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READING EMILY BRONTË'S WUTHERING HEIGHTS AND GEORGE SAND'S MAUPRAT AS MUSICAL NOVELS

Abstract:

Emily Brontë (1818-1848) wrote a single novel and some two hundred poems. George Sand (1804-1876) was a prolific author and one at home in diverse genres, from fiction, autobiographical and political texts, to theatre pieces. These two women writers also had different family backgrounds and different personalities.

In spite of the obvious differences, they had some common interests, such as the love of nature and music, vivid and creative imagination. Passionate and curious readers since their earliest childhood, they read avidly whatever was available to them without any restrictions, an experience that shaped their literary tastes and inspired their first attempts at writing at an early age.

Inclined to daydreaming and making up stories, as a way of coping with traumatic losses they experienced in their childhood, little Emily and Aurore (future George Sand) started creating their imaginary worlds that would accompany them for the rest of their lives. Brontë's poetry and her lost Gondal saga, and Sand's oral and "silent" novel of Corambé were the sources of inspiration and poetic space from which their mature works *Wuthering Heights* and *Mauprat* would be created.

Besides numerous similarities between these two novels in the plot, structure, characters and semantically coded space and landscape, both literary texts bear affinities to another form of art, namely, to music. Emily Brontë's and George Sand's great love of music is mirrored in the structure and texture of their narratives at both macro and micro-level: from the polyphonic structure and the four movement form of a symphony or a sonata, together with multiple narrative voices, the variations and development of primary and secondary themes (of love–romantic, transcendent, parental, sibling, and the denial of love, of violence, the dichotomy between nature and culture), the repetition of motifs that appear as antithetical polarities in dialogue (of [non-identical] doubles and the problem of fragmented identity, of freedom and confinement, of reason and madness, life and death), the elements of folklore and the supernatural, lyrical and dramatic passages to poetic imagery, language and rhythm of their prose. *Wuthering Heights* and *Mauprat* can therefore be read as novels written by poetesses-musicians who crossed medial boundaries and created musical novels by borrowing structures, techniques and impressions typical of a classical piece of music. Like a musical score, *Wuthering Heights* and *Mauprat* with their complex structure and nature exist as a unique piece of art, offering at the same time different possibilities of interpretation.

Keywords:

Wuthering Heights, *Mauprat*, musical novel, poetesses-musicians, interpretation