narrow-minded disposed to make cutting remarks. In chapter 32, when Xiang-yun's expostulation about examinations to Bao-yu gets retorted, Xi-ren tells her: "... thank goodness it was Miss Bao-chai and not Miss Lin – she'd have made a fearful scene, weeping and sobbing..." (p.469)[22] From these examples and many others, it can be concluded that Dai-yu is thought of by almost everybody around the house as tactless, narrow-minded and irritable. As is known to all, Xi-ren has been treated as Bao-yu's concubine, who even happens to hear Bao-yu's avowal to Dai-yu and mentions it indirectly to Lady Wang. And there are such people as Aunt Zhao who out of mere jealousy, has ever been seeking opportunity to find fault with Bao-yu and Dai-yu. So it is very probable that without her grandma's patronage, Dai-yu might be driven into a very difficult and dangerous situation and that could even be death.

For the third, Bao-chai, Dai-yu's potential rival, is probable to defeat Dai-yu in the pursuit. There is a comparison between Bao-chai and Dai-yu when Bao-chai has not been long in the Rong Mansion: "Bao-chai's generous, tactful and accommodating ways contrasted strongly with Dai-yu's stand-offish reserve and won the hearts of her subordinates, so that nearly all the maids liked to talk to her" (p.67)[23]. This can be proved by Xi-ren's praise for her when consoling Xiang-yun when retorted by Bao-yu that she's really good natured and tolerant. Xi-ren even takes it for granted that she will be Bao-yu's concubine. And from Ping-er's and Xiang-ling's undergoing as concubines, we can conclude that every concubine is like a maid for her husband's wife, so the concubine wishes for a tolerant and good-natured wife only as earnestly as, if not more than the husband wishes for such a wife. It could happen very probably that Xi-ren shall say something in favor of Bao-chai now and then to Lady Wang which might consequently influence the lady's choice for a daughter-in-law.

In chapter 32, when Jin-chuan, one of Lady Wang's maid, gets drowned, Bao-chai hurries to condole with her. Lady Wang tells her about making clothes for Jin-chuan, "but according to Xi-feng the only ones ready are two new sets of your cousin's Lin's birthday. She's such a sensitive child, so delicate too, that wouldn't she think it unlucky to have the clothes made for her birthday made over to a dead girl?" (p.475) [24]? Yet hearing these, Bao-chai offers her clothes and says she is not that superstitious. In chapter 35, when Bao-yu, angling for compliments for Dai-yu, says that "If you merely liked good talkers, the only ones of these girls you could fancy would be Xi-feng and Dai-yu" (p.507)[25]; notwithstanding, his grandma, after having just been flattered by Bao-chai as even superior to Xi-feng no matter how clever Xi-feng is, praises Bao-chai instead as none of her four girls can stand comparison with Bao-chai, and his mother consolidates the praise even further. Yet the utterance of such flattering words has never been made from Dai-yu's mouth for any of those who are to decide her marriage. In chapter 34, after Bao-yu's just beaten by Jia Zheng, lying on bed, Bao-chai comes as the first one to see him and brings for him some drug, of which Lady Wang is soon informed by Xi-ren; while Dai-yu comes secretly when nobody is around, her eyes swollen and her face bathed in tears, and when Xi-feng is announced, she hurries off in case Cousin Xi-feng might catch her sobbing with swollen eyes and make fun of it. So it can be well seen that Bao-chai has been doing much more than winning over those maids, but also appealing on purpose to those who have considerable say in Bao-yu's marriage, while nothing of the sort have Dai-yu ever thought of or cared about, and what Dai-yu has been doing is but to love and cherish Bao-yu as much as, or even more than she does herself. Therefore it shall be of little wonder if those that have the right to decide whom to choose for Bao-yu's wife choose Bao-chai rather than Dai-yu.

If it is judicious to say that Dai-yu's parentless and homeless situation which is ever and again stinging her heart has rendered her her sentimental disposition, it should be as well justified to conclude that it is her monopolizing and cherishing love for Bao-yu that is consuming her sentimental tears. Such is the very case for all love that a hearty and devoted love shall as well be required as hearty and devoted. Dai-yu has devoted all her heart to Bao-yu and in turn hopes inevitably that Bao-yu should spare no space in his heart for anybody else. Although he swears that there's no one else every time she sheds tears for that, Bao-yu seems so disposed now and then to get distracted by fancies for other maidens, or at least so in Dai-yu's eyes, like his being fascinated by Bao-chai like a silly goose, his cherishing the gold unicorn when informed that Xiang-yun has a unicorn too, and so on. So it could be little wonder that jealousy should be aroused within Dai-yu's heart and tears trickle down her cheeks.

Compared with Dai-yu, Heathcliff should only have more reasons to be endowed with a sentimental disposition and to shed sad tears: Dai-yu has been lucky enough to bask in her parents affection in her girlhood, while for Heathcliff nobody knows where he was born, or who were his parents; Dai-yu has

been hotly expected and warmly received into her grandma's house where affection has been lavished upon her, while for Heathcliff, a castaway found on a street, is rather unexpected and extremely hostilely received into a totally alien house as an interloper; if Dai-yu's identity as an outsider takes a disposition of sentimentality to be felt and reminded of, Heathcliff's takes as little effort to be felt and reminded of as burning fire can be easily felt with a curious finger. What the little black gipsy brat has earned for himself, besides the Christian name and surname Heathcliff, are but such pretty curses like vagabond, beggarly interloper, imp of Satan from his young master and enemy Hindley, and a wicked, naughty swearing boy and a vulgar ruffian from his rival Linton's family, as well as atrocious persecution which is enough to make a fiend of a saint. However, Heathcliff is anything but a wailing lad. Rather, in spite of all his proud and haughty disposition nurtured by Mr. Earnshaw's partial affection, notwithstanding all those persecutions and maltreatments, he remains ever sullen, patient and as uncomplaining as a lamb, cherishing his determined yet lurking plan of revenge entirely within himself. Or rather, it is for his love Catherine that he is enduring all these quietly and uncomplainingly. So the moment Catherine's confession that it would degrade her to marry Heathcliff now escapes into his ears, the whole motive that he stays at Wuthering Heights to quietly tolerate those intolerable oppressions and insulting prejudices is thrown away and trampled by his own love, or at least so in his interpretation; he runs away and comes back a hypocrite and a deliberate deceiver three years later, only to learn that his love has become his rival's wife. But why does Catherine think it degrading for her to marry Heathcliff when they love each other so? And why has she accepted Linton? To find the answer, this paper shall try to dig as deep as possible into Catherine's heart and trace all the way through its alterations.

The little heroine is mischievous and wayward from her very early ages, and in Nelly's narrative, "put all of us past our patience fifty times and oftener a day" and "we had not a minute's security that she wouldn't be in mischief; yet it is no more than a few days since Heathcliff is introduced into the house they become very thick friends and remains "constant companions ever after. They both promised fair to grow up as rude as savages and one of their chief amusements is to run away to the moors in the morning and remain there all day. Six quiet years lapses and then comes her five-week linger at Thrushcross Grange, during which period her sister-in-law, Mrs. Earnshaw, commenced her plan of reform by trying to raise her self-respect with fine clothes and flattery, and that she takes readily. She comes back a very dignified person, manners much improved, anything but that rough-headed counterpart of Heathcliff, and cannot hinder herself from laughing at Heathcliff and exclaiming to him that he looks odd and dirty. Five weeks might be termed a long period, but comparing with six years, it is anything but that. Yet it is the very five weeks that has turned a six-year-long companion an "odd" and "dirty" laughingstock; and it is the very five weeks that is to introduce to the hero a rival.

Gradually, between the new friend and the old, between her vain ambition and her inner heart, between her fancy and her true love, the little heroine, about twelve years of age then, falls into a dilemma, ever to be tortuously torn.

Yet the lass will not have the dilemma hung long, and the choice is soon made. "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" (p.110) [26]. Such is the very confession of Catherine in Nelly's face, yet the choice she makes is such as to make herself very unhappy.

Catherine confesses her heart as a secret to Nelly, overheard by Heathcliff who vanishes before the confession comes to its point, leaving herself irretrievably misunderstood; Dai-yu leaves quite before Bao-yu's confession comes to its point too, only that she is well aware of its content. The two confessions are of quite similar contents, yet have led to such dissimilar and even contrary results, one leading to the dissolution of misunderstanding and complete understanding, the other only to the deepening of misunderstanding.

She is "unhappy" because she has made a choice that is against her heart and her soul. Her words might quite possibly have been meant by the author to be a ominous prediction of her marriage with Linton. When they first sneak into Thrushcross Grange and Catherine's bitten by their dog and obliged to stay, Heathcliff comes back telling Nelly that they should have thought themselves in heaven, which indicates that they have viewed Thrushcross Grange, or Thrushcross Grange has deeply impressed them, as heaven. And in Catherine's confession to Nelly, she says: "If I'm in heaven, Nelly, I should be extremely miserable" (p.107) [27], "heaven didn't seem to be my home, and I broke my heart with weeping to come back to earth...on the top of Wuthering Heights...I've no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven" (p.107) [28]. Nelly answers because she is not fit to go there. This conversation can be well applicable to the case of her will to be married into Linton's house and a prediction of how she will be after she is married into the heavenly house, as Heathcliff says: "she thinks

you are all spies for her husband. Oh, I've no doubt she's in hell among you! I guess by her silence, as much as anything, what she feels" (p.205) [29]; a further abduction shall be what the ghost Cathy has said, at the very beginning of the novel, "I've been a waif for twenty years" (p.35) [30], which means she has been a waif who has lost herself since 1781, when she is 16 years old, and that is exactly the time when Heathcliff runs away from home and vanishes.

As Heathcliff scolds her: "Because misery and degradation, and death, and nothing that God or Satan could inflict would have parted us, you, of your own will, did it. I have not broken your heart—you have broken it; and in breaking it, you have broken mine" (p.216) [31]. Catherine's love for Heathcliff is quite the same deep and passionate with Baoyu's for Daiyu; only that she is concerned with wealth and social status, even more than she cares for her true love, her soul and her heart, while for Baoyu, the concern with wealth and social status is only too remote out of his head, and with his true love his mind, his soul and his heart have been quite brimmed. So Cathy is distracted and got deviated from herself, her heart and soul and her true love while Bao-yu keeps the hold of that to the degree where, once the hold gets broken, he will lose himself and everything and his heart and soul will become empty for whom the only suitable place will be a temple or somewhere like that. So it is little wonder that Cathy after marrying Linton shall find herself not herself and her heart and soul not within her body. When Heathcliff comes back to her, in her husband eye and to his annoyance, Catherine seized Heathcliff's hands again, and laughed like one beside herself; actually, it is more probable that Cathy's behaviors after seeing Heathcliff is more the natural ones of her, while those before, as Nelly puts it as Cathy behaved infinitely better than she dared to expect, are not of her natural self; she is not herself at all after Heathcliff vanishes and her marriage, so in Linton's eye that she "laughed like one beside herself", the "one beside herself" should be her real and genuine self while that Cathy as his wife is not that natural Cathy Cathy should have been; that is to say, the Cathy Linton is acquainted with is not the genuine and natural Cathy herself, and the natural and genuine one has been lost with Heathcliff's disappearance and returned with Heathcliff's return, as has been clearly shown by Bao-yu's being more dead than alive after being told Dai-yu is leaving him and his coming back to himself at the sight of Zi-juan again. And it is not until her last days that she comes to be aware of all this: "But, supposing at twelve years old I had been wrenched from the Heights, and every early association, and all in all, as Heathcliff was at that time, and been converted at a stroke into Mrs.Linton, the lady of Thrushcross Grange, and the wife of a stranger: an exile, and outcast, thenceforth, from what had been my world. You may fancy a glimpse of the abyss where I groveled" (p.168)[32]; "I wish I were a girl again, half savage and half hardy, and free; and laughing at injuries, not maddening under them! Why am I so changed" (p.168)[33]; the whole last seven years of her life grew a blank, the last seven years is just counted from the year she and Heathcliff broke into Thrushcross Grange and came into acquaintance with Edgar Linton.

Some words of hers shall be taken as a special example to examine an important aspect of her character. The night after Heathcliff is back, Catherine is so happy and excited she cannot rest and wants someone to keep company in her happiness; she turns to Linton and gets disappointed, then she comes to Nelly grumbling: "Edgar is sulky, because I'm glad of a thing that does not interest him: he refuses to open his mouth, except to utter pettish, silly speeches. . .He always contrives to be sick at the least cross! I gave a few sentences of commendation to Heathcliff, and he, either for a headache or a pang of envy, began to cry: so I got up and left him. From these grumbling words against her husband it can well be concluded that she has been two indulgent, willful, wayward and selfish to put herself in her husband's shoes, or even Heathcliff's, and never shall she figure out why her husband should be so "sulky and envious" at Heathcliff's advent, or where could have lied the wrongness and injudiciousness of her will to marry Linton so that she can help Heathcliff to place him out of my brother's power; or she's been exposed to so few cares that it could just have happened no other way but that the duties of marriage should be quite beyond her carefree and naïve mind. This willfulness and selfishness of the heroine can be further shown after her dispute with both her lover and her husband. She must have thought her world has been crushed and shattered because the two men she believes in the entire control of her hand actually turn out to be not, Heathcliff wrangling with her and refusing to obey her request of letting Isabella alone, Linton misunderstanding her kindness for Isabella and displaying little anxiety and care for her professing heavy illness; and Isabella, for whose sake she has been arguing with Heathcliff, called her a dog in the manger and a poisonous friend; and even Nelly, whom she has been always taking as a confidant, betrayed her and refused to obey her orders. And this crushed and shattered world is so much beyond her tolerating, that she won't have it so for long, and she has to take some actions to reestablish her status in their hearts and rebuild her world, so she plans to frighten her husband by ordering Nelly to tell her husband that she is seriously ill and reserves the plan to "break their heart by breaking my own" as "a forlorn hope". But Nelly's exasperated "stolidity" leads her nowhere as to expose her mistress' situation to her master. And the master, whose world is no less crushed and shattered that the two most

important women in her life are both poisoned by “the black ruffian” against him, his sister infatuated with him, his wife refusing to drop the intimacy with him, locks himself in his library and fails to be informed of his wife’s dangerous situation early enough. So her “reserved forlorn hope” just turns out to come true too unexpectedly soon. And so she dies, hardly 19 years of age, rendering the two men in eternal torment and an irredeemable loss.

The intrusion of a castaway orphan, out of Mr. Earnshaw’s kind sympathy, brings the violent love and revenge story of *Wuthering Heights*; and the most moving sad love story in *A Dream of Red Mansions* comes with an orphan as well. Both of their love is of the kind that comes from and mingles with long-term companionship that starts from their very childhood and lasts lifelong. To each of them, the other half means all the world, even more than themselves, without whom all the joy and sunshine of the world would vanish. No separation shall be suffered. However, in such imperfect world they live and love that no such perfect love, or rather perfect ending of such love could have been possibly allowed.

Free love is prohibited, or thought immoral, in the society of Bao-yu and Dai-yu, to say nothing of free marriage, which should be wholly the business of the parents. But as mentioned above, the heroine is parentless. Therefore, though the heroine and hero love openly and secretly, the heroine has no parents to arrange that for her, while the hero’s parents have on their mind some maiden else, who is not only from a richer family, but of “much better” character. Though Bao-yu is different from Catherine who cares for wealth and status, he is not in the position to put that out of his parents’ mind. Or even though Dai-yu shall be their choice, her sentimentality and invalidity probably would not allow her life last that long. So their love is doomed to end with tragedy.

In the society of Heathcliff and Catherine, they can love and marry as they will; and they have loved most passionately and deeply and are most likely to marry each other. But Catherine’s family member, her brother and sister-in-law, would not allow that. And the society she lives in has infused into her mind such concerns with wealth and status that she allows herself to be distracted and deviated and blinded by it so that the heavenly house of Thrushcross Grange just appears to her irresistible and Linton’s promising wealth most tempting. The orphan gets deserted a second time which his sullen and vindictive disposition would not allow unrevenge. So because of the heroine’s willfulness and vanity, their love ends with death and revenge.

So under the direct or indirect influence of the society they live in, the family background they are from, and the character they are endowed with, they live together as most bosom companions, love each other most heartily and truly, strive and struggle quietly or violently. No happiness follows. Or it is just in their love and struggle that they love each other only better, and it is just this violence and sadness that has put so much charm and sorrow into the story, and readers love the story better and get constantly touched.

#### 4. Conclusion

In the whole of Chinese literature, on the very top is *A Dream of Red Mansions* that is of the most extraordinary capacity and beauty, whose love story is as well of the most passionate and beautiful, the deepest and saddest that can represent Chinese love mode as well as any other Chinese love stories; and *Wuthering Heights*, one of the most disputed and impressive English novels, presents to the readers the charm, power, and depth the English language could have fully displayed, and the power and depth the potential of the human’s love and abhorrence could have possibly possessed. And the beauty, capacity and depth of the two works themselves have left us latter generations inexhaustible sources for beauty and insuperable interpretation work of their capacity and depth that’s been and ever to be pursued.

From very personal and limited province this paper has attempted boldly to present an interpretation of the causes of the tragedy of the love stories from the aspects of social and family background and the lovers’ characters with all the clues and inspirations traced within the novels themselves. It observes that the society Dai-yu lives in doesn’t allow her free love or marriage with Bao-yu, while that Catherine lives in allows her to love freely Heathcliff but teaches her that she should not marry him; Dai-yu’s marriage, according to the then practice, calls for a proposal by her parents or some elder one who has the right and the intention to do so, yet she has got no parents or any one that has the right and the intention as well, and on Bao-yu’s side, those who have the right, deduced from what the novel has said, would rather choose Bao-chai who is obviously of richer family background and better character; while for Catherine who has the right to decide her marriage of her own will, affected and reformed by her brother and sister-in-law, gets distracted by the poor fancy for Linton who is of promising rich future, and accepts his proposal; Dai-yu is likely to die young because she is born invalid and of sentimental disposition, while Catherine

earns deliberately her premature death by her willfulness and selfishness; the deceased ever gone, the surviving could only be lost and mad: Bao-yu becomes a monk, while Heathcliff pitifully pursues his cursing prayer that his love shall never rest, shall haunt him and drive him mad. Such is their love, and the truest union, in which the loss of the other half shall not be suffered.

### References

- [1] [2] [3], [13]...[15], [26]...[33]. Brontë Emily. *Wuthering heights*. London: Lancer Books. 1968.  
[4]...[12], [16]...[25]. Yang, H. Y. & Yang, Gladys. *A Dream of Red Mansions*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press. 1978.