

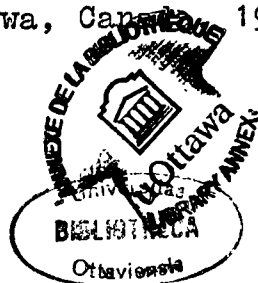
THE PRINCIPAL FEMININE CHARACTER-TYPES
IN SELECTED NOVELS OF D. H. LAWRENCE

by

Robert Walter Millett

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of the University of Ottawa in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It can be reasonably said that an artist's philosophy of life is contained within his works and it is only within those works that a reader should look for it. However, at times, this can be an extremely difficult task. D. H. Lawrence was one artist who encouraged his readers to search out and understand his "philosophy" of life. To further this, he wrote many expository essays explaining his views. In the forward to Fantasia of the Unconscious, he stated:

This pseudo-philosophy of mine ... is deduced from the novels and poems, not the reverse. The novels and poems come unwatched out one's pen. And then the absolute need which one has for some sort of satisfactory mental attitude towards oneself and things in general makes one try to abstract some definite conclusions from one's experiences.¹

Mr. Lawrence drew his conclusions from his novels after they were written and expressed those conclusions in his essays. The same approach seems justified in this thesis. It is firmly believed that a great deal more can be learned about the nature of Mr. Lawrence's ideas by showing them and their consequences in action.

In this introductory chapter, the following points

1. D. H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. 57.

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will be made:

1. D. H. Lawrence's views toward Christianity and its effect upon the societal man.
2. Mr. Lawrence's beliefs in restoring man to a "real" self through the sexual mystery.
3. Mr. Lawrence as a novelist.
 - (a) His prose style.
 - (b) His curious habit of rewriting rather than revising.
 - (c) His approach to his characters.
4. The purpose of this thesis.
 - (a) The selection of the novels.

It will be seen, this chapter contains what appears to be bits and pieces of Mr. Lawrence's "philosophy". This, of course, was inevitable since the present thesis contains a discussion of five novels. The various portions of Mr. Lawrence's ideas that are presented were deemed necessary for a thorough exposition of his works.

From the time that D(avid) H(erbert) Lawrence was twenty, he believed that Jesus Christ was as human as any man and that it was His principal failing as a prophet and as a man that He did not live enough. This belief was the dominant contributing factor in the "philosophy" that D. H. Lawrence formulated and which prevailed in the fiction he wrote during the rest of his life.

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The Laurentian² doctrine maintains that over two thousand years ago and directly due to the teachings of Jesus Christ, man embarked on the attempt to live by the love motive alone. While Mr. Lawrence would attribute this concept of the love-ideal mainly to the growth of Christianity, at times he places it earlier with the growth of Platonism and the rise of the higher religions. Mr. Lawrence would view these steps in the history of humanity from at least two directions. Sometimes his doctrine sees Platonism and Christianity as a great rejection, a failure of courage, a refusal of the responsibility of life, and sometimes as a necessary development, living and valid for its own time and subsequent centuries but now burned out and in need of replacement.

From either approach, Mr. Lawrence asserted that the love-motive is exhausted. Christianity, to him, has been kept going by a sheer effort of will and no longer has any connection with the deep sources of life.

Man's disposition, according to Mr. Lawrence, has been hopelessly warped by Christian ideals. Mr. Lawrence believes that the politics and commerce, the Edwardian

2. The spelling of this word seems to fluctuate at the whim of the critic who is using it. "Laurentian" is the spelling used by Richard Aldington in his Portrait of a Genius But..., and by Graham Hough in his The Dark Sun, while Harry T. Moore's The Life and Works of D. H. Lawrence and Anthony Beal's D.H. Lawrence show a preference for "Lawrencian". "Laurentian" will be used.

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flummery and the covetousness and rapacity of our civilization are all merely extensions of man's private propensities. Mr. Lawrence sees the whole functioning of society as a fool's game, a giant conspiracy to exalt the principles of conduct at the expense of any true principle of "being and becoming". ("Being and becoming" will be used throughout the present thesis to express this all important belief of D. H. Lawrence. The expression has been coined from the following passage in which Mr. Lawrence elucidates the importance he places upon the generative powers of love.

The via media to being, for man or woman, is love, and love alone. Having achieved and accomplished love, then the man passes into the unknown. He has become himself, his tale is told. Of anything that is complete there is no tale to tell. The tale is about becoming complete, or about the failure to become complete.³

The expression "being and becoming" is used merely for the sake of facility.) Mr. Lawrence also believed that these exalted principles of conduct festered the mental-consciousness so that natural experiences were distorted and depreciated. The true principles of being alive as a human being and as an individual are those principles erupting from what he called the blood-consciousness.

To be alive is what D. H. Lawrence wanted for himself and the rest of humanity. One must be alive and one

3. D. H. Lawrence, Phoenix, The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence, p. 410.

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must take life seriously; but the seriousness must be the very opposite of pomposity or conscious solemnity. Mr. Lawrence's seriousness demanded living to the fullest extent. Mr. Lawrence's natural man is one who lives through all his senses and aspirations and ideals, with a vital connection with his own sex and the opposite sex, with the birds, beasts and flowers and the whole natural world. Mr. Lawrence's "living man" should never be construed as the flippant person, the purely sensual man or the purely idealistic individual, although the expression has often been interpreted as such.

Because his doctrine appears to be one that advocates the suppression of the intellect, D.H. Lawrence has been accused of being anti-intellectual in a manner similar to that in which Jean Jacques Rousseau and the Romantic poets have been regarded. However, such is a succinctly erroneous view. Mr. Lawrence has no quarrel with the intellect. He never maintains that man knows too much but rather that modern man does not know enough about the right things and that what he does know of these things is often perverted. What Mr. Lawrence actually was seeking was an entirely new form of consciousness. He believed that a flaw existed in modern institutions and was sure that the flaw existed because of an erroneous conception of man's nature. To improve mental-consciousness, Mr. Lawrence insisted that man required a new notion of the self;

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conversely, that a new self could be created only out of a new form of mental-consciousness. Because of modern civilization's view of mental-consciousness, sex activities and the like, Mr. Lawrence believed that man could not realize his full human potentials.

The total annihilation of Christian civilization is a necessary condition which must be met, according to Mr. Lawrence, before the sexual mystery can destroy the "civilized" man and allow the "natural" man to emerge. It is in the sexual impulse of man, taken out of the mental-consciousness and returned to the body and the blood where it belongs, that Mr. Lawrence finds the clue to the salvation of the individual man and, by extension, to the whole of humanity.

The author maintained that the sexual mystery, like any other mystery, should always remain cloaked in mist. Further, he maintained that any attempt to explain a mystery would only result in its reduction to the status of the absolutely pedestrian. His violent and celebrated outbursts against what he called "sex in the head" bear witness to this. Lascivious anticipations and morbid post-mortems with regard to the sexual mystery in the man-woman relationship are the worst possible sins. They give rise to the various types of "shame" which are such natural attributes of a modern society. Mr. Lawrence developed such an intense dislike for such perversions that he even attributed

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Adam and Eve's exile from the Garden of Eden to them.

When Adam went and took Eve, after the apple, he didn't do any more than he had done many a time before, in act. But in consciousness, he did something very different. So did Eve. Each of them kept an eye on what they were doing, they watched what was happening to them. They wanted to KNOW. And that was the birth of sin. Not doing it, but KNOWING about it. Before the apple, they had shut their eyes and their minds had gone dark. Now, they peeped and pried and imagined. They watched themselves. And they felt self-conscious. So they said, "The act is sin. Let's hide. We've sinned." ... The sin was the self-watching, self-consciousness. The sin, and the doom. Dirty understanding.⁴

Mr. Lawrence also asserted that there was a basic hostility within all people between the physical and the mental, the blood and the spirit. The mind tries to suppress the blood or the body because of the mental "shame" associated with physical activities and at the same time, the blood-consciousness attempts to obliterate the mind and the spiritual conscious.

... the blood hates being KNOWN by the mind. It feels itself destroyed when it is KNOWN.⁵

The proper relation between these opposing forces is described by Mr. Lawrence as polarity. Graham Hough, discussing the doctrine of the author, sums it up thus:

4. D. H. Lawrence, Studies in Classic American Literature, p. 94.

5. Ibid., p. 95.

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It [polarity] may be achieved, both between individuals and between psychic forces within the individual, as the result of prolonged conflict; but when achieved, it is a state where conflict is transcended, a state of still tension, life-sustaining and life-creating, forbidding forever the merging of the opposites, and maintaining both in a state of mutual complementary balance. ... married men and women most emphatically do not live their own lives: they are indispensably and irrevocably dependent on each other. But they never merge; each recognizes at the core of the other's being an eternally separate spark. And the two poles are eternally opposed; the whole fruitfulness of the relationship depends on their opposition, yet its whole integrity depends on moments when the sense of opposition has vanished.⁶

The study of man is always D. H. Lawrence's primary concern, and the prime example of the polarity in human affairs is the polarity between the sexes. Mr. Lawrence's attitude toward sex is not, as is above argued, a pure sensualism. Mr. Lawrence emphasizes the sex relation because it is his contention that it is the primary polarity and reality for man. Man's very being is the result of a sexual encounter, and in his own sexual encounters, man returns to his origins and finds his complete fulfillment. The physical is primary for man, D. H. Lawrence asserts, while the spirit should be secondary. Because of this,

6. Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, p. 264.

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the Laurentian doctrine maintains that man's most complete means of realizing primary reality is through the sexual experience.

Mr. Lawrence contends that both sexual experiences that are incomplete and unsatisfying and the attitude that sexual experience is not the central experience in one's life are due to the radical perversion of human nature which has been going on for over two thousand years.

All the great pagan cults, before the advent of the "higher religions", were cults of fertility and generation, and it is the genial influence of the phallus that alone can produce active and happy forms of human society. If sex is not our primary fulfilment, it is due to a cultural failure in which we are nearly all involved. ... it is the business of a free man to fight against the failures; and the implication of this is that sexual failure in the individual is always in part a failure of character.⁷

However, Mr. Lawrence's concern for fertility is refuted by his own fictional writing in which virtually all instances of parental love are presented in a perverted form. Perhaps, this explained by his belief that the experience of the participants in sex is always primary and that the child, if one results, is merely an incidental.

7. Ibid., p. 268.

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In other words, a child is merely a by-product of the sexual experience.⁸ Whether or not sexual failure is the partial cause of a failure in character is a moot point but it is one Laurentian conclusion with which many men and women will agree.

D. H. Lawrence, although he wrote many short stories, much poetry and a large number of expository essays in addition to his ten full-length novels, nevertheless believed that it was a greater thing for him to be a novelist than to be a poet or critic. His essay "Why the Novel Matters" seems to set up the novelist alone as the complete man just as Shelley's "Defense of Poetry" sets up the poet alone as the complete man.

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8. An interesting sidelight to the contention of Mr. Lawrence that the sexual experience is always primary and the child merely a by-product is that D. H. Lawrence would be violently opposed to any method of birth control. Being consciously aware of the possibility of conception during the sexual intercourse would result in the participants committing the unforgivable sin of having "sex in the head". Specialists in the fields of Gynecology, Obstetrics, and Psychology would agree with Mr. Lawrence that this fear of conception and "sex in the head" is often the underlying cause of frigidity or impotency.

Those women who are depicted by Mr. Lawrence as abandoning themselves in the sexual experience almost always conceive, e. g. Meg in The White Peacock, both Lydia and Ursula in The Rainbow, Alvina in The Lost Girl, and Connie Chatterley in Lady Chatterley's Lover.

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... I, who am man alive, am greater than my soul, or spirit, or body, or mind, or consciousness, or anything else that is merely a part of me. I am man, and alive. I am man alive, and as long as I can, I intend to go on being man alive.

For this reason, I am a novelist. And being a novelist, I consider myself superior to the saint, the scientist, the philosopher, and the poet, who are all great masters of different bits of man alive, but never get the whole hog.

The novel is one bright book of life. Books are not life, but they are only tremulations on the ether. But the novel as a tremulation can make the whole man alive tremble, which is more than poetry, philosophy, science, or any other book-tremulation can do.⁹

To D.H. Lawrence, the novel was neither the artistic presentation of an invented story nor merely a piece of entertainment. He abhorred any kind of "formula" writing, and his determination to be true to life as he experienced it has often produced in his works what critics call faults. Anthony Beal says:

The faults ... are ... found to a greater or lesser degree in all Lawrence's novels, faults due to going on too long and too insistently. He hammers away too much at many of the episodes and experiences presented ... when he has in fact already summed them up dramatically in vivid scenes. ... the more abstract commentary becomes superfluous.¹⁰

9. D. H. Lawrence, Phoenix, the Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence, p. 535.

10. Anthony Beal, D. H. Lawrence, pp. 39-40.

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while Graham Hough's observation is

... confusion of detail, contradiction, mania,
false science - yet throughout, power ...¹¹

From the very beginning of his literary career, Mr. Lawrence showed originality and disregard for literary fashion, which at the time was highly in favor of "form" in the novel. D. H. Lawrence's works are more like mental adventures than physical happenings and appear to be aimed at putting the reader in touch with actual life. The author's attempts to be what he believed was true to life would also undoubtedly account for the quiet, almost inconclusive, endings of his novels "since the "happy" or dramatic ending would almost always be a falsity in relation to actual circumstances".¹²

In passage after passage throughout his works, Mr. Lawrence reveals the representative qualities of his prose style. Time after time, descriptive passages such as:

... entering the spinney of black poplar. In the hedge was an elm tree, with myriads of dark dots pointed against the bright sky, myriads of clusters of flaky green fruit.¹³

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11. Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, p. 17.
 12. D. H. Lawrence, The White Peacock, introduction by Richard Aldington, p. vii.
 13. D. H. Lawrence, The White Peacock, p. 208.

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... the suave smooth ivy with its fingers in the tree's throat.¹⁴

The spinney opened out; the ferns were serenely uncoiling, the bluebells stood grouped with blue curls mingled. ...~~forget-me-nots~~ flowered in nebulae, and dog-violets gave an undertone of dark purple, with primrose for planets in the night. There was a slight drift of woodruff, sweet new-mown hay, scenting the air under the boughs. On a wet bank was the design of golden saxifrage, glistening unholily as if varnished by its minister, the snail.¹⁵

Dry country with mesquite bushes, in the dawn: then green wheat alternating with ripe wheat. And men already in the pale, ripened wheat reaping with sickles, cutting short little handfuls from the short straw. A bright sky, with a bluish shadow on earth. Parched slopes with ragged maize stubble. Then a forlorn hacienda and a man on horseback, in a blanket, driving a silent flock of cows, sheep, bulls, goats, lambs, rippling a bit ghostly in the dawn, from under a tottering archway. A long canal beside the railway, a long canal paved with bright green leaves from which poked the mauve heads of the lirio, the water hyacinth. The sun was lifting up, red.¹⁶

appear and illustrate Mr. Lawrence's natural endowment for vivid observation and ability to express his sensitivity.

Mr. Lawrence's

... descriptions of nature with the finest nature-writing in our language. Long before Lawrence had completely formulated his distaste for modern civilized life, he had an acute awareness of non-human life, a specialist's knowledge of trees, flowers, animals. Born in the country, he remained

14. Ibid., p. 209.

15. Ibid., p. 210.

16. D. H. Lawrence, The Plumed Serpent, p. 94.

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a country person - a great walker, ... who seemed to learn the way of a new place not only by human encounter, but almost by the feel of the earth under his feet or by a sense of the current with which the new air was charged.¹⁷

Mr. Lawrence is able to give unity to a passage by merging man with nature and to convey a sense of physical intimacy in a variety of ways. The following passage cited by Walter Calvert Clements in his unpublished thesis Reverence and Worship in D. H. Lawrence¹⁸ is a prime example of poetic description as well as an excellent illustration of this merging of man with nature and of the successful expression of the spirit of a place and a season.

I was born in September, and love it best of all the months. There is no heat, no hurry, no thirst and weariness in corn harvest as there is in the hay. If the season is late, as is usual with us, then mid September sees the corn still stand in stock. The mornings come slowly. The earth is like a woman married and fading; she does not leap up with a laugh for the first fresh kiss of dawn, but slowly, quietly, unexpectantly lies watching the waking of each new day. The blue mist, like memory in the eyes of a neglected wife, never goes from the wooded hill, and only at noon creeps from the near hedges. There is no bird to put a song in the throat of morning; only the crow's voice speaks during the day. Perhaps there is the regular breathing hush of the scythe - even the fretful jar of the mowing machine, But next day, in the morning,

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17. Diana Trilling, The Portable D. H. Lawrence, p. 18.
 18. Walter Calvert Clements, Reverence and Worship in D. H. Lawrence, p. 8.

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all is still again. The lying corn is wet, and when you have bound it, and lift the heavy sheaf to make the stock, the tresses of oats wreath round each other and droop mournfully.¹⁹

The attention is first caught by the onomatopoetic phrases, "the regular breathing hush of the scythe", "the fretful jar of the mowing machine", but the passage is filled with palpable appeals to the human senses, an awareness of the absence of heat, hurry and thirst; the blue mist, the wetness and the weight of the lying corn, and the mournful drooping of the oat tresses. The metaphors equating the earth to a woman married and fading and the blue mist to the memory in the eyes of a neglected wife serve to bring together the life of man and the life of nature and to see them together with the same eyes, just as the crow speaks and the earth lies watching. The passage begins with a purely subjective pathetic fallacy "I ... love it best of all the months" and then Mr. Lawrence submerges the individual into the scene being described. As a "living" piece of natural description, this passage of visual and emotional imagery serves as a prime illustration of both Mr. Lawrence's sensitivity and his ability to relate his observations.

19. D. H. Lawrence, The White Peacock, pp. 57-58.

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D. H. Lawrence did not revise his writings. He re-wrote. Aldous Huxley relates that he often

... heard him say, indeed, that he was incapable of correcting. If he was dissatisfied with what he had written, he did not, as most authors do, file, clip, insert, transpose; he rewrote. In other words, he gave the daimon another chance to say what it wanted to say.²⁰

To illustrate, Lady Chatterley's Lover was written at least three times. The earliest version, published in 1944 as The First Lady Chatterley, seems only an incomplete realization of the intentions of the final publication. Mellors, the now-famous gamekeeper, was known as Parkin and the novel was much more concerned with socio-political differences than with the phallic tenderness which is so emphasized in the final edition.

Dr. F. R. Leavis, in his unsurpassed study of The Rainbow and Women in Love,²¹ tells of the rewriting of these two novels. Richard Aldington records the rewriting of the other novels with the exception of Kangaroo which was hurriedly written in the short period of six weeks.²² In Mr.

20. D. H. Lawrence, Selected Letters, ed., Richard Aldington, introduction by Aldous Huxley, p. 13.

21. F. R. Leavis, D. H. Lawrence, Novelist, London, Chatto and Windus, 1955, 318 p.

22. Richard Aldington, D. H. Lawrence, Portrait of a Genius But ..., p. 243.

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Aldington's biography of D. H. Lawrence, it is revealed that the earliest draft of The White Peacock was completed in 1905, rewritten at least twice in the ensuing years, and finally published in 1911. The first draft of The Trespasser was completed in the summer of 1910; it was completely rewritten in 1911, and finally published in 1912. Sons and Lovers was started in 1910. After receiving additional notes from Jessie Chambers, Mr. Lawrence completely rewrote the novel and it was finally published in 1913. The Rainbow is a product of 1912 and after three years being written and rewritten, the novel was finally published in 1915. Women in Love, which was originally intended to be included as one novel with The Rainbow under the title of The Sisters, was rewritten as a separate novel and published in 1921. The Lost Girl was first written in 1912, set aside, and then completely rewritten with a more serious intent in 1920, the year in which it was finally published. Aaron's Rod was started in 1918, completely rewritten in the spring of 1921, and published in 1922. Kangaroo, as above stated, was written almost in its entirety in the period from May 28 to July 3, 1923. The Plumed Serpent was started in May, 1923, completely rewritten the next year, and finally published in January, 1925. Lady Chatterley's Lover, as above noted, had three complete versions; the first being completed in 1927, the second in 1928, and the final version, which had to be printed privately,

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towards the end of 1928.

Mr. Lawrence's interest in themes and states of consciousness rather than in the persons who are involved in them is often the reason why sympathy or identification with the Laurentian people is lost. It is only when he is writing almost pure autobiography, as in The White Peacock and Sons and Lovers, or drawing a portrait of one of his acquaintances²³ that his people become flesh-and-blood individuals. Often the natural development of a character and the expected relationship between two persons is distorted to fit the Laurentian doctrine. This merely furnishes proof for Mr. Lawrence's contention that he was not much interested in character in the ordinary sense. In a letter to Edward Garnett, he clarifies this:

But somehow - that which is physic - non-human, in humanity, is more interesting to me than the old-fashioned human element - which causes one to conceive a character in a certain moral scheme and make him consistent. ... You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character. There is another ego, according to whose action the individual is unrecognizable, and passes through, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than any that we are used to exercise,

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23. It is interesting to note that while Mr. Lawrence never hesitated to use one of his "friends" as a model for a character in his novels, e.g. Lady Ottoline Morrell as Hermione in Women in Love, J. Middleton Murry and Katherine Mansfield as Gerald and Gudrun in Women in Love, D. H. Lawrence was the real-life prototype used as a model for the character of Rampion in Aldous Huxley's Point Counter Point.

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to discover are states of the same single radically unchanged element.²⁴

In all of D. H. Lawrence's novels with the exception of Aaron's Rod, at least one woman plays a leading part. In the story of Aaron's travels, the few women who do appear are faint and vague images. The novel might well have been called "Men Without Women"; but just as the author felt his life would be a failure without a woman, his attempt to do without women in his fiction proved a failure.²⁵ The other novels present particular women going through particular situations, developing a state of mind and either achieving or failing to obtain an individual integrity. It appears that the great majority of these women, regardless of their social stratum, education, marital status or "state of mind", are in a great measure similar and can be to a great degree categorized and compared according to their nature, their nature being one of Mr. Lawrence's principal concerns. The formal object of this thesis points directly to the novels that shall form its material object. In each case, the novel selected is studied because of the particular heroine who shapes it.

24. D. H. Lawrence, The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, ed., Aldous Huxley, p. 197.

25. Anthony Beal, D. H. Lawrence, p. 67.

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Aaron's Rod will necessarily be eliminated because of the absence of women characters, as above suggested. The generalizations about women that D. H. Lawrence has his characters make in Aaron's Rod have been made in other novels and in many of his expository essays in much more detail.

It is Dr. F. R. Leavis' contention in D. H. Lawrence, Novelist that great fiction demands the same sort of attention and detailed study as great poetry; that, in fact, a great novel can be looked upon as a "dramatic poem" and is worthy of the same treatment.²⁶ Dr. Leavis uses the techniques of detailed "practical criticism" on The Rainbow and Women in Love. His approach involves an examination of the individual sentence or even a single word. The degree of analysis that Dr. Leavis achieves within his study has placed these books out of the scope of the present thesis.

John Middleton Murry's Love, Freedom and Society has a detailed study of Kangaroo presented side-by-side with an attempt to deal with Mr. Lawrence's work from the

26. A large portion of Dr. Leavis' study was originally published as articles under the title "The Novel as a Dramatic Poem: Women in Love" in Scrutiny, vols. 17, 18, nos. 1, 3, 4, pp. 18-31, 203-220, 319-330.

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psychological angle. In any case, the fact remains that D. H. Lawrence's set-in-Australia "leadership" novel is more concerned with the political revival that is depicted than with the man-wife relationship of Richard and Harriet Somers. For this reason, Kangaroo is also beyond the scope of the present study.

The White Peacock, while it will be frequently alluded to for various illustrations and comparisons, will not be discussed in any great detail. The newly awakened interest in D. H. Lawrence's writings in recent years has produced a natural curiosity about The White Peacock as an author's "first" book. The White Peacock is characterized by the existence of a number of disconnected episodes with no real underlying development. However, the fact that it contains the seeds of Mr. Lawrence's later dominant themes requires that this first venture into novel writing be treated alone in a full-length study.²⁷

In this study of the role of the principal women character-types of D. H. Lawrence, the remaining five full-length novels will be examined: The Lost Girl (1920), The Trespasser (1912), Sons and Lovers (1913), Lady Chatterley's Lover (1928), and The Plumed Serpent (1925).

27. Themes that are merely introduced in The White Peacock and became more dominant in D. H. Lawrence's later works include Annable; the gamekeeper who developed into Mellors; the loving but possessive mother; unfulfilled marriages; the spiritual girl.

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In these selected novels, the women are discovered in situations or roles in which at least five woman-man relationships are examined. Helena of The Trespasser never progresses beyond the station of a mistress and it is her mental attitude that is instrumental in the final conclusion and denouement of the novel's plot. While it is true that Gudrun of Women in Love is only a mistress, her role seems only significant when viewed as a counterpart of the Birkin-Ursula relationship. The Trespasser is also the one novel that has been greatly neglected by the readers of D. H. Lawrence. For this reason and the above suggested, this work seems to be in need of examination.

Sons and Lovers has been previously rather minutely examined from many different viewpoints. It also has recently become familiar to the general public through a motion picture adaptation. However, Sons and Lovers is and will continue to be an excellent narrative on the etiolating effect that perverted parental love can have on children. While the loving and possessive mother is also in evidence in The White Peacock and The Trespasser, the extremely interesting mother-son relationship that is depicted between Paul Morel and his mother, Gertrude Morel, is the dominating theme in this largely autobiographical novel. For this reason, Sons and Lovers will be examined rather thoroughly.

Fear of impending spinsterhood is the motivating force in the story of the rebellion of Alvina Houghton in

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The Lost Girl. Graham Hough describes the book as:

... the nearest thing to a potboiler that he [D. H. Lawrence] ever wrote.²⁸

and Richard Aldington states:

The Lost Girl began as a potboiler that didn't boil.²⁹

Winifred Inger of The Rainbow is also depicted by D. H. Lawrence as a spinster but she does not attempt to escape its "stigma" as does Alvina. The Lost Girl also serves to reveal that D. H. Lawrence was capable of combining his creative imagination with the literary "form" which was deemed so important at the time this novel was written. For these reasons, The Lost Girl's inclusion within this thesis is justified.

Kate Forrester Leslie's spiritual odyssey in The Plumed Serpent depicts a woman facing widowhood and serves to illustrate the final resolution of the problem of facing middle-age. While middle-aged characters are present in many of the other novels, The Plumed Serpent is the only one in which the state of middle age motivates the actions of the central character. This heroine's adventures amid the "mysterious" rites of Quetzalcoatl reveal much of Mr. Lawrence's thoughts on the need for a replacement for what he thought was a decadent Christianity. For these

28. Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, p. 111.

29. Richard Aldington, D. H. Lawrence, Portrait of a Genius But ..., p. 213.

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reasons, The Plumed Serpent merits full examination within the present thesis.

Another form of a life of "nothingness" and of the attempt to find a replacement for it is presented in the person of the at first loyal and subservient wife, Constance Chatterley of Lady Chatterley's Lover. The inclusion of Lady Chatterley's Lover in this study is apropos to the **role of womanhood**. The novel represents a further and final step in Mr. Lawrence's life-long struggle against the "outrages" industrialized society perpetrates upon the integrity of the individual man or woman. The novel's long struggle against censorship and its recent release for publication in unexpurgated form also seems to make a discussion of this book necessary.

These five novels examine five different stations of life which woman as woman can hold in relationship to man: mistress, spinster, mother, wife and widow. Within these novels, the women are portrayed in such a manner that while they remain distinct in their prescribed roles, the overlapping similarities that exist in the majority of them emerge. These similarities exist because of the patterns that society has drawn up for women. Mr. Lawrence believed that if a woman's life was a failure, it was due to the failure of the mold that the woman was forced to fit.

Man is willing to accept woman as an equal, as a man in skirts, as an angel, a devil, a babyface, a machine, an instrument, a bosom, a womb, a pair

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of legs, a servant, an encyclopaedia, an ideal or an obscenity; the one thing he won't accept her as is a human being, a real human being of the feminine sex.³⁰

(The foregoing distinctions in the women characters of D. H. Lawrence's novels are recapitulated in graphic form in the appendix to this thesis on pages 140-141.)

To depict "being or becoming" an individual human being or failing in the attempt is the primary object of D. H. Lawrence's novels, but while he is tracing people's behavior, he implicitly reveals that, in his opinion,

... women don't change. They only go through a regular series of phases. They are first the slave; then the obedient helpmeet; then the respected spouse; then the noble matron; then the splendid woman and citizen; then the independent female; ...³¹

The series of phases that women go through are all the result of the set patterns, and each phase women enter is as much a pose as the previous phase. It is only when women break out of the mold and attain a rebirth that they find their new self as pictured in D. H. Lawrence's personal symbol of rebirth: the phoenix.³²

30. D. H. Lawrence, "Give Her A Pattern, Assorted Articles, p. 39.

31. D. H. Lawrence, "Do Women Change?" Assorted Articles, p. 48.

32. The phoenix, which in Egyptian mythology rose renewed each 500 years and in Christian art often serves as a sign of the Resurrection, was adopted by D.H. Lawrence as a personal symbol of his trust in life's continuity.

CHAPTER II

GREAT EXPECTATIONS: THE TRESPASSER

The most neglected work of D.H. Lawrence is The Trespasser. Critics in their analysis of the various writings, even when they are emphasizing the full-length novels, have tended to avoid any detailed discussion of this work. They excuse themselves by making the accusations: that the book is poorly written, that The Trespasser is not entirely D. H. Lawrence's work, that the work itself is more suitable for a women's magazine. For example, Graham Hough, who devotes one hundred and ninety-five pages to a discussion of the full-length novels, handles The Trespasser in approximately one page. The following is Mr. Hough's treatment of this work in full.

Lawrence's second novel, The Trespasser, need not detain us long. In the first place it is not entirely his own, but a revision of some work by Helen Corke, the friend of his London school-teaching days. A good deal of it is pretty close to conventional novelesque, both in plot and in details. I suspect that it has been strongly influenced by George Moore's Evelyn Innes; and Moore's brand of worldly aestheticism sits very ill on Lawrence. The story of Siegmund and Helena and their frustrated love-affair is not substantially different from a hundred other such situations in fiction. Even if we did not know that it had no very deep roots in Lawrence's experience, we should divine it from the uncertain quality of the writing. It never manages to be modestly undistinguished; in parts it is extremely good, but in other parts it is grossly and flamingly bad, not with the prophetic over-emphasis of Lawrence's later bad writing, but with the second-hand poetry of the

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woman's magazine.

They are all still - gorse and the stars and the sea and the trees, are all kissing, Siegmund. The sea has its mouth on the earth, and the gorse and the trees press together, and they all look up at the moon, they put up their faces in a kiss, my darling. But they haven't you - and it all centres in you, my dear, all the wonder-love is in you, more than in them all, Siegmund - Siegmund.

Well, well; it is kinder to turn to the more purely descriptive passages. Most of this frustrated idyll takes place in the Isle of Wight, and the enchanting picture of a white, sunny, salty landscape does more than provide the setting for Siegmund's and Helena's affair, it conditions and flavours their whole relationship during the few days of the story. Even when he is working on second-hand and second-rate material, nothing can dull Lawrence's sense of the interpenetration of man's life and the life of nature. And it survives even when his own relation with his theme is slight. Lawrence was in the Isle of Wight only for a short holiday, yet the spirit of the place is as keenly and clearly felt as that of the other landscape with which he was far more deeply involved. And this kind of sensibility is the only certain thing in Lawrence's writing at this stage. As far as human experiences are concerned, he is quite uncertain, without any standard of taste or judgement - perceptive, delicate, and sure when he is on his own ground, quite capable of being false and second-hand when he is off it; and apparently unaware of the difference. The Trespasser is the product of a brief taste of London literary life after the appearance of The White Peacock. This kind of society never did Lawrence much good; and in Sons and Lovers he is to return to his own country.¹

Anthony Beal in his Writers and Critics series book, D. H. Lawrence goes into much more detail concerning The Trespasser. However, it appears that this author is

1. Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, pp. 49-50.

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more concerned with a recapitulation of the story and the nature descriptions than with any examination of the motivations of the characters. However, it also should be considered that the Writers and Critics book series has the avowed purpose of serving as a guide to authors' works for readers and any discussion of Laurentian "philosophy" or a psychological interpretation of the characters would have been beyond the scope of the book. Treatments of The Trespasser by other critics follow a similar pattern.

Notwithstanding such treatment, The Trespasser contains one of the most interesting and memorable feminine characters that D. H. Lawrence created. The theme of this work is warmth or contact (or the lack of it) and it is through the figure of Helena that this concept is most effectively reflected. There is no contact or real communication between the two chief characters of the novel.

The main action revolves around two people, Siegmund and Helena. The novel has the time span of only five days spent on an illicit holiday on the Isle of Wight. Siegmund, a professional violinist, thirty-eight, and married, in an effort to "find himself" leaves his wife and children to go on a holiday with Helena, a young woman of twenty-six to whom he had taught music.

This was one of the crises of his life. For years he had suppressed his soul, in a kind of mechanical despair doing his duty and enduring the rest. Then his soul had been softly enticed from its bondage. Now he was going to break free altogether, to have

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at least a few days purely for his own joy. This, to a man of his integrity, meant a breaking of bonds, a severing of blood-ties, a sort of a new birth.²

To this point in his life, Siegmund had been a life-denier. He had suppressed the real man in himself. As always with Mr. Lawrence, the characters of the novel do not go on any promiscuous adventure for its own sake. Instead, they go to achieve a wholeness or rebirth of themselves.

Helena is a self-possessed young woman, "so calm and full of her own assurance",³ It is she who initiates the whole idea of going away together. It is she who overruled his objections - for example; when he made known that he would not have the money to go. It is also she who is at the resort waiting for Siegmund to arrive. This woman is different from D. H. Lawrence's other heroines. There is no coyness. There is no expected fascade of coquettishness about her. There is no element of ich dien about her. Rather, she appears to be the sort of woman who is inclined to try to lead. She appears to be the modern woman type, the type that Mr. Lawrence describes in:

With the two kinds of femininity go two kinds of confidence: there are women who are cocksure, and the women who are hensure. A really up-to-date

2. D. H. Lawrence, The Trespasser, p. 15.

3. Ibid., p. 16.

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woman is a cocksure woman. She doesn't have a doubt nor a qualm. She is the modern type. Whereas the old-fashioned demure woman was as sure as a hen is sure, that is, without knowing anything about it. She went quietly and busily clucking around, laying the eggs and mothering the chickens in a kind of anxious dream that was full of sureness. But not mental sureness.⁴

While Helena is so "self-assured", Siegmund is somewhat "timid, tremulous, rather soft and submissive, easy in ... his very henlike tremulousness".⁵ His relationship with his wife Beatrice is dead. Beatrice, similar to Mrs. Beard-sall of The White Peacock and Mrs. Morel of Sons and Lovers, has turned their children against him. His life at home is filled with expressions of scorn. His escapade with Helena is meant to, at least temporarily, relieve him of this unhappy burden. It is meant as a reaffirmation of his manhood.

However, on the first night of their holiday, a flaw in their relationship emerges. Siegmund is intensely moved. "... he was a tense, vivid body of flesh, without a mind; his blood, alive and conscious, running toward her".⁶ Helena is moved in a different way.

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4. D. H. Lawrence, "Cocksure Women and Mensure Men", Sex, Literature and Censorship, p. 46.
 5. Ibid., p. 47.
 6. D. H. Lawrence, The Trespasser, pp. 29-30.

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Suddenly she strained madly to him, and drawing back her head, placed her lips on his, close, till at the mouth they seemed to melt and fuse together. It was the long supreme kiss, in which man and woman have one being, Two-in-one, the only Hermaphrodite.

When Helena drew away her lips, she was exhausted. She belonged to that class of 'dreaming women' with whom passion exhausts itself at the mouth. Her desire was accomplished in a real kiss. The fire, in heavy flames, had poured through her to Siegmund, from Siegmund to her. It sank, and she felt herself flagging. She had not the man's brightness and vividness of blood. ...

With her the dream was always more than the actuality. Her dream of Siegmund was more to her than Siegmund himself. He might be less than her dream, which is as it may be. However, to the real man she was very cruel.

He held her close. His dream was melted in his blood and his blood ran bright for her. His dreams were the flowers of his blood. Hers was more detached and inhuman. For centuries a certain type of woman has been rejecting the 'animal' in humanity, till now her dreams are abstract, and full of fantasy and her blood runs in bondage, and her kindness is full of cruelty.⁷

Thus, Helena is made to symbolize the whole class of dreaming women. It is not so much her sexual coldness that destroys her relationship with Siegmund. It is her complete self-sufficiency.

The sea played by itself, intent on its own game. Its aloofness, its self-sufficiency are its great charm. The sea does not give and take, like the land and the sky. It has no traffic with the world. It spends its passion on itself. Helena was something like the sea, self-sufficient and careless of the rest.⁸

7. Ibid., pp. 30-31.

8. Ibid., p. 43.

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Helena calls Siegmund, Domine - "it was his old nickname she used"⁹ and the implications surrounding such a name illustrate just what the woman's vision of the man was. Helena does not need Siegmund as a man or a person. She needs him as her dream, the ideal. However, Siegmund is a man and, like all men, he is no god. Helena submits to his passions but it

... was not his passion she wanted actually. But she desired that he should want her madly, and that he should have all -everything. It was a wonderful night for him. It restored in him the full 'will to live'. But she felt it destroyed her. Her soul seemed blasted.¹⁰

She could give Siegmund so much but she cannot give herself.

Helena is afraid of the "brute" in her lover.

What was all this? This was not comfort or love. He was not understanding or helping, only chaining her, hurting. She did not want his brute embrace - she was most utterly alone, gripped so in his arms. If he could not save her from herself, he must leave her free to pant her heart out in free air. The secret thud, thud of his heart, the very self of that animal in him she feared and hated, repulsed her.¹¹

Helena needs her dream, her dream of Siegmund. However, her dream of Siegmund is more than Siegmund himself. He destroys that dream when the need for confession grips him. He tells her of his courtship of Beatrice, his marriage and

9. Ibid., p. 121.

10. Ibid., p. 56.

11. Ibid., p. 100.

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the death of that marriage. In relating his human frailties Siegmund thoroughly destroys Helena's dream, the ideal that is so necessary to her. She becomes aware that human love is not ideal. It is at best only temporary. She is disillusioned. The Siegmund of her dreams is gone.

Was that really Siegmund, that stooping thick-shouldered, indifferent man? Was that Siegmund who had seemed to radiate joy in his surroundings, the Siegmund whose coming had always changed the whole weather of her soul? Was that the Siegmund whose touch was keen with bliss for her, whose face was a panorama of passing God? She looked at him again. His radiance was gone, his aura had ceased. She saw him a stooping man, past the buoyancy of youth, walking and whistling rather stupidly - in short, something of the 'clothed animal on end', like the rest of men.

She suffered an agony of disillusion. Was this the real Siegmund, and her own only a projection of her soul? She took her breath sharply. Was he the real clay, and that other, her beloved, only the breathing of her soul upon this.¹²

With the realization that the man cannot measure up to her mental picture, Siegmund is rejected.

Helena had rejected him. She gave herself to her fancies only. For some time she had confused Siegmund with her god. Yesterday she had cried to her ideal, and found only Siegmund. It was the smear in the side of his tortured self-respect.¹³

12. Ibid., pp. 99-100.

13. Ibid., p. 121.

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There has been no communication between the two lovers. Helena stands aloof at all times. She wants Siegmund to be consciously aware of her at all times but she is detached from life.

She had a peculiar, childish wistfulness at times, and with this an intangible aloofness that pierced his heart. It seemed to him he should never know her. There was a remoteness about her, an estrangement between her and all natural daily things, as if she were of an unknown race that never can tell its own story. This feeling always moved Siegmund's pity to its deepest, leaving him poignantly helpless. This same foreignness, revealed in other ways, sometimes made him hate her. It was as if she would sacrifice him rather than renounce her foreign birth. There was something in her he could never understand, so that never, never could he say he was master of her as she was of him the mistress.¹⁴

Helena's aloofness from the natural world is again seen in Siegmund's walk from Victoria to Waterloo.

He was glad Helena was not with him, for the streets would have irritated her with their coarse noise. She would stand for a long time to watch the rabbits pop and hobble along on the common at night; but the tearing along of the taxis and the charge of a great motor-bus was painful to her. 'Discords', she said, 'after the trees and the sea.' She liked - the glistening of the streets; it seemed a fine alloy of gold laid down for pavement, such pavement as drew near to the pure gold streets of Heaven; but this noise could not be endured near any wonderland.¹⁵

14. Ibid., pp. 131-132.

15. Ibid., p. 147.

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With Helena's rejection of him, Siegmund cannot stay with her. He cannot face his former life with Beatrice and the children. Above all, he wants peace. He sought it with Helena but she only served to increase the tumult within him. The only solution he can see is death.

Siegmund sat thinking of the after-death, which to him seemed so wonderfully comforting, full of rest, and reassurance, and renewal. He experienced no mystical ecstasies. He was sure of a wonderful kindness in death, a kindness which really reached right through life, though here he could not avail himself of it. Siegmund had always inwardly held faith that the heart of life beat kindly towards him. When he was cynical and sulky he knew that in reality it was only a waywardness of his.¹⁶

Thereupon, Siegmund "'anged 'imself from the door 'ooks".¹⁷ Even though Helena had sworn that she will not live one day after him, Siegmund is aware that she will be left behind.

... death was no way for her. She could not escape thus with him from this house of strangers which she called 'life'. She had to go on alone, like a foreigner who cannot learn the strange language. ... Yet she would not die, of that he was certain.¹⁸

The total lack of contact between Helena and Siegmund renders Siegmund's suicide ironical. Helena feels

16. Ibid., p. 186.

17. Ibid., p. 192.

18. Ibid., p. 132.

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that she would be able to sense if something happened to the man.

... It is impossible anything should have happened to him - I should have known. I should have known the moment his spirit left his body; he would have come to me. But I slept without dreams last night, and today I am sure there has been no crisis.¹⁹

How ironic that she should learn of Siegmund's death through such a commonplace thing as a newspaper! Helena's memories bother her but they will fade. They will fade and vanish just as the sunburn upon Helena's arms begins to fade and will one day vanish. There is every indication that the self-assured girl will go on just as before. The beginnings of her affair with Byrne appear to indicate that this is so. Byrne is determined that he will not become another Siegmund. However, while walking together in a wooded area, Byrne senses:

'I might as well not exist, for all she is aware of me.' ...²⁰

Helena wants rest and warmth but it is doubtful that she will ever possess it. It appears that Helena will continue to "make strangers of all the people ... [she] meet[s]".²¹

19. Ibid., p. 196.

20. Ibid., p. 213.

21. Ibid., p. 118.

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The sea plays a part in The Trespasser, a part similar to a third principal character. While Siegmund can see the cruelty and danger of the sea, Helena can only see its gentleness. While Siegmund feels rejuvenated by the sea, Helena uses it to cleanse herself from the previous evening's passion. While the sea tosses Siegmund against a submerged object and gashes his leg, the sea delights Helena. For Helena,

... at that moment the sea was a great lover, like Siegmund, but more impersonal, who would receive her when Siegmund could not. She rejoiced momentarily in the fact.²²

While the sea can be so gentle as to toss a light bulb upon the beach without breaking it, it plays a great part in the breaking of Siegmund. For the sea, Siegmund is mere debris that should be expelled.

Anthony Beal points out the relationship of the descriptions of nature to the events of The Trespasser.

Already in The White Peacock Lawrence has shown his powers of observation and description of nature, but in this book they are put to much better use, for the Isle of Wight itself is made to play an integral part in the emotions of the lovers: ... Their feelings are affected by the sea, by the sun and its setting, by stars and moonlight and sea-mist at night, by flowers on the downs, and by the tiny life of the rock pools on the shore. Nearly all their talk and togetherness takes place in the open air. "It is all enchanted," Siegmund has to admit even after Helena has cast him off. Indeed, their time together is an escape from everyday reality into an almost mythological world. It is not for

22. Ibid., p. 63.

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nothing that, throughout the book, Wagner and his music are constantly evoked. A sunset evokes the Grail music in Lohengrin; even a fog-horn is "some-like the call of the horn, across the sea to Tristan"; and Helena, we are told, "forever hummed fragments of Tristan. As she stood on the rocks, she sang, in her little, half-articulate way, bits of Isolde's love, bits of Tristan's anguish, to Siegmund."²³

Therefore, the descriptive passages have an intrinsic value to the whole of the novel and do not exist for their own sake.

As a dreaming woman, Helena lives within a fantasy. Her mental ideal is everything to her. When she finds that this ideal cannot exist, she is disillusioned. With her disillusionment, she casts aside all with whom she comes into contact. For her, everything about love should be ideal. It should be permanent. The great flaw is her repulsion toward the physical element in love. D. H. Lawrence's attitude toward these "dreaming women" appears to be expressed through the character of Hampson when he says:

"The best sort of women - the most interesting - are the worst for us," Hampson resumed. "By instinct they aim at suppressing the gross and the animal in us. Then they are supersensitive - refined a bit beyond humanity. We, who are as little gross as need be, become their instruments. Life is grounded in them like electricity in the earth; and we take from them their unrealized life, turn it into light or warmth or power for them. The ordinary woman is, alone, a great potential force,

23. Anthony Beal, D. H. Lawrence, p. 13.

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an accumulation, if you like, charged from the sources of life. In us, her force becomes evident.

She can't live without us, but she destroys us. These deep, interesting women don't want us, they want the flowers of the spirit they can gather of us. We, as natural men, are more or less degrading to them and to their love of us; therefore they destroy the natural man in us - that is, us altogether.²⁴

One is aware that the statements are applicable to Helena. However, they also reveal Mr. Lawrence's awareness that a woman who has lost contact with the physical intimacy of love can destroy a man. These "supersensitive" women - refined "a bit beyond humanity" may marry or have affairs but still remain aloof from the "brute" in man. They withdraw, protect their ideal, and never really give themselves to a man. In a sense, in a very real sense, they remain "mental virgins". They are inviolable. The mortal man cannot touch them. When a man is allowed to approach them, it is because the man, at least temporarily, is part of the ideal. When the man is found to be just a man, he is rejected as a trespasser. The story of Siegmund as the trespasser on Helena's ideal is analogous to a farmer ejecting an unwanted intruder from his land. The farmer will chase the trespasser away, repair his fences and after a period of time

24. D. H. Lawrence, The Trespasser, p. 84.

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the whole incident will fade in his memory. Such is what happens with Helena. Siegmund had "trespassed" upon Helena's ideals and fancies. She rejected him. She is in the process of repairing her fences and in time the incident will fade.

It is fully recognized that The Trespasser can be approached from the viewpoint that the unsatisfactory affair is caused in reality by the integrity of Siegmund. The fact that the man is constantly in abstract thought, the fact that events continually bring about thoughts of his wife and children, and the possible fact that he may have been an unsatisfactory lover are all elements that can be cited in support of this view. This view also gains strength when one considers Mr. Lawrence's identification with the novel. In a letter to Edward Garnett, dated January 21, 1912, the author wrote:

But this is a work one can't regard easily - I mean, at one's ease. It is so much oneself, one's naked self. I give myself away so much, and write what is my most palpitant, sensitive self, that I loathe the book, because it will betray me to a parcel of fools. Which is what any deeply personal or lyrical writer feels, I guess. I often think Stendhal must have writhed in torture every time he remembered Le Rouge et le Noir was public property; and Jefferies at The Story of My Heart. ... I wish The Trespasser were to be issued privately, to a few folk who had understanding.²⁵

25. D. H. Lawrence, Selected Letters, ed., Richard Aldington, pp. 36-37.

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It is also fully recognized that from this point of view the "trespasser" is Helena. Helena is the trespasser upon Siegmund's conscience, duties and respectability. However, this argument loses some of its strength when it is considered that Siegmund was "intensely moved". Through his passion he became a "tense, vivid body of flesh, without a mind". It is seen that Siegmund could have come together with Helena and achieved a fulfillment. "Without a mind" or "mindless", Siegmund has sufficiently subordinated his personality. This, above all, is a requisite in Laurentian thought for "coming into being". Therefore, the "passionless" and idealized love that Helena offers must be the flaw in the relationship. Further, it appears that Mr. Lawrence believed ~~it was~~ the mental attitude of the woman that was the cause of the failure between Siegmund and Helena. Later, in Lady Chatterley's Lover, Mellors' recounting of the unsatisfactory relationships of his youth contains an almost exact transcript of Helena.

Then I took on with another girl, a teacher, who had made a scandal by carrying on with a married man and driving him nearly out of his mind. She was a soft, white-skinned, soft sort of a woman, older than me, and played the fiddle. And she was a demon. She loved everything about love, except the sex. Clinging, caressing, creeping into you in every way: but if you forced her to the sex itself, she just ground her teeth and sent out hate. I forced her to it, and she could simply numb me with hate because of it. So I was balked again.²⁶

26. D. H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover, p. 209.

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The similarity between the woman described and Helena is too striking to be mere coincidence. Juxtaposed with this woman described is Mellors' wife Bertha Coutts. Bertha Coutts is a woman who is representative of pure lust, a lust that cannot be satisfied. Connie Chatterley's gradual achievement, an achievement in balance between the two states, is even more poignantly seen when viewed in this setting. In The Trespasser, written so early in D. H. Lawrence's career, this balanced equilibrium has yet to be conceived or imagined. Mr. Lawrence sees only one side of the coin. The one side he sees is unsatisfactory. Yet, he still does not have a solution. However, The Trespasser with its examination of the loss of physical intimacy in Helena appears to be a giant step toward the author's final conclusions, conclusions that no longer approach love in an ambit of cultural or personal antagonism. The Lost Girl is another step in the direction of finding the author's resolution of his problem.

CHAPTER III

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS: THE LOST GIRL

The Lost Girl contains an aspect of the general picture of life from which D. H. Lawrence arrived at his final conclusions. Of all the full-length novels that Mr. Lawrence wrote, the work that most closely follows the conventions and traditions prominent in the fiction written at that time is The Lost Girl. Following the main tradition of the English novel, the early portion of this book is set among the shopkeeper class where material things are most important, where the greatest disgrace possible is bankruptcy, and where spinsters seem to outnumber married women.

The story of Alvina Houghton, a young girl belonging to this class and seemingly destined to a stuffy sort of feminine bourgeois existence, appears to be an attempt by D. H. Lawrence to show that not adhering to the conventional "rules" in his previous novels was the result of choice and not the result of inability. Another possible reason for the author writing this book in the accepted manner may have been to increase sales. Whatever the reasons may have been, The Lost Girl was awarded the James Tait Black Memorial Prize in 1920 - one of the few official literary tributes paid to D. H. Lawrence during his lifetime.

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Whereas Mr. Lawrence in his earlier novels presented characterizations not really representative of their background, The Lost Girl appears to depict the characters in the proper setting for their actions and social norms, and because of this, the characters take on a more human appearance and possess less self-consciousness than is noticed in other Lawrence novels. For example, the characters of The White Peacock, supposedly comfortable middle class people, have an artificiality and stiltedness presented against the background of the East Midland mining area. They partake in afternoon teas, practice the social graces and stand aloof from the soot and dirt of the coal industry. It is a world of Edwardian leisure. This assumption of a bourgeois background has a deadening effect on The White Peacock and the artificiality extends to many of the important conversations in the book. The love-making between Lettie and the man she marries, Leslie, is carried on in an impossibly literary, even archaic, style, liberally sprinkled with quotations and mythological references.

"You are splendid!" he said.

She only laughed for answer. He drew her away to the great arm-chair, and made her sit in it beside him. She was indulgent and he radiant. He took her hand and looked at it, and at his ring which she wore.

"It looks all right!" he murmured.

"Anything would," she replied.

"What do you mean - sapphires and diamonds - for I don't know?"

"Nor do I. Blue for hope, because Seranza in 'Fairy Queen' had a blue gown - and diamonds for - the crystalline clearness of my nature."

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"Its glitter and hardness, you mean - You are a hard little mistress. But why Hope?"

"Why? - No reason whatever, like most things. No, that's not right. Hope! Oh - Blindfolded - hugging a silly harp with no strings. I wonder why she didn't drop her harp framework over the edge of the globe, and take the handkerchief off her eyes, and have a look round! But of course she was a woman - and a man's woman. Do you know I believe most women can sneak a look down their noses from underneath the handkerchief of hope they've tied over their eyes. They could take the whole muffler off - but they don't do it, the dears."

"I don't believe you know what you're talking about, and I'm sure I don't. Sapphires reminded me of your eyes - and - isn't it 'Blue that kept the faith?' I remember something about it."

"Here," said she, pulling off the ring, "you ought to wear it yourself, Faithful One, to keep me in constant mind."

"Keep it on, keep it on. It holds you faster than that fair damsel tied to a tree in Millais' picture - I believe it's Millais."¹

Nothing could be further from the love-talk of Lady Chatterley's Lover. Connie says to Mellors:

"It's the courage of your own tenderness, that's what it is; like when you put your hand on my tail and say I've got a pretty tail."²

Nothing could more clearly illustrate Mr. Lawrence's gradual development of his belief in the difference between the cultivated world of ideas and the world of life itself - what Mr. Lawrence calls warmth - than this contrast between his first and last novels.

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1. D. H. Lawrence, The White Peacock, pp. 106-107.
 2. D. H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover, p. 290.

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However, the middle class is a many-sided thing. In The Lost Girl, it is seen in an aspect quite different from what is reflected in The White Peacock. The early part of Alvina's Houghton's story gives the reader a fair notion of the social customs and mores of an English family of the period. Society is presented in such a manner as to have it appear that Mr. Lawrence accepted its existence without his usual protest. At the very outset, Mr. Lawrence describes it as:

The well-established society in Woodhouse, full of fine shades, ranging from the dark of coal-dust to grit of stone-mason and saw-dust of timber merchant, through the lustre of lard and butter and meat, to the perfume of the chemist and the disinfectant of the doctor, onto the serene gold-tarnish of bank-managers, cashiers for the firm, clergymen, and such-like, as far as the automobile refulgence of the general manager of all the collieries. Here the ne plus ultra. The general manager lives in shrubberied seclusion of the so-called Manor. The genuine Hall, abandoned by the 'County'; has been taken over as offices by the firm.

Here we are then; a vast substratum of colliers; a thick sprinkling of tradespeople intermingled with small employers of labour and diversified by elementary schoolmasters and non-conformist clergy; a high layer of bank managers, rich millers and well-to-do iron-masters, episcopal clergy and the managers of collieries; then the rich and sticky of the coal-owner glistening over all.

Such the complicated social system of a small industrial town of the Midlands of England in this year of grace 1920.³

3. D. H. Lawrence, The Lost Girl, p. 1.

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Mr. Lawrence once again returns to the mining area. This time it serves mainly as a backdrop and the author remains detached from it and its more dynamic influences. To a great degree, this approach seems to result in a loss of physical intimacy. The corresponding passage in Sons and Lovers reveals this:

'The Bottoms' succeeded to 'Hell Row'. Hell Row was a block of thatched, bulging cottages that stood by the brookside of Greenhill Lane. There lived the colliers who worked in the little gin-pits two fields away. The brook ran under the alder-tree, scarcely soiled by these small mines, whose coal was drawn to the surface by donkeys that plodded wearily in a circle round a gin. And all over the countryside were these same pits, some of which had been worked in the time of Charles II, the few colliers and the donkeys burrowing down like ants into the earth, making queer mounds and little black places among the corn-fields and the meadows.⁴

Both passages are examples of excellent writing. The opening of The Lost Girl appears to display only an awareness of the background that is accidentally present. In the opening of Sons and Lovers, it is unmistakably felt, resulting in the actual "living through" the described environment.

In The Lost Girl, the characters that Mr. Lawrence portrays are often the familiar, recognizable types common to the popular novel of the day. Miss Frost, Alvina's

4. D. H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers, p. 1.

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governess, is the typical English governess that has been so often depicted by numerous novelists.

She must defend the little Alvina, whom she loved as her own, and the nervous petulant, heart-stricken woman, the mother ...⁵

She seemed to give weight, ballast and repose to the staggering and bewildering home.⁶

She controlled the maid, and suggested the meal,...⁷

She brought in flowers and books, and, very rarely, a visitor, ...⁸

Miss Frost imperceptibly took into her hand the reins of the domestic government. Her rule was quiet, strong and generous. She was not seeking her own way. She was steering the poor domestic ship of Manchester house, illuminating its dark rooms with her own sure, radiant presence; her silver-white hair, and her pale, heavy, reposeful face seemed to give off a certain radiance.⁹

As a character, she is virtually indistinguishable from the figure of Miss Pross of Charles Dickens' Tale of Two Cities.

Miss Pross, it is recalled, had reared Lucie Manette "since she was ten years old"¹⁰ after the girl's mother's death and during Dr. Manette's imprisonment.

5. D. H. Lawrence, The Lost Girl, p. 8.

6. Ibid., p. 8.

7. Ibid., p. 8.

8. Ibid., p. 8.

9. Ibid., p. 8.

10. Charles Dickens, Tale of Two Cities, p. 116.

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Miss Pross ... one of those unselfish creatures - found only among women - who will, for pure love and admiration, bind themselves willing slaves,...¹¹

... there is nothing ... better than the faithful service of the heart; so rendered and so free from any mercenary taint, ...¹²

In the arrangements of the little household, Miss Pross took charge of the lower regions, and always acquitted herself marvellously. Her dinners, of a very modest quality, were so well cooked and so well served, and so neat in their contrivance, ... that nothing could be better.¹³

... the woman and girl who formed the staff of domestics regarded her as quite a sorceress, ...

Miss Pross's friendship being...thoroughly practical. On Sundays, Miss Pross dined at the doctor's table, but on other days, persisted in taking her meals, at unknown periods, either in the lower regions, or in her room on the second floor.¹⁴

Miss Pinnegar, the direct opposite of Miss Frost in demeanor, is also a familiar character-type; an uneducated working woman who utilizes her brusqueness to cover up her true emotions but, in her own way, is as equally loyal and unselfish as the admirable Miss Frost. The hard-talking brusqueness of the Nurse in Romeo and Juliet serves the same purpose and William Shakespeare's character is one of the earliest appearances of this character-type in English Literature. Alvina's father, James Houghton, with his

11. Ibid., p. 116.

12. Ibid., p. 117.

13. Ibid., pp. 121-122.

14. Ibid., p. 121.

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fanciful day-dreams of establishing the fashions for the 'County', his love for silks and fine draperies and his innumerable schemes for gaining financial security appears to be one of the very few characters created by Mr. Lawrence who can be considered humorous and somewhat pathetic simultaneously - not an unheard of combination but one found more frequently in the works of other novelists.

The plot of The Lost Girl is somewhat contrived. Nevertheless, the first few chapters are relatively simple compared to the others in the book. Alvina does not appear in the first chapter at all. It is only after the introduction of Miss Frost and Miss Pinnegar that Alvina is met, and then only as a child. As Mr. Lawrence says:

The heroine of this story is Alvina Houghton. If we leave her out of the first chapter of her own story it is because, during the first twenty-five years of her life, she really was left out of count, or so overshadowed as to be negligible. She and her mother were the phantom passengers in the ship of James Houghton's fortunes.¹⁵

James Houghton is the big local draper and proprietor of the Manchester House, who feels it is his mission to introduce the latest fashions and fabrics to the little mining town. Since the fashions and fabrics that he selects are impractical for their needs, the miners' wives refuse to accept his wares. The once successful shop enters into

15. D. H. Lawrence, The Lost Girl, p. 20.

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a state of decline. The shop which once dominated the little town diminishes in importance, portions of it are rented and eventually Mr. Houghton actually has to give away his remaining merchandise. Always a day-dreamer, he invests in a brickyard, then a small coal mine of his own and finally in "The Pleasure Palace", a cinema with theatrical intervals. While James Houghton invests and loses his money, the family is in a state of passive existence. His wife dies from heart failure after being a semi-invalid for most of her married life and the household is left to be run by Miss Frost and Miss Pinnegar.

In the meantime, Alvina has been growing up. Tutored and guided by her governess, she, little by little, seemed to be taking her natural place in society. Amid the inevitable rounds of chapel attendance and tea drinking which characterizes that society, she felt everywhere the adverse attitudes concerning spinsterhood. Consequently, she became engaged to a young Australian simply for the sake of having a husband. Fortunately, she soon became disenchanted with the prospects of marrying a man she did not love. More and more her existence seemed meaningless. Alvina studied nursing in order to escape the situation. She works as a midwife for a while and feels that she is accomplishing something. A dramatic incident arises when she finds herself called upon to nurse her own mother, a mother who was dying. All during this period, she is

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exceptionally efficient. However, the really significant characteristic of her professional capacity is her complete lack of emotion. Even towards her own mother, she is amazingly unemotional. Upon her mother's death, Alvina finds that she has once again drifted into the non-meaningful day-by-day existence of her previous life.

It is her father's purchase of the cinema and music hall that gives Alvina the promise of a new life. Although it is regarded as something of a social comedown, she agrees to play the piano there. Playing the piano and meeting the various performers is a novelty for Alvina and through these new experiences, she is swept into a life of less restraint. Now, for the first time in her life, she discovers herself less perturbed by the social pressure and responsibility of Woodhouse.

One of the dancing troupes to perform at "The Pleasure Palace" is the Natch-Kee-Tawara - a French woman and her four young men (two Swiss, one French and one Italian) - with its famed Red Indian act. The atmosphere surrounding the group is somewhat unhealthy, with an absurdly theatrical worship by the young men of Madame, the mother-figure who looks after them. She darns their socks, sees that they are properly fed and arranges their housing and receives - in fact, demands - subservience from the young men.

However, it is the Italian, Cicio, who fascinates Alvina. Anthony Beal describes him as:

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... not a noble savage; like the other performers he is commonplace and not particularly intelligent, certainly not noble.¹⁶

While Mr. Beal's observation is not distorted, it does not do complete justice to the overall impression that D. H. Lawrence wishes to convey. Virtually all the descriptive elements surrounding the character of Cicio in The Lost Girl have a subhuman almost animal quality to them. Indeed, animal images are constantly invoked in reference to this male figure:

His curious soft slouch, and curious way of lifting his lip from his white teeth, in a sort of smile ...¹⁷

He looked down at her with the same long, half-sardonic look of his yellow eyes, like a cat looking casually at a bird which flutters past.¹⁸

... while Cicio sprang like a cat down from the stage and bounded across the theatre ...¹⁹

... his strange watchful yellow eyes, that looked fixedly into hers, the dark pupil opening round and softening. She smiled into his softening round eyes, the eyes of some animal which stares in one of its silent, gentler moments.²⁰

... looking up at her with a narrowed cat-like look in his derisive eyes.²¹

16. Anthony Beal, D. H. Lawrence, p. 62.

17. D. H. Lawrence, The Lost Girl, p. 140.

18. Ibid., p. 142.

19. Ibid., p. 156.

20. Ibid., p. 164.

21. Ibid., p. 165.

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His skin was delicately tawny, and slightly lustrous. The eyes were set in so dark, that one expected them to be black and flashing. And then one met the yellow pupils, sulphurous and remote. It was like meeting a lion.²²

So that there can be absolutely no doubt as to Mr. Lawrence's conception of Cicio, the author has Madame refer to him as:

" ... the animal, the animal, ... And now thou hast called him a dirty Italian, or a dog of an Italian, and he has behaved like an animal. Too much, too much of an animal, ..." ²³

Almost unobtrusively, Mr. Lawrence also creates the impression of a reptile-like quality about the Italian.

... might have watched a serpent, had he found one gliding in the theatre. He looked at her sideways, furtively, but persistently.²⁴

... which sprawled nakedly on the floor. The forward drop of his head was curiously beautiful to her, the straight, powerful nape of the neck, the delicate shape of the back of the head, ... There was something mindless but intent about the forward reach of his head. His face seemed colourless, neutral-tinted and expressionless.²⁵

A snake is a phallic symbol. D. H. Lawrence regarded the phallus as an almost sacred image epitomizing the sensual and mystical integrity of the natural man. Certainly, Cicio

22. Ibid., p. 166.

23. Ibid., p. 157.

24. Ibid., p. 166.

25. Ibid., p. 170.

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is a phallic symbol. But there is also

... something "mindless and intent" about him: and at the appearance of this so Lawrencian phrase in this hitherto un-Lawrencian novel, the reader may well surmise that Alvina's goose is cooked.²⁶

However, Alvina is still a product of her environment and, contrary to expectations, does not submit to this male animal at once. To her, Cicio is unreal.

They were unreal, Madame and Cicio and the rest. Cicio was just a fantasy blown in on the wind, to blow away again. The real, permanent thing was Woodhouse, the semper idem Knarborough Road, and the unchangeable grubby gloom of Manchester House, with the stuffy, padding Miss Pinnegar, and her father, whose fingers, whose very soul seemed dirty with pennies. These were the solid permanent fact.²⁷

Viewing it thus, Alvina thinks her present existence is "life enough" but it obviously is not. Being drawn from all sides by the many pressures in her life, Alvina finally rebels, leaves home and joins the "Red Indian" troupe because:

There was no hope for Alvina in the ordinary. If help came, it would have to come from the extraordinary. Hence the extreme peril of her case. Hence the bitter fear and humiliation she felt as she drudged shabbily on in Manchester House, ... Men can suck the heady juice of exalted self importance from the bitter weed of failure - even as was James Houghton. But to a woman, failure is another matter. For her, it means failure to live, failure to establish her own life on the face of the earth. And this is humiliating, the ultimate

26. Anthony Beal, D. H. Lawrence, p. 62.

27. D. H. Lawrence, The Lost Girl, p. 149.

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humiliation. . . . Alvina had passed her twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, and even her twenty-ninth year. She was in her thirtieth. It ought to be a laughing matter. But it wasn't.²⁸

Alvina's joining the troupe and her subsequent seduction by Cicio with the full approval of Madame and her "Red Indians" brings about a conflict within the girl which makes her more closely resemble Mr. Lawrence's other heroines than she had previously. With the beginning of her affair with the Italian, the dilemma of succumbing to her passions or obeying her will, following her instinct or being true to her background presents itself. However, Alvina is a woman who possesses self-knowledge to a degree that the other heroines of D. H. Lawrence do not. She knows that Cicio does not and will never have the qualities that will be acceptable to her social standards and she is also well aware that her being physically attracted to him means a rejection of "respectability" for her. Even so, Mr. Lawrence does not depict Alvina as a tormented character who has given up all and gained nothing by her final decision.

Life with the Natch-Kee-Tawaras is exciting after living in Manchester House but the group and the girl have such diversified outlooks on things that Alvina feels it

28. Ibid., p. 87.

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necessary that she make one more attempt at the respectable life. Leaving the troupe, she takes a position as a midwife in a Lancaster hospital where, at first, being tired of the dingy theatrical boarding houses, she thoroughly enjoys the cleanliness and usefulness of hospital life.

Through her life at the hospital, Mr. Lawrence once more exposes Alvina to a life of bourgeois respectability. A symbol of social status is introduced with the advent of Dr. Mitchell, a kind, reasonable and professional Scot. Dr. Mitchell is all the things that Cicio is not. He is middle-aged, respected and financially secure. He owns a square old house with a choice selection of furniture.

... the Jacobean side board and the Jacobean arm-chairs and the Hepplewhite wall-chairs and the Sheraton settee and the Chippendale stands and the Axminster carpets and the bronze clock with Shakespeare and Ariosto reclining on it.²⁹

He was a made man: and now he was really letting himself go, luxuriating in everything; above all, in Alvina, who poured tea gracefully from the old Georgian teapot, and smiled so pleasantly above Queen Anne tea-cups.³⁰

When he proposes, Alvina accepts although she knows that she will never marry him. When Cicio returns professing his love, Alvina, weighing her love for the Italian and the

29. Ibid., p. 268.

30. Ibid., p. 268.

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prospects of a dull life of "non-existence" with Dr. Mitchell, marries the dancer and they make the long wartime journey to Italy.

Despite her yielding to her love and passion for Cicio, Alvina is well aware that she never can become a part of her husband's life. The novel ends in the familiar Laurentian manner of inconclusiveness with Alvina pregnant, Cicio in the army and a vague promise that the couple will seek a new life in America after the war.

Now, Alvina is indeed a "lost girl". She loves her husband. She is his woman and realizes that she will never become completely adjusted to his way of life. Although Cicio has accepted her, she knows she can never be anything but conspicuous against the background that Pescocalascio affords. Despite these things she is happy that she has escaped the fate of a sterile old maid living in a Manchester House and going through the mundane social rituals of a Woodhouse. There is no question that Mr. Lawrence meant the Lost of the title to mean other than morally lost. In a letter to Lady Cynthia Asquith in May, 1920, he wrote:

I've actually finished my new novel, The Lost Girl: not morally lost, I assure you.³¹

31. D. H. Lawrence, Selected Letters, ed., Richard Aldington, p. 133.

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The "lostness" of the lost girl can be interpreted to signify the fact that she is completely "lost" as far as her prior station in life and the middle class respectability that she turned her back on are concerned. In a sense, she has abandoned herself to a middle road of life. She is aware that she cannot return to the old and yet she cannot adjust to the new. "She was cut off from everything she belonged to."³² Graham Hough states that Alvina is

... in the position of a girl who has burnt her
boats and abandoned herself to this kind of life;
... ³³

True, Alvina's boats have been burned. She can never return to Woodhouse. She must remain at Pescocalascio but always bearing the badge of what she once was. In this sense, this relative sense, Alvina has taken up a position which might justify the word "lost". How prophetic had been the words of Miss Pinnegar when she remarked: "You're a lost girl!"³⁴ and how unwittingly, almost ironically, prophetic are the words of Alvina when she answered: "I like being lost".³⁵

The Lost Girl stands alone among the novels because it is only here that Mr. Lawrence is not, to a greater or

32. D. H. Lawrence, The Lost Girl, p. 324.

33. Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, p. 115.

34. D. H. Lawrence, The Lost Girl, p. 224.

35. Ibid., p. 224.

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lesser degree, emotionally involved. He is more the disinterested observer and reporter of events than he is in any of his other novels. However, in The Lost Girl, for the first time, the embryo of the feminine seeker for fulfillment is sketched, a shape that is going to be molded and remolded many times in far more passionate hands as, for example, in Mr. Lawrence's treatment of the characters of Kate Leslie in The Plumed Serpent and Connie Chatterley in Lady Chatterley's Lover.

As it has been seen in The Trespasser, a woman who is sexually self-conscious can be a destructive force for man. A purely lustful woman can also be destructive for man. In The Lost Girl, the fulfillment that Alvina achieves loses much of its plausibility through the animal-like qualities that are attributed to Cicio. As Katherine Mansfield pointed out:

He [D. H. Lawrence] denies life - I mean human life. His hero and heroine are non-human. They are animals on the prowl. They do not feel: they scarcely speak. They submit to the physical responses and the rest go veiled - blind - faceless ... ³⁶

This does appear to be a serious lapse. Mr. Lawrence's natural man is not intended to be purely a sensuous animal, responding merely to biological instincts. He is

36. Edward Nehls, D. H. Lawrence, A Composite Biography, 1919-1925, Vol. II, p. 51.

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intended to achieve a rapport with a woman, a rapport that transcends both the physical and the mental. He is intended to be as one with a woman both sexually and spiritually. His darkest, deepest inner self is involved. Yet, as he becomes as one with a woman, he still retains his otherness. An otherness which retains the individuality, pride and independence of the self is imperative. For Mr. Lawrence, this is the proper response to the blood-consciousness. It is through this blood-consciousness that the natural or "living" man will commune with the gods within him. The true "being" of a man or woman is present when they have both transcended their mental-consciousness and have achieved a polarization both within themselves and between themselves. In no way is it indicated that Alvina and Cicio achieve this polarity. He responds completely through animal drive. Unlike Helena of The Trespasser, Alvina does not fear the "brute" in her lover. In fact, it is just this animal quality that fascinates her. Cicio, being representative of a phallic symbol, would be indicative of what could have been. Certainly, it is not what was. The animal-like squalor of peasant living in Pescocalascio - its dirt floor, earth closets and lack of furniture - which Mr. Lawrence describes makes Alvina's position all the more repulsive. Perhaps, this is what D. H. Lawrence meant when he called Alvina a "lost girl". Yielding to sheer animalism in a quest for fulfillment and as an escape from

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a life of mediocrity and "nothingness" is a complete negation of the self. How doubly ironic are Alvina's words: "I like being lost". Perhaps this is what Mr. Lawrence saw on the other side of the coin. "Being and becoming" involves much more than Alvina's achievement. It involves the parental pressures, the mental pressures, the physical pressures; it involves the whole of one's self. The "coming into being" for Paul Morel pictured in Sons and Lovers embodies all of these pressures and a look at both sides of the coin.

CHAPTER IV

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN: SONS AND LOVERS

The need for a "mental attitude toward oneself and things in general" which "makes one try to abstract some definite conclusions" ¹ is best illustrated in Sons and Lovers. D. H. Lawrence wrote his own analysis of this novel and he wrote it after the novel had been written. As was observed in the first chapter, Mr. Lawrence first wrote Sons and Lovers in 1910 and published it early in 1913. On November 12, 1912, D. H. Lawrence wrote the following letter to his friend Edward Garnett, in which he outlined Paul Morel - the first title for this novel.

It follows this idea: a woman of character and refinement goes into the lower class, and has no satisfaction in her own life. She has had a passion for her husband, so the children are born of passion, and have heaps of vitality. But as her sons grow up she selects them as lovers - first the eldest, then the second. These sons are urged into life by their reciprocal love of their mother - urged on and on. But when they come to manhood, they can't love, because their mother is the strongest power in their lives, and holds them. ... As soon as the young men come into contact with women, there's a split. William gives his love to a ribble, and his mother holds his soul. But the

1. D. H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. 57.

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split kills him, because he doesn't know where he is. The next son gets the woman who fights for his soul - fights his mother. The son loves the mother - all the sons hate and are jealous of the father. The battle goes on between the mother and the girl, with the son as object. The mother gradually proves the stronger, because of the tie of blood. The son decides to leave his soul in his mother's hands, and, like his elder brother, go for passion. He gets passion. Then the split begins to tell again. But almost unconsciously, the mother realizes what is the matter, and begins to die. The son casts off his mistress, attends to his mother dying. He is left in the end naked of everything, with the drift toward death.²

Both the outline of the novel and the novel itself suggest Freud's theory of the Oedipus Complex in a classic manner. It would naturally appear as if D. H. Lawrence were greatly influenced by Freudian theories in the plot of the novel. However, it has been established that Sons and Lovers is a largely autobiographical work and that the situation of mother-son love described actually existed in the author's life. Jessie Chambers Wood, the real-life prototype of Miriam, has recorded an incident which took place in 1910. The incident in question illustrates the author's insight.

The day before his mother's funeral we went for a walk together. ... At the end of that same walk, as we stood within a stone's throw of the house where his mother lay dead, he said to me: 'You know, J., I've always loved mother.' 'I know you have,' I replied. 'I don't mean that,' he answered. 'I've loved her -

2. D. H. Lawrence, *Selected Letters*, ed., Richard Aldington, pp. 47-48.

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like a lover - that's why I could never love you.'³ Being aware of the situation, Mr. Lawrence was able to re-live many of his own experiences while writing this novel. Later, in 1912, he said that he had never read Freud - though he had heard of him, of course - during the period when he was making Sons and Lovers.⁴ His wife's memoirs reveal that on the day of their first meeting, she and D. H. Lawrence "talked about Oedipus and understanding leaped through our words".⁵ Thus, though D. H. Lawrence's Sons and Lovers is one of the first, if not the first, Freudian psychological novels to be written in English, it is not a novel that was written after a study of the psychologist's theories. In other words, it was not the result of any conscious attempt on the part of D. H. Lawrence to use Freud as many later novelists have. It came

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3. Edward Nehls, D. H. Lawrence, A Composite Biography, 1925-1930, Vol. III, p. 479.
 4. D. H. Lawrence, The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, ed.,
 5. Frieda Lawrence, "Not I, but the Wind...", p. 4.

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about quite accidentally.⁶

Sons and Lovers, the third novel written by D. H. Lawrence, presents three distinct feminine character-types. Each, by being the kind of woman she is, has a profound effect upon Paul Morel.

Mrs. Morel, a mother-figure, as complex and as memorable as Jocasta, provides an image and an overpowering blood-tie to Paul Morel which he cannot easily escape. The reader of this book is always aware of her influence upon the characters even when she is absent for several chapters. As D. H. Lawrence outlined, in his letter to Garnett, she is puritanical, high-minded, educated, from an old "burgher", Congregationalist family that had come down in the world. Walter Morel, the "diamond in the rough" miner, is very different and it is this difference that makes him originally so appealing to her. However, it is

6. Psychologists and amateur psychologists who champion Freudian concepts often tend to see examples of Freud's theories in almost everything which they encounter. Sons and Lovers has been a favorite target for many of them. They cite it as the prime example of the perverted mother-son love that we all call the Oedipus Complex. They argue that Mr. Lawrence was a supreme egotist and never hesitated to lie to make himself more exalted; the novel could not reflect the psychological theory if the author had not been palpably influenced by it. These "Freudians" seem to be ignoring the Oedipal existence in Oedipus Rex and the fact that the situation was depicted in Sophocles' play long before Freud put labels on abnormal behavior. In this context, there is insufficient evidence to make one believe any way but what the author's and his wife's statements tell.

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also this difference that causes their marriage to deteriorate. During the first year of their marriage, Mrs. Morel experiences real satisfaction and is not unhappy. She had viewed her husband as

... so full of colour and animation, his voice ran so easily into comic grotesque, he was so ready and pleasant with everybody. Her own father had a rich fund of humour, but it was satiric. This man [Walter Morel] was different: soft, non-intellectual, warm, a kind of gambolling.⁷

The first year, the physical satisfaction was enough. However, she was soon disillusioned. She was too much unlike her husband.

Sometimes, when she herself wearied of love-talk, she tried to open her heart seriously to him. She saw him listening deferentially, but without understanding. This killed her efforts at finer intimacy.⁸

She had a curious receptive mind, which found much pleasure and amusement in listening to other folk. She was clever in leading folk on to talk. She loved ideas, and was considered very intellectual. What she liked most of all was an argument on religion or philosophy or politics with some educated man. This she did not often enjoy. So she always had people tell her about themselves, finding her pleasure.⁹

She found that her husband lacked a sense of responsibility. She discovered unpaid bills and detected him in lies and evasions. He began to neglect her. Although he had signed the "pledge" when they married, he began to spend his spare

7. D. H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers, p. 17.

8. Ibid., p. 20.

9. Ibid., p. 17.

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time drinking in the pub.

Walter Morel was not the sole cause of the disharmony which developed between them. Mrs. Morel contributed a great deal to this dissension. She badgered him. She complained. She fretted after him.

She still had her high moral sense, inherited from generations of Puritans. It was now a religious instinct, and she was almost a fanatic with him, because she loved him, or had loved him. If he sinned, she tortured him. If he drank, and lied, was often a poltroon, sometimes a knave, she wielded the lash unmercifully.¹⁰

She tried to make her husband over, to change his nature.

His nature was purely sensuous, and she strove to make him moral, religious. She tried to force him to face things. He could not endure it - it drove him out of his mind.¹¹

They were simply too much unlike each other.

She could not be content with the little he might be. So in seeking to make him nobler than he could be, she destroyed him.¹²

Such behaviour on the part of Mrs. Morel appears to indicate that she possesses a characteristic similar to Helena of The Trespasser. She is one of those women who "by instinct

10. Ibid., p. 25.

11. Ibid., p. 23.

12. Ibid., p. 25.

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aim at suppressing the gross and the animal"¹³ in men. It is the "brute" in Siegmund that repels Helena. It is the sensuous nature of Walter Morel that Mrs. Morel tries to refine.

By the time William, the Morels' first son, is born, much of her love for her husband has given way to disillusionment. She gives the son the love that was once her husband's. The birth of their daughter, Annie, does nothing to breach the gap between them. Mrs. Morel views her third pregnancy with bitterness. She hates the thought of another child. This dread of another child is transformed into feelings of guilt and remorse when Paul Morel is born.

In her arms lay the delicate baby. Its deep blue eyes always looking up at her, unblinking, seemed to draw her innermost thoughts out of her. She no longer loved her husband; she had not wanted this child to come, and there it lay in her arms and pulled at her heart. She felt as if the navel string went over her to the infant. She held it close to her face and breast. With all her force, with all her soul she would make up to it for having brought it into the world unloved. She would love it all the more now it was here; carry it in her love. Its clear knowing eyes gave her pain and fear. Did it know all about her? When it lay under her heart, had it been listening then? Was there a reproach in the look? She felt the marrow melt in her bones, with fear and pain.¹⁴

13. D. H. Lawrence, The Trespasser, p. 84.

14. D. H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers, pp. 50-51.

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The children, of course, are close to their mother. She is their teacher in many respects. As a result, they come to see their father through her eyes and all build up an antagonism against him. Mrs. Morel's background and her immense distaste for her husband's grossness makes her determined that her sons will never work in the mines as he has done. Instead, they will become educated and gain "superior" positions as clerks and teachers.

When pneumonia causes the death of William, his mother's hopes are destroyed. She feels as if the "end of the world" had come. She withdraws into herself and it is only the severe illness of Paul that brings her out of her self-pitying doldrums. From then on, her entire life is centered around Paul. In her view Walter, her husband, had failed her. She needs her son as a lover.

Such is Paul Morel's heritage. His subsequent lack of decisiveness is a direct result of his parents' failure. They have been false to their true natures. Mrs. Morel will not have her husband as he is. She tries to force him to be something else, something less virile and less free. Walter Morel has failed to dispel his wife's prejudices. He has failed to make her accept life as it is. He has also failed himself by not taking any decisive action.

With the introduction of Miriam, however, things begin to alter. Miriam is the feminine character who,

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as Mr. Lawrence wrote in the outline, "fights for his soul - fights his mother". Paul Morel's struggle into "being" has begun. Miriam

... was romantic in her soul ... She herself was something of a princess turned into a swine-girl in her own imagination. ... brown eyed, and inclined to be mystical, such women treasure religion inside them, breathe it in their nostrils, and see the whole of life in a mist thereof ...

On the whole, she scorned the male sex. But here was a new specimen [Paul], quick, light, graceful who could be gentle and who could be sad, and who was clever and who knew a lot. ... Yet, she tried hard to scorn him, because he could not see in her the princess but only the swine girl.¹⁵

As their relationship progresses, Miriam brings the artist in Paul to life. The man she ignores. Similarly, Paul ignores the woman in her. During the many years of their friendship, neither could conceive their relationship as anything other than a relationship between souls. Their attraction for each other was wholly on a spiritual plane. For over eight years, they were virtually inseparable. They enjoyed nature and books together. Not once during their years together does passion arise with sufficient clarity to cause even a kiss between them. It is not that

15. Ibid., pp. 177-178.

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Paul Morel continually fights sexual desires. He simply does not desire Miriam that way.

He wished he did. He would have given his head to have felt a joyous desire to marry her. ... There was some obstacle; ... It lay in the physical bondage. He shrank from the physical contact. ...

It seemed as if virginity was a positive force which fought and won in both of them.¹⁶

Miriam had been raised by her mother to believe that "there is one thing in marriage that is always dreadful, but you have to bear it".¹⁷ Paul, because of his mother's influence, had become overly sensitive.

A good many of the nicest men he knew were like himself, bound by their own virginity, which they could not break out of. They were so sensitive to their women that they would go without them forever rather than do them a hurt, an injustice. Being sons of mothers whose husbands had blundered rather brutally through their feminine sanctities, they were themselves too diffident and shy. They could easier deny themselves than incur any reproach from a woman; for a woman was like their mother, and they were full of the sense of their mother. They preferred themselves to suffer the misery of celibacy, rather than risk the other person.¹⁸

Mrs. Morel deeply resents the time that Paul spends with Miriam. She deplores the hold that the girl appears to have on her son. She continually makes disparaging remarks about the girl to try to make Paul reject Miriam

16. Ibid., p. 340.

17. Ibid., p. 355.

18. Ibid., p. 341.

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and to make the sensitive girl feel unwelcome in the Morel home. Ostensibly, she believes that:

She Miriam is one of those who will want to suck a man's soul out till he has none of his own left. ... and he is just such a gaby as to let himself be absorbed. She will never let him become a man; ...¹⁹

But, in reality, her principal fear is that Miriam will displace her with Paul.

She exults - she exults as she carries him off from me, ... She's not like an ordinary woman, who can leave me my share in him. She wants to draw him out and absorb him till there is nothing left of him, even for himself.²⁰

Paul is in a dilemma. On one hand, there is Mrs. Morel with the "tie of blood" which prevents him from breaking away from her. The "tie of blood" is related to nothing more esoteric than the fact that Paul's deepest sympathy and sense of protection lies with his mother. His mental anguish is the result of his indecision.

He walked biting his lips and with clenched fists, going at a great rate. Then brought up against a stile, he stood for some minutes, and did not move. There was a great hollow of darkness fronting him, and on the black up-slopes patches of tiny lights, and in the lowest trough of the night, a flare of the pit. It was all weird and dreadful. Why was he torn so, almost bewildered and unable to move?

19. Ibid., p. 199.

20. Ibid., p. 237.

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Why did his mother sit at home and suffer? Why did he hate Miriam, and feel so cruel toward her, at the thought of his mother? If Miriam caused his mother suffering, then he hated her. Why did she make him feel as if he were uncertain of himself, insecure, an indefinite thing, as if he had not sufficient sheathing to prevent the night and the space breaking into him.²¹

In either case, Paul is torn apart. On one hand, he cannot join Miriam in a satisfactory association; and, on the other, he feels himself straining to escape from his home life which prevents him from expressing what he feels stirring within himself.

When, at last, Paul's sensitivity is overcome by natural desires, he forces the issue and makes love to Miriam. She submits almost passively because she loves him. He has no regard for her in their lovemaking and is brutish in his passion. Afterwards, within himself, Paul feels a sense of failure. Instead of their physical intimacy drawing them closer together, it drives them apart. Finally Paul decides that Miriam could not

... take him and relieve him of the responsibility of himself. She could only sacrifice herself to him - sacrifice herself every day, gladly. And that he did not want. He wanted her to hold him and say, with joy and authority: 'Stop all this restlessness and beating against death. You are mine for a mate.'

21. Ibid., p. 238.

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She had not the strength. Or was it a mate she wanted? or did she want a Christ in him?²²

Overcome by his mother's will and his sense of failure, Paul breaks off with Miriam. He knew what he meant to his mother. He was now aware that as long as she lived, he could never give himself to another woman. However, youthful male vigor being what it is, he was driven to find compensation. Following his break with Miriam, he turns to Clara Dawes.

Clara Dawes is the "new woman" of the period. Though married, she is separated from her husband. She is self-supporting, self-educated and active in the Suffragette movement. With her, Paul attempts to satisfy his passions, while reserving for his mother the spiritual love that had once been Miriam's but which his mother had never completely surrendered. As Cicio of The Lost Girl possesses what Dr. Mitchell lacks, Clara Dawes possesses what Miriam lacks. Clara is independent, emancipated, experienced, and physically uninhibited. While Miriam trespassed upon the sanctities that had been Mrs. Morel's, Clara stands free. Miriam wanted complete love with all the committals of fidelity, tenderness and understanding. Paul could not

22. Ibid., p. 508.

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give this because of the "tie" to his mother. Clara's is a frank, physical appeal.

The difference between the relationship which exists between Paul and Clara and that which existed between Paul and Miriam is subtly emphasized. Shortly before his first meeting with Clara, Paul had been reading the Bible to Miriam. He stammers and stumbles over a passage about a woman in travail. Anything suggesting the physical relation of men and women was taboo between them. Not long after, when they are walking with Clara, they meet an elderly spinster lovingly caressing a beautiful stallion. Clara blurts out flatly: "I suppose she wants a man".²³ Paul's immediate reaction is the feeling of a hot wave of excitement running through him.

Miriam possesses a deep, sensitive and spiritual nature. Clara is trivial and shallow. However, Paul Morel is seeking passion and Clara Dawes possesses a mature womanliness that Miriam lacks. With Clara, Paul is pleased that he can gain relief from his passions and still not risk his mother's disapproval. As Graham Hough points out; "It is not the women whom their sons sleep with that possessive mothers hate - it is the women whom they love".²⁴

23. Ibid., p. 290.

24. Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, p. 66.

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Even on Clara's visits to the Morel household "it was a clear, cool atmosphere, where everyone was himself and in harmony".²⁵

Paul and Clara share passion but this sexual relationship only produces satisfaction for a little while. Paul, in his inexperience, has not yet realized that women need to be satisfied as well as men need to be relieved. He approaches their love-making impersonally.

It is not Clara. It was something that happened because of her, but it was not her. They were scarcely any nearer each other.²⁶

Even the uninhibited Clara Dawes begins to fear the "brute" in him.

... she was afraid. When he had her then, there was something in it that made her shrink away from him ... something unnatural. She grew to dread him. He was so quiet, yet so strange. She was afraid of the man who was not there with her, whom she could feel behind this make-believe lover; somebody sinister, that filled her with horror. She began to have a kind of horror of him. It was almost as if he were a criminal. ... it made her feel as if death itself had her in its grip.²⁷

Clara's purely physical relationship and Miriam's purely spiritual relationship are equally powerless to hold the real and vital Paul. Through Paul's efforts, Clara

25. D. H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers, p. 393.

26. Ibid., p. 431.

27. Ibid., p. 470.

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eventually becomes reconciled with her estranged husband, Baxter Dawes. Clara feels

... 'as if I hadn't got you, Paul as if all you weren't there, and as if it weren't me you were taking - ' ... 'Something just for yourself. It has been fine, so that I daren't think of it. But is it me you want, or is it It?²⁸

While with Baxter, it was something different.

'When I had Baxter, actually had him, then I did feel as if I had all of him ... it was more whole.'²⁹

When Clara sees the two men together, she finds Paul paltry and insignificant. On the other hand, Baxter seems to have more manly dignity - even a certain nobility. In a final act of self-negation, Paul slips away and leaves the husband and wife together. He is finished with his only real sexual relationship and the bond with his mother is unimpaired.

All this while, Mrs. Morel has been slowly dying from cancer. Paul and his sister Annie nurse her and despite of her steadily weakening condition, she fights to live. To spare her further agony, Paul, in desperation, kills his mother with an overdose of sleeping tablets.

D. H. Lawrence's outline of the novel to Garnett states: "He is left in the end naked of everything, with

28. Ibid., p. 441.

29. Ibid., p. 442.

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the drift toward death". While it is true that Paul is left derelict and with no one now to love him or to help him, the ending of the novel itself does not seem to support Mr. Lawrence's contention concerning the "drift toward death". The novel ends:

'Mother!' he whimpered - 'mother!'

She was the only thing that held him up, himself, amid all this. And she was gone, intermingled herself. He wanted her to touch him, have him alongside with her.

But no, he would not give in. Turning sharply, he walked toward the city's gold phosphorescence. His fists were shut, his mouth set fast. He would not take that direction, to the darkness, to follow her. He walked towards the faintly humming, glowing town, quickly.³⁰

Following the author's own edict, - "Never trust the artist, trust the tale" - it is necessary to reject his "drift toward death" statement. The drift is actually toward life. Paul refuses to give in. He proves capable of a regenerating spark. The euthanasia he provides for his mother might be considered as simply an act of utter despair. However, it is significantly symbolic that his first real decisive action involves the taking of his mother's life. The umbilical cord that has bound them since his birth has finally been cut. Paul rejects despair and determines to

30. Ibid., pp. 510-511.

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face the unknown future - but in the light, not in the darkness.

Mrs. Morel and Miriam, together with Helena of The Trespasser, are examples of the destructive force that can exist in women. They live by their ideals and inhibitions. They take from a man but rarely give. As such they can destroy a man.

It is the death of all life to force a pure idea into practice. Life must be lived from the deep, self-responsible, spontaneous centres of every individual, in a vital, non-ideal circuit of dynamic relation between individuals. The passions or desires which are thought-born are deadly. Any particular mode of passion or desire which receives an exclusively ideal sanction at once becomes poisonous.³¹

Mrs. Morel tried to change her husband into something he was not. She had thought that he owned his house and that he had substantial savings. In fact, he was a miner living from one week's pay to the next. He was not a property owner, he was a member of the working classes, and according to her standards, she had married disastrously. The rest of her life was devoted to a rejection of her husband and his class. She would improve her station - if not through her husband, then through her sons. Since her husband,

31. D. H. Lawrence, Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious, pp. 120-121.

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Walter Morel, had failed her, she tried to feed herself on that part of her son that should have belonged to his woman.

Miriam, on the other hand, "scorned the male sex". She had been taught by her mother that "there is one thing in marriage that is always dreadful". Men could not see that she "was something of a princess turned into a swine girl". She can sacrifice herself to Paul Morel's sexual needs but she cannot give herself to him. She wants not a "mate" but a "Christ". Her spirituality produces a spiritual love that is devoid of any physical aspects. As a dreaming woman, she

... did not fit in with the others; she could rarely get into human relations with anyone; so her friend, her companion, her lover, was Nature. She saw the sun declining wanly. In the dusky, cold hedgerows were some red leaves. She lingered to gather them, tenderly, passionately. The love in her fingertips caressed the leaves; the passion in her heart came to a glow upon the leaves.³²

Miriam's idealism and self-conception was a barrier that Paul Morel could not surmount. Helen of The Trespasser has been discussed in detail. However, Helena is similar to Miriam. Helena's conception of Siegmund was godlike. She could detach herself from human relationships. As Nature is a lover to Miriam, Helena felt that

32. D. H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers, p. 205.

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... the sea was a great lover, like Siegmund, but more impersonal, who would receive her ... She rejoiced momentarily in the fact.³³

Mr. Lawrence's following observation is applicable to all three women: Mrs. Morel, Miriam and Helena.

But once a woman is sexually self-conscious, what is she to do? There it is, she is born with the disease of her own self-consciousness, as was her mother before her. She is bound to experiment and try one idea after another, in the long run always to her own misery. She is bound to have fixed one, then another idea of herself, herself as a woman. First she is the noble spouse of a not-quite-so noble male: then a Mater Dolorosa: then a ministering angel: then a competent social unit, ... she is the Isolde of some Tristand, or the Guinevere of some Lancelot, or the Fata Morgana of all men - in her own idea. She can't stop having an idea of herself. She can't get herself out of her own head. And there she is, functioning away from her own head and her own consciousness of herself and her automatic self-will, till the whole man-and-woman game has become just a hell, and men with any backbone would rather kill themselves than go on with it.³⁴

D. H. Lawrence was just twenty-seven when he finished Sons and Lovers. Even so it appears that Sons and Lovers is a definite look backwards, a look backwards at the youth that made the man. In this respect, Sons and

33. D. H. Lawrence, The Trespasser, p. 63.

34. D. H. Lawrence, Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. 121.

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Lovers can be likened to James Joyce's Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and, to a degree, to T. S. Eliot's essay, "The Development of Taste". Paul does not come into "being" in the novel but the events depicted surely must be considered as a part of his "becoming".

Of the four archetypal figures which dominated Mr. Lawrence's work - the sensuous, mindless man; the possessive, loving mother; the yearning spiritual girl; and the loving mature woman who brings fulfillment - only the last does not appear in Sons and Lovers. It is in Lady Chatterley's Lover that her portrait is drawn in broad dark strokes.

CHAPTER V

THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY: LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER

D. H. Lawrence had always been impressed by the difference between the quality of personal reticence and separateness of middle-class people and the working-class capacity for fusion and mingling. As Paul Morel of Sons and Lovers put it:

The difference between people isn't in their class, but in themselves. Only from the middle classes one gets ideas and from the common people - life itself, warmth.¹

Mr. Lawrence's deepest destestation was always reserved for the 'hard-shelled, separate people' of whom he found so many among the English and American middle classes. In the achievement of separateness all capacity for tenderness and warm human relationship is lost. This is particularly true in the physical and sexual sphere, and it is the women who suffer the most. It is on this long-standing conviction that Lady Chatterley's Lover was built.

There is probably no more widely known female character in Western fiction at the present time than Constance Reid Chatterley of D. H. Lawrence's Lady Chatterley's Lover. As the final creation in the long line of

1. D. H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers, p. 313.

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desperate women who people Mr. Lawrence's fiction, she has been discussed in law courts, and talked about in hushed tones at social gatherings. More recently her actions and her motivations have been subjected to close scrutiny by scholars and students of literature. Unfortunately, her primary appeal as a fictional character does not depend upon any especially attractive or repulsive traits as does the appeal of characters such as Tiny Tim or Fagin. On the contrary, Connie Chatterley is known to the general public almost wholly because of the publication bans that have been imposed on Mr. Lawrence's final novel and the subsequent trials it has been forced to undergo.

As already noted in the first chapter of this thesis, D. H. Lawrence wrote three versions of his romance, Lady Chatterley's Lover, before he was satisfied with what he termed its intrinsic purity.

Anybody who calls my novel a dirty sexual novel is a liar.²

Such was his first reaction to criticism. More followed:

I always labour at the same thing - to make the sex relation valid and precious, instead of shameful ... Beautiful and tender and frail as the naked self is ...³

2. D. H. Lawrence, The Portable D. H. Lawrence, p. 598.

3. D. H. Lawrence, The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, ed., Aldous Huxley, p. 683.

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and,

It is a nice and tender phallic novel - not a sex novel in the ordinary sense of the word ... I sincerely believe in restoring the other, the phallic consciousness; because it is the source of all real beauty and all real gentleness. And those are the two things tenderness and beauty, which will save us from horror.⁴

Lady Chatterley's Lover turned out to be almost as much as a polemic as a novel. It is not considered Mr. Lawrence's best work by some analysts. However, it has been his most controversial novel. In the English-speaking world, almost from the start, it was forced into furtive, under-the-counter sales by back-alley dealers because, until recently, the law forbade it the right to appear in normal literary thoroughfares. The liberal use of certain Anglo-Saxon words in a way which Mr. Lawrence believed was therapeutic, and the intimate descriptions of physical sex in its unexpurgated editions labelled it prurient in many circles. As a result, it has been the subject of clashes in and out of court between those who believe in censorship and those who do not believe in censorship, and between those who know what literature is and those who do not know what literature is.

4. Ibid., p. 708.

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Public opinion suppressed the complete version of Lady Chatterley's Lover for thirty years. But recently, after legal battles on both sides of the Atlantic, the unexpurgated edition was published widely and allowed to be sold through normal channels, first in the United States in 1959, then in England in 1960, and finally in Canada in 1962.

D. H. Lawrence wrote Lady Chatterley's Lover in 1928, two years before he died. Aldous Huxley recalled that

My first wife typed out the manuscript for Lawrence, even though she was a bad typist and had no patience with English spelling - she was Belgian, you know. Then, she didn't always appreciate the nuances of the language she was typing. Our friends were profoundly shocked when she tried out some of those four-letter words in conversation.⁵

The Florentine firm of Orioli published the first edition of the novel. The printer could not read English and some of his assistants could not read at all. The thousand copies of the run were priced at two guineas each but within a few weeks, a single copy was selling in Paris for twenty-five pounds. Some two hundred more copies were printed and pirated for sale in the United States and other parts of France at high prices.

5. Anonymous, "The Trial of Lady Chatterley", CBC Times, p. 6.

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In a letter replying to a complimentary cable, Mr. Lawrence wrote to say that Lady Chatterley's Lover

... seems to have exploded like a bomb among most of my English friends, and they're still suffering from shell-shock. But they're coming 'round already; some few already feeling it was good for 'em. Give them time. There are rumors of suppression in England, and rumors of bans in America. But I can't help it. I've shot my shot, anyhow; shot an arrow into the air tee-de-dum!⁶

But he took the antipathy to his uninhibited writing much more seriously than this lighthearted letter might imply.

You mustn't think I advocate perpetual sex. Far from it. ... But I want, with Lady C., to make an adjustment in consciousness to the basic physical realities.⁷

Mr. Lawrence also said that he wanted to show up the shallow customs of the post World War I period, the deplorable falseness of class distinction, and the soul-destroying emasculation of the mechanical age. All of this is forcefully presented in Lady Chatterley's Lover, but it is the novel's other aspects that made it famous. The British customs soon seized copies filtering into England. Two months after the publication of Lady Chatterley's Lover, the manuscript of D. H. Lawrence's poems Pansies was seized

6. Ibid., p. 33.

7. Harry T. Moore, "Lady Chatterley's Lover as Romance", A D. H. Lawrence Miscellany, p. 265.

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by the British Post Office, and was not released until after its seizure was protested by the literary world. A few months later, a London exhibition of twenty-five D. H. Lawrence paintings, which had been widely acclaimed, was raided by the police during a crowded viewing hour and half the paintings were carried off. A few hours later the police returned and carted away a set of drawings by William Blake, but when they discovered that the artist had been dead for a century they allowed the Blake drawings to be returned. The D. H. Lawrence's paintings were ordered to be returned to him in Italy and the Warren Gallery was given a stiff warning.

All this publicity whipped up the sale of Lady Chatterley's Lover and a year after it first appeared the author's royalties were estimated at ten thousand pounds. But Mr. Lawrence was by this time desperately ill and he died near Nice in 1930. Afterwards the success of Lady Chatterley's Lover continued. If the author had lived he would have been a wealthy man. The book was banned right and left and controversy went on as heatedly as ever. Even now that the novel has been freed from publication bans by three Supreme Courts, Lady Chatterley's reputation is still on trial wherever books are discussed.

The story of Lady Chatterley's Lover is at this time relatively well known and the plot is basically one that adheres rather closely to modern novel convention.

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Connie Chatterley, daughter of a Royal Academician, was raised with her sister in the cosmopolitan world of arts and politics. During the First World War, she meets and marries Clifford, heir to a baronetcy, who is more upper class than Connie - Connie being well-to-do intelligentsia while Clifford is aristocracy.⁸ After a short honeymoon, Clifford goes to war and comes home paralysed and impotent. Making the best of the situation, he becomes a writer and achieves literary success and reputation rapidly. The couple are wealthy and have a circle of reasonably intelligent friends. Connie devotedly looks after Clifford but gradually becomes oppressed by the "nothingness" of her life. After one unsuccessful love affair with her husband's friend Michaelis, she meets Clifford's gamekeeper, Mellors. Eventually, they fall passionately in love. Their love produces a kind of sexual fulfillment which Connie had never before obtained. The novel ends with Connie leaving her husband. She and Mellors plan a future life together on a farm in the English Midlands. So stated,

8. D. H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover, p. 10.

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the plot seems

... almost vulgarly conventional. On this there are two things to be said. One is that the conventions have been established by Lawrence himself. Until his days, novels were commonly about approaches to marriage. Today, as a reviewer has recently remarked, they are commonly about marriage, and every marriage in the novel is a problematic one. The shift of emphasis is largely the result of Lawrence's work. The second remark is that the peculiar quality of the book depends less on the bare situation than on the fullness, fidelity, and scrupulousness with which the situation is worked out.⁹

At one time, Mr. Lawrence thought of calling Lady Chatterley's Lover "Tenderness" because of the phallic tenderness for which Connie deserted her aristocratic husband and found in her relationship with the gamekeeper. The word tenderness is frequently found in D. H. Lawrence's comments on the book in his letters. This tenderness is to be a private and sexual thing. Mellors reflects upon Connie:

Tender! Somewhere she was tender, tender with a tenderness of the growing hyacinths, something that has gone out of the celluloid women of today. But he would protect her with his heart for a little while.¹⁰

9. Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, p. 178

10. D. H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover, pp. 123-124.

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Connie reveals her awareness of tenderness within the game-keeper with

... "Shall I tell you what you have that other men don't have" ... "It's the courage of your tenderness, that's what it is; ..." ¹¹

It is a tenderness that each possesses in relationship to the other.

Paralleling many of Mr. Lawrence's previous works, the setting for most of this novel is the English Midlands and once again Mr. Lawrence uses the coal-mines that wither the land there as a symbol of his antagonism toward the industrial society which, in his opinion, also withers human beings. Early in the novel, the eventual deterioration of Connie is foreshadowed:

Connie was accustomed to Kensington or the Scotch hills or the Sussex downs: that was her England. With the stoicism of the young she took in the utter, soulless ugliness of the coal-and-iron Midlands at a glance, and left it at what it was: unbelievable and not to be thought about. From the rather dismal rooms at Wragby she heard the rattle-rattle of the screens at the pit, the puff of the winding engines, the clink-clink of shunting trucks, and the hoarse little whistle of the colliery locomotives. Tevershall pit-bank was burning, had been burning for years, and it would cost thousands to put it out. So it had to burn. And when the wind was that way, which was often, the house was full of the stench of this sulphurous combustion of the earth's excrement. But even on windless days the air always smelt of something under the earth: sulphur, iron, coal, or acid. And even on

11. Ibid., p. 290.

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the Christmas roses the smuts settled persistently, incredible, like black manna from the skies of doom.

Well, there it was: fated like the rest of things! It was rather awful, but why kick? You couldn't kick it away. It just went on. Life, like all the rest ...¹²

Connie's initial placid acceptance of the dismal surroundings, with what Mr. Lawrence calls the "stoicism of the young", and her ensuing devotion and loyalty in caring for her crippled husband underline just how complete a contrast her later decisions and actions are. Connie is a loyal and kind woman and since Clifford cannot help himself, there is every moral and humane reason against her doing as she does. However, as D. H. Lawrence develops the character of Connie, it becomes more and more obvious to the reader that her life lacks complete meaning and her existence develops to a point of what in Laurentian terms is called "nothingness".

Time went on. Whatever happened, nothing happened because she was so beautifully out of contact. She and Clifford lived in their ideas and his books. She entertained ... there were always people in the house. Time went on as the clock does, half past eight instead of half past seven.¹³

In all that Clifford does, Connie is very close to him in mind, although, through necessity, they are bodily non

12. Ibid., p. 14.

13. Ibid., p. 20.

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existent to one another. It is a purely mental life that they share.

Lady Chatterley's love affair with Michaelis, Clifford's friend, is her first attempt to fill the void in her life. But any possibility of even partial fulfillment as a woman and human being is utterly and brutally destroyed by her lover in his accusation that she desires nothing in their affair other than selfish physical satisfaction. Connie's reaction is significant:

And she went through the days drearily. There was nothing now but this empty treadmill of what Clifford called the integrated life, the long living together of two people who are in the habit of being in the same house with one another.

Nothingness! To accept the **great** nothingness of life seemed to be one end of living. All the many busy and important little things that make up the grand sum-total of nothingness!¹⁴

By allowing Connie to achieve a partial and short-lived satisfaction in her affair and then having it so devastatingly destroyed, Mr. Lawrence manages to convey an even more poignant sense of forlornness in his character's quest for fulfillment. Such a forlornness would inevitably lead to her being vulnerable to the first incident of love making in the poultry shed with the gamekeeper - if only as a desperate gasp for some relief from her stifling situation.

14. Ibid., p. 57.

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Here, as in so many of his other works, D. H. Lawrence creates

... his own variant of the Sleeping Beauty myth, in which a woman in a trance-like state of unfulfillment is awakened by what might be called the Erotic Invader. In story after story, ("The Fox", "The Ladybird" and "The Virgin and the Gipsy" are typical), the Erotic Invader breaks through the thorny hedge of an imprisoning relationship to release the dreaming woman or "lost girl".¹⁵

The replacing of the conventional asterisks with vivid descriptions of the sexual incidents within the novel, and the use of the so-called taboo four-letter words appear to be justified in as much as sexual experiences between Mellors and Connie are the crux upon which the novel stands. Their relationship is one of progression. Lady Chatterley's quest for fulfillment is not finished with one bout of love-making but instead it is wholly dependent upon the depth and quality of their sexual experiences. In many kinds of novel - John O'Hara's which comment upon the financial or suburban world, or Mickey Spillane's "thriller" novels, for example - descriptions of the depths and feelings of such a relationship would be irrelevant; but in Lady Chatterley's Lover, such descriptions are the very essence of the situation. If Mr. Lawrence was to depict Connie achieving her completeness, the

15. Harry T. Moore, "Lady Chatterley's Lover as Romance", A D. H. Lawrence Miscellany, p. 263.

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depths of her different kinds of sexual sensations had to be examined.

Gradually Lady Chatterley obtains complete pleasure in love-making. Whereas she finds no positive enjoyment in her first experience with Mellors, she does achieve more sensual pleasure in subsequent encounters. Still more failures are experienced, then some periods of fulfillment, and, in the end, the experience of complete sensual enjoyment for its own sake is realized. Mellors is able to explain exactly why he can find happiness with Connie. He has had love affairs with young women drawn exactly on the models of Helena of The Trespasser and Miriam of Sons and Lovers. They are romantic, "spiritual" women who offended his manhood. The "Miriam" Mellors knew was

... a school-master's daughter over at Ollerton, pretty, beautiful really. I was supposed to be a clever sort of young fellow from Sheffield Grammar School, with a bit of French and German, very much up aloft. She was the romantic sort that hated commonness. She egged me on to poetry and reading: in a way she made a man of me. I read and I thought like a house on fire, for her. ... I held forth with rapture to her, positively with rapture. I simply went up in smoke. And she adored me. The serpent in the grass was sex. She somehow didn't have any; at least, not where it's supposed to be. I got thinner and crazier. Then I said we'd got to be lovers. I talked her into it, as usual. So she let me. I was excited, and she never wanted it. She just didn't want it. She adored me, she loved me to talk to her and kiss her: in that way she had a passion for me. But the other, she just didn't want. And there are lots of women like her. And it was

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just the other that I did want. So there we split.
I was cruel, and left her¹⁶

Mellors' "Helena" was

... a teacher, who had made a scandal by carrying on with a married man and driving him nearly out of his mind. She was a soft, white-skinned, soft sort of a woman, older than me, and played the fiddle. And she was a demon. She loved everything about love, except the sex. Clinging, caressing, creeping into you in every way: but if you forced her to the sex itself, she just ground her teeth and sent out hate. I forced her to it, and she could simply numb me with hate because of it. So I was balked again. I loathed all that. I wanted a woman who wanted me, and wanted it.¹⁷

From these women, he turned to the "common" girl, Bertha Coutts, whom he married, but who revealed at once a ferocious sexual will under the force of which the marriage passed swiftly into brutish deterioration. From this marriage, Mellors escaped into the world, and the world of gentlemen: he had become an officer's aide in India. Now, in his cottage, he has books that he can read and talk about. He is Connie's equal in all but birth. Connie Chatterley is also a person whose experiences have equipped her to take the full measure of her world. Her marriage ruined by Clifford's physical incapacity, she carries on a casual post-marital affair. This affair with Michaelis, a successful,

16. D. H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover, pp. 208-209.

17. Ibid., p. 209.

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trivial playwright, tends to place Connie at the very center of the full emptiness of the social-intellectual world. Mellors and Connie are in precisely the same situation: an experienced man and woman, both disillusioned with their experiences, both capable of a better experience. By contrasting Mellors' achievement of a sense of completeness with his former sense of forlornness and by contrasting Connie's achievement of a sense of completeness with her former sense of forlornness, Mr. Lawrence is able to emphasize just what he believed a complete man-woman relationship could accomplish.

D. H. Lawrence tells his readers: "Never trust the artist. Trust the tale".¹⁸ Viewed in its entirety with this in mind, the story of Connie Chatterley reveals that while the conventional use of the asterisks may have sufficed in the first incident between Connie and Mellors, the absence of the descriptions and the so-called taboo words from their subsequent episodes would have destroyed Mr. Lawrence's expression of Connie's coming to completeness. Her completeness might have appeared as a romanticized overnight metamorphosis instead of a gradual physical awakening that is more closely akin to the actual physical experiences of real men and women.

18. D. H. Lawrence, Studies in Classic American Literature, p. 13.

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An awareness also develops of the fact that the four-letter words that are used are put into the mouth of the gamekeeper in order to make his character more representative of carnal frankness and its vivifying powers. His use of these words emphasizes the great dichotomy that Mr. Lawrence so often attempted to bring into the open; that is, the great difference that exists between the mental conscious world of Clifford to which Connie had previously been subjected and the blood conscious world that Mellors represents and all that it offers to Lady Chatterley.

The descriptions of **emotional feelings in Lady Chatterley's Lover** are almost always told from the woman's point of view and nearly all the physical elements described are from the man's point of view. Characteristically female, also, is Connie's assurance that she has got the only real man in the whole world.

"Shall I tell you?" she said, looking into his face.
"Shall I tell you what you have that other men don't have and that will make the future? Shall I tell you?"

"Tell me then," he replied.

"It's the courage of your own tenderness, that's what it is; like when you put your hand on my tail and say I've got a pretty tail."¹⁹

It is natural that the lovers feel that they are unique. Most lovers do. However, Mr. Lawrence's moral purpose seems

19. D. H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover, p. 290.

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to constantly intrude upon the romantic talk of the lovers. When Lady Chatterley is talking about her "pretty tail", she is talking like a woman. When she talks about "making the future", she is talking like D. H. Lawrence. Just as when Mellors, replying to Connie's remarks, says, "It's a question of awareness, as Buddha said", he is talking like the author. The romantic story of the man and woman is always being used as a vehicle for Mr. Lawrence's ideas. The characters constantly speak for the author. They discuss fully Mr. Lawrence's beliefs that the world must be remade into one based upon instinctual norms rather than the conventional norms. At such times, Mellors and Connie lose their humanity and the tenderness they possess and become a mere paradigm of fulfillment and regeneration in an otherwise **sterile** and degenerate world.

Unfortunately, it appears that, symbolically, Connie is forced to bear an enormously heavy burden of being Everywoman and as such, she has been subjected to much criticism for her "callousness" in deserting a husband who is an invalid. But those who see her as a symbol and are still prone to condemn her for such an action have probably neglected to see Clifford as a symbol as well. When his paralysis is viewed as a poignant symbol of the paralysing effect upon human beings that the world he is representative of has, her action is easier to understand.

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D. H. Lawrence's own attitude upon the question of Clifford's condition is contained in this passage:

I have been asked many times if I intentionally made Clifford paralysed, if it is **symbollic**. And literary friends **say**, it would have been better to have left him whole and potent, and to have the woman leave him nevertheless.

As to whether the 'symbolism' is intentional - I don't know. Certainly not in the beginning when Clifford was created, when I created Clifford and Connie, I had no idea what they were or why they were. They just came, pretty much as they are. But the novel was written, from start to finish, three times. And when I read the first version, I recognized that the lameness of Clifford was symbolic of the paralysis, of most men of his sort of class today. I realized that it was perhaps taking unfair advantage of Connie to **paralyse** him technically. It made it so much more vulgar of her to leave him. Yet the story came as it did, by itself, so I left it alone. Whether we call it symbolism or not, it is, in the sense of its happening, inevitable.²⁰

It is true that Mr. Lawrence has left himself open to criticism by making Clifford crippled. Clifford's paralysis is apt to invoke a touch of pity. As a symbol of what he represents, even D. H. Lawrence would concur that he deserves pity.

... we have a man, Sir Clifford, who is **purely** a personality, having lost entirely all connection with his fellow men and women, except those of usage. All warmth is gone entirely, the hearth is cold, the heart does not humanly exist. He is a pure product of our civilization, but he is the death of

20. D. H. Lawrence, "A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover", Sex, Literature and Censorship, pp. 109-110.

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the great humanity of the world. He is kind by rule, but he does not know what warm sympathy means. He is what he is.²¹

As the "pure product of our civilization" and the "death of the great humanity", this man would deserve pity. However, as a man, as a character in a novel, whatever sentimental pity that has been evoked by his ailment and his fate is lost with Clifford's loss of manly dignity and his infantile behavior with Mrs. Bolton.

A more valid criticism of Lady Chatterley's Lover is that the relation of Connie and Mellors is so unlike a normal love relation. Both are deeply injured and unhappy people. The man-woman relationship between the two lovers appears to be based entirely upon physical attractions and/or satisfactions. There are hardly any incidents of normal conversation between Lady Chatterley and the gamekeeper. It is entirely conceivable that a woman would leave an impotent husband for a lover who produces sensual pleasure for her. However, it is doubtful that a woman's motivations would not extend to greater depths than those pictured within the novel.

Perhaps, Mr. Lawrence, indeed, foresaw criticism of this nature on this point and attempted to neutralize it by having the novel end inconclusively. The novelist neither

21. Ibid., p. 109.

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suggests nor attempts to foresee what Connie's and Mellors' future life together will be. As has been previously mentioned, D. H. Lawrence's novels end quietly and inconclusively because, in Mr. Lawrence's view, this is closer to actual life. His questing characters resolve one facet of their life and look ahead to the future. Such is the case with Connie Chatterley and Mellors. Any incompatibility that may arise between them in their future life is beyond the scope of the novel. It remains something for the reader to speculate upon. It has no other artistic importance to D. H. Lawrence.

According to the Laurentian doctrine, a woman finds a large part of her satisfaction in providing stability for her husband, being in herself a fixed center - as long as she is satisfied sexually. If she is not, she has the right - sometimes it seems the duty - to reject the unsatisfactory mate and find another. It is Connie's role in Lady Chatterley's Lover to re-enact this thought throughout the novel in her relationship with Clifford and in her quest which culminates in her affair with Mellors. What Connie is escaping from is pictured in the novel. What she will find in her life with the gamekeeper is questionable. It appears that even Mr. Lawrence had his doubts.

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The other man still has the warmth of a man, but he is being hunted down, destroyed. Even it is a question if the woman who turns to him will really stand by him and his vital meaning.²²

Further, among the comments on the book that Mr. Lawrence quotes in "A Props of Lady Chatterley's Lover" is the following:

"Well, one of them was a brainy vamp, and the other was a sexual moron," said an American woman, referring to the two men in the book - "so I'm afraid Connie had a poor choice - as usual!"²³

It is doubtful that this would have been quoted unless D. H. Lawrence saw some truth in it. Mr. Lawrence was apparently dispassionate toward his lovers. It was the forces working through the lovers that aroused him most strongly, rather than their personal happiness. Certainly, the conventional happy ending was of no importance to him.

D. H. Lawrence shows far more sympathy toward the most successful of his minor characters: Mrs. Bolton. Mrs. Bolton is from the village, called in to relieve Connie of the tiring ordeal of caring for Clifford. She is far more than a village gossip or a flat humorous character. In a sense, her life with her husband (all told in retrospect) is one of the very few illustrations in The works of

22. Ibid., p. 109.

23. Ibid., p. 111.

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D. H. Lawrence of a "fulfilled" marriage. Her recounting to Connie the story of her marriage results in a piece of common human feeling which Mr. Lawrence is often accused of lacking.

"It must have been terrible for you!" said Connie.
 "Oh, my Lady! I never realized at first. I could only say: Oh my lad, what did you want to leave me for! - That was all my cry. But somehow I felt he'd come back."

"But he didn't want to leave you," said Connie.
 "Oh no, my Lady! That was only my silly cry. And I kept expecting him back. Especially at nights. I kept waking up thinking: Why he's not in bed with me! - It was as if my feelings wouldn't believe he'd gone. I just felt he'd have to come back and lie against me, so I could feel him with me. That was all I wanted, to feel him there with me, warm. And it took me a thousand shocks before I knew he wouldn't come back, it took me years."

"The touch of him," said Connie.

"That's it, my Lady! the touch of him! I've never got over it to this day, and never shall. And if there's a heaven above, he'll be there, and lie up against me so I can sleep."²⁴

The pathos of the passage reminds one of innumerable Victorian novelists but again there is a physical immediacy that the Victorians did not commonly allow themselves. Mrs. Bolton's account of her own life, her talk about Tevershall, the colliery village, and her memories of her marriage are all treated sympathetically by the author.

24. D. H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover, p. 170.

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The sympathy which the author renders is perhaps prompted by the feeling that it is by the mere virtue of her class that Mrs. Bolton has avoided the etiolation of the Chatterleys. Mrs. Bolton's love for her husband has been something real, and her interest in her neighbors, for all its gossipous viciousness, is a kind of human contact.

This warmth and humanity on a low level - low enough that it can be patronizing - is such that Clifford can respond to it. With this response, Mrs. Bolton becomes more and more the driving and dominant force for Clifford. In gaining this dominance over her patient, Mrs. Bolton appears to shed the cloak of a minor character and to gain the status of a mother-figure similar to the Madame of The Lost Girl and, indeed, to Mrs. Morel of Sons and Lovers. Madame "mothers" the Red Indians of the theatrical troupe, darning their socks and making sure that they eat properly, but what is most important to her is that she be the principal moving force in the group. Like Mrs. Morel, she does not dislike the women that her "boys" sleep with as long as her position is not usurped. Mrs. Morel encouraged her sons to stay out of the mines and to achieve a "superior position" and social mobility but as illustrated in Sons and Lovers, she must retain her spiritual hold upon them. Her biggest cry of anguish is that Miriam "carries him [Paul] off from me". Mrs. Bolton is the force that convinces Clifford that his literary career is not enough and spurs his

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interest in running the coal mines. She was aware almost from the beginning that Lady Chatterley was having an affair. To a degree, she even aided in keeping the knowledge of it from the crippled aristocrat. When Clifford is finally informed that his wife is pregnant by the gamekeeper, it is Mrs. Bolton who comforts him making herself all the more indispensable to him. In fact, a somewhat perverse relationship springs up between them.

After this, Clifford became like a child with Mrs Bolton. He would hold her hand, and rest his head on her breast, and when she once lightly kissed him, he said: "Yes! Do kiss me! Do kiss me!" And when she sponged his great blond body, he would say the same: "Do kiss me!!" and she would lightly kiss his body, anywhere, half in mockery.

And he lay with a queer, blank face like a child, with a bit of the wonderment of a child. And he would gaze on her with wide, childish eyes, in a relaxation of madonna-worship. It was sheer relaxation on his part, letting go all his manhood, and sinking back to a childish position that was really perverse. And then he would put his hand in her bosom and feel her breasts, and kiss them in exultation, the exultation of perversity, of being a child when he was a man.

Mrs Bolton was both thrilled and shamed, she both loved and hated it. Yet she never rebuffed nor rebuked him. And they drew into a closer physical intimacy, an intimacy of perversity, when he was a child stricken with an apparent candour and an apparent wonderment, that looked almost like a religious exaltation: the perverse and literal rendering of: 'except ye become again as a little child'. - While she was the Magna Mater, full of power and potency, having the great blond child-man under her will and her stroke entirely.²⁵

25. Ibid., p. 305.

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Clifford's wallowing in private emotion and the utter debasement of his manly self seems to give him the ability to be more piercing and almost visionary in his business affairs, and Mrs. Bolton, very reminiscent of Mrs. Morel, regards this as a personal triumph.

"How he's getting on!" she would say to herself in pride. "And that's my doing! My word, he'd never have got on like this with Lady Chatterley. She was not the one to put a man forward. She wanted too much for herself." 26

Mrs. Bolton's final triumph, going out of her way to make Connie aware that she knew the truth about the love affair, appears to be a form of gloating. It also underlines her change of position in the household: from the solicitous and sympathetic nurse and housekeeper to one who runs the house and its owner. Mrs. Bolton has developed from a minor character similar to Miss Pinnegar and Miss Frost of The Lost Girl to a counterpart of Mellors. In a somewhat perverse fashion, she provides for Clifford some shadow of what the gamekeeper does for Lady Chatterley. She has provided a meaning for his existence. Without her presence in his household, Clifford would undoubtedly feel that he had no real reason for living. Clifford's dependence upon Mrs. Bolton molds the crippled aristocrat into the form

26. Ibid., p. 306.

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of another "son and lover".

Since it is a woman who is the quester in most of D. H. Lawrence's later novels, it is not too surprising to find that the character who searches in Lady Chatterley's Lover is female. Alvina of The Lost Girl follows this pattern as does Kate Leslie of The Plumed Serpent. All three women embark upon their spiritual odysseys in order to leave their lives of "nothingness" behind them. All three achieve a degree of fulfillment with "mindless" men who can sufficiently subdue their personalities, "mindless" men who act and react as their blood consciousness directs them.

Various suggestions have been offered by his contemporaries as to D. H. Lawrence's strong interest and his perception of their natures. William Edward Hopkin recalled in answer to inquiries:

My wife one day said she very much objected to him putting a woman on his operating table for dissection and then saying in a sneering tone: "There you are! That is a woman, body and soul." He turned round and said: "If I need any woman for my purpose - you included - I shall use you. Why the devil should you or any other woman come between me and the flowering of my genius?" He almost made me believe in the theory of reincarnation, for he had a most uncanny knowledge of women. I said to him more than once, "Bert, you were a woman last time you were on earth."²⁷

27. Edward Nehls, D. H. Lawrence, A Composite Biography, 1885-1919, Vol I, p. 72.

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In a letter to Edward Nehls dated May 17, 1955, Mr. F. D. Chambers observed:

As a matter of fact Lawrence was a woman in a man's skin and only women had much sympathy with him. He disliked male company from his earliest years.²⁸

However, a less emotional and more credible explanation is that, perhaps, D. H. Lawrence

... like Jung or indeed like James Joyce, thought that the creative principle was feminine. If that is so, Lawrence's questing women become the artist's deepest self in search of subject or a place.²⁹

Whatever the actual explanation, Mr. Lawrence's heroines emulate the phoenix to a degree and experience a spiritual rebirth which reaffirms the author's belief in a tenderness and a passion between individuals that transcends the conscious and personal. It is this tenderness and passion between individuals which alone may negate the harmful spirit of industrial civilization.

Throughout D. H. Lawrence's writing career, he had been concerned with the general theme of Lady Chatterley's Lover - the violation or fulfillment of individuality in relationships. Many times he handled this theme in the concrete terms presented within this novel. The fulfillment involves the crossing either of class or cultural lines, and

28. Ibid., footnote 99, p. 548.

29. D. H. Lawrence, The Plumed Serpent, introduction, William York Tindall, p. vii.

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often of both, where violation results from resisting this crossing. The pattern is of a woman in a relatively superior social situation drawn to an outsider - a man of lower social rank, or a foreigner. The woman then either resists her impulse or yields to it. The two choices are embodied in the situation into which Mr. Lawrence was born and in the situation into which he married. His mother resisted the impulse. His wife yielded to it. It was almost inevitable that it became a favorite situation for his fiction. This situation is present in Lady Chatterley's Lover. The Lost Girl contains it in a less believable form. In Sons and Lovers, the parental situation is not only an example but the archetype. Mr. Lawrence indicated that:

The novel is a perfect medium for revealing to us the changing rainbow of our living relationships. The novel can help us live ... if the novelist keeps his thumb out of the pan.³⁰

Mr. Lawrence rarely could "keep his thumb out of the pan" in his full-length novels. It was the intensity of his convictions that made him place Kate Leslie's yielding to an "outsider" amid the rites of Quetzalcoatl in The Plumed Serpent.

30. D. H. Lawrence, "Why the Novel Matters", Phoenix, The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence, p. 532.

CHAPTER VI

FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD: THE PLUMED SERPENT

In Lady Chatterley's Lover, D. H. Lawrence has expressed his final conclusions, conclusions that place the fulfillment of a man and woman in a balanced equilibrium. They become as one. Yet, they retain their otherness. Lady Chatterley and Mellors never attempt to evaluate their relationship. They are content to accept their fulfillment without examining the mystery surrounding the sexual relationship. It was Mr. Lawrence's belief that the sexual mystery and, indeed, all the mysterious elements of life should remain dark and unknown. To know, according to Mr. Lawrence, was to kill.

And the nearer a conception comes toward finality, the nearer does the dynamic relation, out of which this concept has arisen, draw to a close. To know is to lose. When I have a finished mental concept of a beloved, or a friend, then the love and the friendship is dead. It falls to the level of an acquaintance. As soon as I have a finished mental conception, a full idea even of myself, then dynamically I am dead. To know is to die.¹

According to D. H. Lawrence, modern civilization had killed the mysterious by knowing. It is in The Plumed Serpent that Mr. Lawrence reaffirms this belief.

1. D. H. Lawrence, Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. 108.

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It is not surprising that Mr. Lawrence's attempt to create a new religion was inevitably doomed to failure. Novelists are not founders of religions. However, the surprising thing is that he attempted it in such detail. For many years, the author had cherished the notion that the aboriginal inhabitants of America possessed some esoteric life-secret. Whereas the Natcha-Kee-Tarawas of The Lost Girl is just a slight reflection of this belief, the rites of Quetzalcoatl are elaborated enough within the action of The Plumed Serpent to construct a complete liturgy with innumerable hymns and to produce the ritual costumes and ceremonies.

Sigrid Undset states that D. H. Lawrence at this period of his development was not content to be only a novelist,

... his own wish was to be a prophet, a saviour of the world, a Messiah.²

Richard Aldington reaffirms this conclusion by relating an incident which occurred between Mr. Lawrence and his wife, Frieda. She accused "him before others of being such a preposterous egotist that he made a god of himself",³

2. Sigrid Undset, "D. H. Lawrence", Men, Women and Places, p. 43.

3. Richard Aldington, D. H. Lawrence, Portrait of a Genius But ..., p. 270.

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referring, of course, to his identification of himself with the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl in The Plumed Serpent.

Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo, and The Plumed Serpent have been described as novels written by a "man with a message". The settings of Aaron's Rod, within the Mediterranean area, and Kangaroo, in Australia, are only accidental in that a certain phase of Mr. Lawrence's feelings and interests coincided with his travels in those areas. However, The Plumed Serpent presents a setting that is inseparable from the spiritual action which it represents or involves. Mexico, to the author, contained an atmosphere that was extremely conducive to spiritual and mystical feelings. Mr. Lawrence makes the point that he experienced in New Mexico what to him was fundamental religion.

I had looked over all the world for something that would strike me as religious. The simple piety of some English people, the semi-pagan mystery of some Catholics in southern Italy, the intensity of some Bavarian peasants, the semi-ecstasy of Buddhists or Brahmins; all this had seemed religious all right as far as the parties concerned were involved, but it didn't involve me. ...

I had no permanent feeling of religion till I came to New Mexico and penetrated into the old human race-experience there. It is curious that it should be in America, of all places, that a European should really experience religion, after touching the old Mediterranean or the East. It is curious that one should get a sense of living religion from the Red Indian, having failed to get it from Hindus, or or Sicilian Catholics or Cingalese.⁴

4. D. H. Lawrence, Phoenix, The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence, pp. 143-144.

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In his earlier novel, Kangaroo, Mr. Lawrence had come to several conclusions: first, that political action is useless, because, although it may change events, it does not change men; second, that a reaffirmation of the supreme importance of the individual was necessary; that a belief in the "dark gods" ought to be newly expressed. Anthony Beal observes that

Lawrence does little to define the dark gods. They are "forever unrealizable", their medium is the profound unconscious, and they are the complete antithesis of the spiritual-ideal, possessively loving God of Christianity, who is a "proposition of the mental consciousness".⁵

In Kangaroo, these dark gods are implied and presented only as symbols. In The Plumed Serpent, Mr. Lawrence attempts to make them explicit. It is a major undertaking; and he himself described the book as "my most important novel, so far". There is no doubt that the author intended it to be a more significant work than his last three works, The Lost Girl, Aaron's Rod, and Kangaroo.

The first thing that D. H. Lawrence did was to replace the usual Lawrence-figure as hero. Kate Leslie was introduced in its place. She was

... aged forty. She did not hide the fact from herself, but she kept it dark from the others.

5. Anthony Beal, D. H. Lawrence, pp. 75-76.

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It was a blow, really. To be forty! One had to cross a dividing line. On this side there was youth and spontaneity and "happiness". On the side something different: reserve, responsibility, a certain standing back from "fun".

She was a widow, and a lonely woman now. Having married young, her two children were grown up. The boy was twenty-one, and her daughter nineteen. They stayed chiefly with their father, from whom she had been divorced ten years before, in order to marry James Joachim Leslie. Now Leslie was dead, and all that half of life was over.⁶

She

... no longer wanted love, excitement, and something to fill her life. ...

To be alone with the unfolding flower of her soul, in the delicate, chiming silence that is at the midst of things. The thing called "Life" is just a mistake we have made in our own minds.⁷

The novel opens with Kate and her two American male companions going to a bullfight in Mexico City. The squalid cruelty of the fight and the fanatic sadism of the spectators so thoroughly repel her that she leaves the arena in disgust; but, her companions are

... convinced that this was life. ... was seeing LIFE, and what can an American do more.⁸

This, of course, is just the sort of "life" that Kate is trying to escape and so is the "life" represented by the "Tea-Party in Tlacolula" at which the English and American

6. D. H. Lawrence, The Plumed Serpent, p. 50.

7. Ibid., pp. 62-63.

8. Ibid., p. 17.

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expatriates are continually engaged in trivial bickering. The widow wants to get away from such things and from Mexico City itself.

She was more afraid of the repulsiveness than of anything. She had been in many cities of the world, but Mexico had an underlying ugliness; sort of a squalid evil, which made Naples seem debonair in comparison. She was afraid, she dreaded that anything might really touch her in this town, and give her the contagion of its crawling sort of evil.⁹

Her reaction to Mexico had been chiefly one of repulsion until a meeting with Don Cipriano and his friend, Don Ramon, produces an element of fascination within her. Kate is impressed by a certain somber vitality which they possessed. Don Ramon, tall, handsome and pure Spanish and Don Cipriano, short, dapper and pure Indian interest her so much with their intensity for living that Kate, for the first time in her life, loses some of her cultivated and cosmopolitan composure. Kate

... felt she was in the presence of men. Here were men face to face not with death and self-sacrifice, but with the life-issue. She felt for the first time in her life a pang almost like fear, of men who were passing beyond, what she knew, beyond her depth.¹⁰

9. Ibid., p. 19.

10. Ibid., p. 70.

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Her revulsion toward Mexico is finally overwhelmed by fascination and curiosity which an item in a newspaper inspires. The headline had read: The Gods of Antiquity Return to Mexico. The newspaper account reports how a man of great stature had been seen to rise naked from the Lake of Sayula in the distant interior of the country and walk to shore. When he reached it, the man assured the frightened peasants that the old gods were about to return to them; particularly, the god Quetzalcoatl. Knowing that Don Ramon has a hacienda on the shores of the lake, Kate decides to go there to seek out the "strange beam of wonder and mystery, almost like hope".¹¹

She learns a little about the strange god, Quetzalcoatl, but nothing very conclusive.

Quetzal is the name of a bird that lives high up in the mists of tropical mountains, and has very beautiful tail feathers, precious to the Aztecs. Coatl is a serpent. Quetzalcoatl is the Plumed Serpent. ... But Quetzalcoatl was ... a sort of fair-faced bearded god; the wind, the breath of life, the eyes that see and are unseen, like the stars beyond the blue of the day. ... Who knows what he meant to the dead Aztecs, and to the older Indians, who knew him before the Aztecs raised their deity to heights of horror and vindictiveness?¹²

11. Ibid., p. 60.

12. Ibid., p. 61.

FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD: THE PLUMED SERPENT

The confusion of meanings about Quetzalcoatl, rather than disturbing Kate, tends to exalt the mysterious happenings for her:

Her Irish spirit was weary to death of definite meanings, and a God of one fixed purport. Gods should be irridescent, like the rainbow in the storm. Man creates a God in his own image, and the gods grow old along with the men that made them. But storms sway in heaven, and the god-stuff sways high and angry over our heads. Gods die with men who have conceived them. But the god-stuff roars eternally, ...
We must be born again. Even the gods must be born again. We must be born again.¹³

Being born again through a spiritual odyssey is the main theme of the novel. It is the thread which gives unity to The Plumed Serpent which otherwise would appear to contain a lot of unnecessary dross connected with the religion of Quetzalcoatl. Kate oscillates between acceptance and rejection of Mexico. She hates the horror and darkness, but she also hates what she calls the "mechanical cog-wheel people" of the civilized Western world. Her plea is:

Give me the mystery and let the world live again for me! Kate cried to her own soul. And deliver me from man's automatism.¹⁴

It is characteristic of The Plumed Serpent that the mystery should be incomprehensible. It is also characteristic of the novel that Kate is driven back and forth between two

13. Ibid., p. 61.

14. Ibid., p. 114.

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repulsions rather than drawn by contrary attractions.

Almost as soon as Kate arrives at the Lake, "the Galilee of the new religion", she has the occasion to view this new but antique religion in action. She goes to the Plaza with her maid. The "flappers" and young men of the district come in cars and dance to a jazz band. The "modern" group is soon drowned out by primitive drums. A hymn is also sung in which Quetzalcoatl announces that Jesus is going home. Quetzalcoatl is going to take the place of Jesus in Mexico. Kate is profoundly affected by the music and the ceremony which accompanies it.

There was no recognizable rhythm, no recognizable emotion. It was hardly music. Rather a far-off, perfect crying in the night. But it went straight through to the soul, the most ancient soul of all men, where alone can the human family assemble in immediate contact.

Kate knew it at once, like a sort of fate. It was no good resisting. There was neither urge nor effort, nor any specialty. The sound sounded in the far-off innermost place of the human core, the ever-present, where there is neither hope nor emotion, but passion sits with folded wings on the nest, and forth is a tree of shadow.¹⁵

When the men and women start a long, wheeling dance, Kate, who had been just watching the spectacle, is caught up in

15. Ibid., p. 138.

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the fervor, joins in, and feels herself transported, "gone into her greater self, her womanhood consummated in the greater womanhood".¹⁶ This transformation is obviously meant to signify some sort of rebirth, the sort Kate was hoping to achieve when she first decided to journey to the Lake. However, as Anthony Beal observes:

Although it is presumably chiefly a spiritual state, it is induced by sensuous means.¹⁷

As Christianity is more and more replaced by the new-old religion, it becomes clear that Don Ramon is meant to be a living representative, if not the actual reincarnation of the reborn god Quetzalcoatl who stands for the sensual fulfillment of the soul. A conversation between Don Ramon and his sons reveals much of the nature of this strange religion.

"They say also you pretend to be the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl."

"Not at all. I only pretend that the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl is coming back to the Mexicans."

"But, papa, it is not true."

"How do you know?"

"Because it is impossible."

"Why?"

"There never was any Quetzalcoatl, except idols."

"Is there any Jesus, except images?"

"Yes, papa."

"In heaven."

16. Ibid., p. 143.

17. Anthony Beal, D. H. Lawrence, p. 11.

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"Then in heaven there is also Quetzalcoatl. And what is in heaven is capable of coming back to earth."¹⁸

It is the belief of the followers of this new-old religion that all the gods are in heaven and each in turn may reign on earth. Quetzalcoatl, whose return, according to Don Ramon, is due, stands for the restoration of sensuality to its rightful place. As Don Ramon says to Kate:

I am a man who yearns for the sensual fulfillment of my soul, Senora, ... I am a man who has no belief in abnegation of the blood desires.¹⁹

Such words unmistakably reveal a Laurentian belief that had existed and had been expressed by Mr. Lawrence as early as 1913 in a letter to Ernest Collings.

My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what our blood feels and believes and says is always true. The intellect is only a bit and bridle.²⁰

Dona Carlota, Don Ramon's devout and spiritual wife, represents all that the new-old religion is trying to replace. She is described as an "intense, almost exalted Catholic" who is absorbed by her many charitable works.

18. D. H. Lawrence, The Plumed Serpent, p. 295.

19. Ibid., p. 299.

20. D. H. Lawrence, The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, ed., Aldous Huxley, p. 94.

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She loves her husband but it is a love entirely from the will and not a "blood-love". Her husband's undertaking in the rebirth of the Aztec god horrifies her. Her resulting distaste for Don Ramon's activities causes her to attribute his "religious" venture to a perversity of pride.

He says he wants to make a new connexion between the people and God. He says himself, God is always God. But man loses his connexion with God. And then he can never recover it again, unless some new Saviour comes to give him his new connexion. And every new connexion is different from the last, though God is always God. And now, Ramon says, the people have lost God. And the Saviour cannot lead them to Him any more. There must be a new Saviour with a new vision.

But ah, Senora, that is not true for me. God is love, and if Ramon would only submit to love, he would know that he had found God. But he is perverse. Ah, if we could be together quietly loving and enjoying the beautiful world, and waiting in the love of God.²¹

By picturing Dona Carlota as a symbol of Christianity withering through spiritual love, Mr. Lawrence is able to make his revival of the Aztec god more tangible. For indeed, it is only when the new-old religion is presented in contrast to Christianity that we can know the religion. Mr. Lawrence feels that Christianity is an attempt to live from the love-motive alone and to make love or pure altruism the only motive in life. From any point of view, he sees

21. D. H. Lawrence, The Plumed Serpent, p. 103.

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Christianity as the love-ideal and must reject it. Judgment of whether his ideas are correct is not the purpose of the present thesis. Nevertheless, it is obvious that Mr. Lawrence's thoughts on this subject do not take into account the complexity or the historical development of the Christian doctrine. He does not consider the source of Christian love, the love of God, which should be the motive for all faith and action.

To D. H. Lawrence, Christianity was a necessary development in the history of the world and was valid for a time but its usefulness has been outlived.

I know the greatness of Christianity; it is a past greatness. I know that, but for those early Christians, we should never have emerged from the chaos and hopeless disaster of the Dark Ages. If I had lived in the year 400, pray God, I should have been a true and passionate Christian. The adventurer.

But now I live in 1924, and the Christian venture is done. The adventure is gone out of Christianity. We must start a new venture toward God.²²

Christianity, to the author, has been kept going by an effort of the will and it no longer has any connection with the deep sources of life. The consequences of this will-driven love are the prevailing problems of the world. To continue to adhere to this ideal only tends to increase

22. D. H. Lawrence, Phoenix, The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence, p. 734.

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the inhumanities that exist. It is just this doctrine of altruistic love that Don Ramon is revolting against.

The rebirth of Quetzalcoatl brings rebirth to Kate and death to Christianity. This death of Christianity is exemplified by the death of Ramon's wife, Dona Carlota, who dies after making a violent protest in the church of Sayula, from which all Christian images had been removed and burned, and which was being reconsecrated to the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl.

Kate shows an inconsistency in her character by watching Dona Carlota die with very little sorrow or pity. As the competent and independent woman at the beginning of the novel, she is thoroughly disgusted at the bullfight and on another occasion attempts to rescue a bedraggled mud-chick from the cruel hands of children. However, she is strangely passive and totally without compassion toward the spectacle of Dona Carlota's death and the "executions" performed in the name of Quetzalcoatl. Equally surprising is Kate's marriage to Don Cipriano and her consecration as the goddess Malintzi. It is only when she is confronted by the submissive adoration of Don Ramon's new wife, Teresa, that she seems once again herself, an independent Western woman. Her attempts to persuade Teresa to "live her own life" fail and Kate's pride and self-assertion is shaken by a doubt; possibly Teresa is a greater woman than herself

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because of the younger woman's submissiveness.

Her relationship with Don Cipriano, meanwhile, had progressed along with her interest in the new-old religion. Although she still experienced moments of wanting to go home to the "simple human" people, Kate

... had convinced herself of one thing, finally: that the clue to living and to all moving-on into new living lay in the vivid blood-relation between man and woman. A man and a woman in this togetherness were the clue to all present living and future possibility. Out of this clue of togetherness between a man and a woman, the whole of the new life arose. It was the quick of the whole.²³

Don Cipriano's love had made "all her body flower" and with him she finds true sexual satisfaction. With a half-unwilling mind, she finds a curious passivity and rest.

The strange, heavy, positive passivity. For the first time in her life she felt absolutely at rest. And talk, and thought, had become trivial, superficial to her: as the ripples on the surface of the lake are as nothing, to the creatures that live away below in the unwavering deeps ...

The universe had opened out to her new and vast, and she had sunk to the deep bed of pure rest. She had become almost Teresa in sureness.²⁴

Kate even ceases to care for sexual satisfaction after a while. She is aware of the value of sex and rejoices in her discovery but still feels the need to retain her independence and individuality.

23. Ibid., p. 436.

24. Ibid., p. 462.

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"It is sex," she said to herself. "How wonderful sex can be, when men keep it powerful and sacred, and it fills the world! Like sunshine through and through one! - But I'm not going to submit even there. Why should one give in, to anything!"²⁵

Still, she somehow feels bound to Don Cipriano although in reality she hardly knows him.

There was hardly anything to say to him. And there was no personal intimacy. He kept his privacy round him like a cloak, and left her immune within her own privacy.²⁶

Her old independence and freedom to move around the world still haunts her from time to time. Don Ramon and Don Cipriano tell her that she belongs with them. Kate is torn between her old world and this new and strange world.

Events develop to the degree that Kate feels

... as if she had two selves: one, a new one, which belonged to Cipriano and to Ramon, and which was her sensitive, desirous self: the other, hard and finished, accomplished, belonging to her mother, her children, England, her whole past. This old accomplished self was curiously invulnerable and insentient, curiously hard and "free". In it, she was an individual and her own mistress. The other self was vulnerable, and organically connected with Cipriano, even with Ramon and Teresa, and was not "free" at all.²⁷

Kate is well aware that she does not entirely belong to this particular brand of Mexican life. She realizes that she is, for the most part, acting a role that does not coincide with

25. Ibid., p. 478.

26. Ibid., p. 464.

27. Ibid., p. 470.

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her whole being.

What a fraud I am! I know all the time it is I who don't altogether want them. I want myself to myself. But I can fool them so they shan't find out.²⁸

Kate Leslie has not achieved complete fulfillment. Her independence and individuality are too important to her. She must remain self-assured and assertive. It is the thought of the sort of life that women of her own age lead that motivates her decision to remain with Don Cipriano.

Another thing, she had observed, with a touch of horror. One after the other, her women "friends", the powerful love-women, at the age of forty, forty-five, fifty, they lost all their charm and allure, and turned into real grimalkins, greyish, avid, and horrifying, prowling around looking for prey that became scarcer and scarcer. As human beings they went to pieces. And they remained these grey-ribbed grimalkins, dressed in elegant clothes, the grimalkin howl even passing into their smart chatter.²⁹

The fear of becoming like one of them causes her to decide to "abandon some of ... her ego, and sink some of ... her individuality".³⁰ She will remain and play the role that is necessary, but a role that she knows does not coincide with her whole being.

Kate Leslie's decision to remain with Don Cipriano leaves her in very much the same position as Alvina Houghton in *The Lost Girl*. Each woman is married to a strange man

28. Ibid., p. 486.

29. Ibid., pp. 480-481.

30. Ibid., p. 481.

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with something "mindless" about him. Each woman lives in strange surroundings and although neither woman is entirely satisfied with her new life, each is convinced that it is better than growing old in the narrow and sterile society of home.

It appears that Kate's spiritual odyssey to its conclusion could have been just as effectively described without Mr. Lawrence's attempted creation of an elaborate religion. Her two great experiences; her dance in the Plaza and her sexual love for Don Cipriano, could have been illustrated and described vividly without an established church such as the church of Quetzalcoatl. If the religion had been shrouded in mystery or just implied through the sensuous ecstasy of the dance, The Plumed Serpent would have been as effective and perhaps less boring. As Graham Hough asserts:

... the hymns are formally abominable; the prose virtues of intelligence are in abeyance, and the loose rhythm is never strong enough to turn them into poetry. The imagery is false: it is meant to suggest the embodiment of deep inarticulate instincts in symbolic form; what actually happens is the reverse - the deliberate translation of a few quite conscious ideas about sex and power into superficial and carelessly chosen images.³¹

Considering Sigrid Undset's statement quoted earlier about D. H. Lawrence's desire to be a Saviour,

31. Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, p. 162.

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perhaps it is not too inaccurate to believe that Mr. Lawrence as a frustrated leader and prophet was trying to do in fiction what he was unable to do in real life.

Kate Leslie's coming to terms with her turning forty and her impending life of middle-age provides a significant theme. The prospect of her life on the other side of the "dividing line" was dismal; however, gradually she learns that middle-age does not necessarily imply diminished beauty without love. On the contrary, she comes to a full recognition of the beauty of sex. She is able to discern this even after she has foregone sexual fulfillment with Don Cipriano. She will sufficiently submerge her ego, will live amid the mystery surrounding Quetzalcoatl and will not be unhappy "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife".

As much as Kate Leslie's choice to remain in Mexico with Don Cipriano appears to be pointing back toward the decision and plight of Alvina in The Lost Girl, her awareness of the power of sex for the wholeness of being seems to be pointing the way forward to D. H. Lawrence's next and final novel, Lady Chatterley's Lover; the novel that directly expresses an individual's fulfillment in the phallic consciousness. It is in the restoration of the phallic consciousness that one finds the source of "all real beauty and all real gentleness". It is the need for this restoration that Mr. Lawrence traces throughout his novels.

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It is the success or failure of this restoration that produced the particular characters discussed in this thesis.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to examine selected novels of D. H. Lawrence and extract from them proof that Mr. Lawrence's feminine characters - however different their station in life - possess similar traits in a great many cases.

The first chapter concerned itself with diverse portions of Mr. Lawrence's attitudes toward life and society. The need for an extended discussion on Mr. Lawrence's views not only manifested itself because of the question of terminology but also because five novels were selected to be discussed. Without this chapter having been written, the chapters dealing with the individual novels would have had to clarify terminology and Mr. Lawrence's "doctrine" as the case demanded. This would have resulted in repetitive digressions. All points of Mr. Lawrence's "doctrine" are not included - nor were they intended to be. Only those portions necessary for clarification of the heroines' characters and explication of the novels' themes were deemed necessary. This first chapter also contains the criteria used for the selection of the novels and states the purpose of the thesis, that is, the similarities and distinctions of Mr. Lawrence's feminine characters while in relationship to men.

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The Trespasser's "spiritual" and self-willed heroine is the main subject of the second chapter. It is hoped that it has been made apparent that the unsatisfactory love affair depicted was not so much the fault of sexual coldness upon Helena's part or her lover's conscience but in reality this woman's idealistic ideals that permeated her whole life were to blame.

The third chapter, dealing primarily with Alvina Houghton in The Lost Girl, draws attention that this girl's "insurrection" is an unrealized attempt at the feminine seeker motif that D. H. Lawrence's later writings emphasize. Fear of impending spinsterhood was a primary motivation for this "lost Girl". While, from outward appearance, it seems that Alvina has achieved "fulfillment", it is hoped that the distinctive animal qualities of Cicio which were enumerated, will prove this to be a false assumption and the novel to be merely a step in the direction of D. H. Lawrence's final conclusions.

Sons and Lovers, which is discussed in the fourth chapter, contains three feminine characters that had a profound effect upon the hero, Paul Morel. It was pointed out that the mother, Mrs. Morel, possesses traits similar to Siegmund's wife in The Trespasser and also, to a degree, Madame of The Lost Girl. The withering effect of the conflict between spiritual and physical love was discussed in order to show how the characters of Mrs. Morel, Miriam,

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and Clara Dawes leave their mark on Paul Morel. It was pointed out that the same destructive force is in evidence in the characters of Mrs. Morel and Miriam as well as in the character of Helena of The Trespasser. Mrs. Morel destroys her husband and Miriam and she combine to have a near-fatal effect upon Paul.

The extended discussion of Connie in Lady Chatterley's Lover is the topic of chapter five. Mr. Lawrence's final conclusions about phallic tenderness and "fulfillment" are expressed in this novel. As "questing" women, the similarities that exist between Alvina Houghton in The Lost Girl, Kate Leslie in The Plumed Serpent and Lady Chatterley were noted. Mrs. Bolton's similarity to Madame in The Lost Girl and to Mrs. Morel of Sons and Lovers was pointed out; all three women being in varying degrees mother-figures. It is hoped that the question of Mr. Lawrence's use of so-called taboo words has been completely resolved by the discussion within this chapter.

Chapter six entails a discussion of Kate Leslie's spiritual odyssey in The Plumed Serpent. The coming to terms with middle-age by this widow was pointed out to be a significant theme in what otherwise appears to be Mr. Lawrence's attempt to create a religion. It was also pointed out in this chapter that Mr. Lawrence felt strongly about retaining the mystery in all elements. While Kate Leslie's "quest" does not entirely give her a true "fulfillment", it was

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noted that Kate does indeed resemble Alvina in The Lost Girl and Lady Chatterley's Lover's heroine. Kate's awareness of the power of the sexual mystery was shown to be a distinct look forward toward D. H. Lawrence's final novel, Lady Chatterley's Lover which was discussed in Chapter five.

This thesis was written in the hope of its being in some measure an indication that Mr. Lawrence did not concern himself with presenting characters in the accepted novelist's manner. He was perfectly willing to use character-types to fulfill his needs. His primary interest was in the forces that motivated them into action. It is these forces rather than his characters that form the novels.

APPENDIX

In order to confirm the value, originality and possible contribution of this thesis, the following letter was sent to Dr. F. R. Leavis. Dr. Leavis is, of course, a recognized authority on matters Laurentian. He is the author of D. H. Lawrence, Novelist.

58 Sweetland Avenue
Ottawa 2, Ontario
August 6, 1962

Dr. F. R. Leavis
% Downing College
Cambridge University
Cambridge, England

Dear Dr. Leavis;

At the present time, I am engaged in researching at the University of Ottawa in preparation for a thesis on D. H. Lawrence. In my studies of the available material that has been written on this author by yourself and others, and through my readings of his works, I was struck by the gradual emerging of definitely similar but decidedly different dominating female character-types.

It appears to me that although Lawrence's heroines do possess a great deal in common, they also can be categorized according to their situation and nature. For example: Helena of The Trespasser is a dreaming woman as are so many but it is her self-sufficiency and self-assurance that accounts for her rejection of Siegmund rather than her unsatisfying affair. Mrs. Morel of Sons and Lovers is, of course, a mother-figure, as is, to a different degree, Madame of The Lost Girl. In The Plumed Serpent, Kate Leslie becomes distinct as a middle-aged and independent widow but remains similar to Alvina whose background produces a fear of old maidenhood. Lady Chatterley, of course, is to fall in the category of the noble lady being awoken by a man of the people although her being married before embarking upon her quest

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makes her somewhat distinct from other heroines.

To quote Lawrence in his "Do Women Change?" Assorted Articles:

No, Women don't change. They only go through a rather regular series of phases. They are first the slave; then the obedient helpmeet; then the splendid woman and citizen; then the independent female; ...

It is my purpose to attempt to ascertain whether you are aware of any studies that have been written upon Lawrence approaching his feminine characters in just the manner that I am proposing and if you are, will you please forward the title and author's name to me?

Sincerely,

Robert W. Millett

The following short but deeply appreciated answer was received from Dr. Leavis.

August 14, 1962

Dear Mr. Millett,

No, I haven't heard of any study of Lawrence of the kind you describe.

Yours

F. R. Leavis

Mr. Robert W. Millett
58 Sweetland Avenue
Ottawa 2
Ontario

APPENDIX

FROM . . .

F. R. LEAVIS

DOWNING COLLEGE

CAMBRIDGE

August 14, 1962.

Dear Mr. Millett,
No, I haven't heard of any
study of lawrence of the kind you describe.

Yours
F. R. Leavis

Mr Robert M. Millett,
58 Sweetland Avenue,

Ottawa 2

Ontario

APPENDIX

The following two pages of charts were parenthetically referred to on page 25 of the first chapter. It is an examination of the roles and disposition of the principal feminine character-types present in all ten full-length novels written by D. H. Lawrence.

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Role and Disposition	<u>The White Peacock</u>	<u>The Trespasser</u>	<u>Sons and Lovers</u>	<u>The Rainbow</u>	<u>Women in Love</u>
Spinster				Winifred Inger	
Mistress		Helena	Clara Dawes	Ursula	Gudrun Hermione
Wife	Lettie Meg	Beatrice	Mrs. Morel	Anna Lydia	Ursula
Mother	Mrs. Beardsall Meg	Beatrice	Mrs. Morel		
Widow					
mother figure	Grandma				
Accepts "mindless" man					
Rejects "mindless" man	Lady Chrystabel Lettie		Mrs. Morel		
non fulfillment in marriage	Lettie	Beatrice	Mrs. Morel	Anna	
fulfillment in marriage				Lydia	Ursula
self-assured Independent		Helena		Winifred Inger	Hermione
"spiritual" mystical	Lady Chrystabel Emily	Helena	Miriam	Ursula	Hermione
Youthful	Lettie Meg Emily	Helena	Miriam Clara Dawes	Anna Lydia Ursula	Ursula Gudrun Hermione
Middle-aged	Mrs. Beardsall	Beatrice	Mrs. Morel	Winifred Inger	

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Role and Disposition	The Lost Girl	Aaron's Rod	Kangaroo	The Plumed Serpent	Lady Chatterley's Lover
Spinster	Alvina Miss Frost Miss Pinnegar				
Mistress	Alvina	Marchessa del Torre			Connie
Wife	Mrs Houghton	Lottie Tanny	Harriet	Dona Carlota Teresa	Connie
Mother	Mrs Houghton			Dona Carlota	
Widow				Kate	Mrs. Bolton
mother figure	Madame				Mrs. Bolton
Accepts "mindless" man	Alvina			Kate	Connie
Rejects "mindless" man					
non fulfillment in marriage	Mrs. Houghton	Lottie Tanny	Harriet	Dona Carlota	Connie
fulfillment in marriage					Mrs. Bolton
self-assured Independent				Kate	
"spiritual" mystical		Lottie		Dona Carlota	
Youthful	Alvina Madame			Dona Carlota Teresa	Connie
Middle-aged	Miss Frost Miss Pinnegar M. Jane	Lottie Tanny	Harriet	Kate	Mrs. Bolton

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This book is a guide to the works for non-specialist readers, tracing Mr. Lawrence's life and works together. It contains little real scholarship, but the chapter on the up and downs of Mr. Lawrence's reputation has a value. This book is also of great interest in that it contains honest objectivity and personal knowledge.

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ABSTRACT

THE PRINCIPAL FEMININE CHARACTER-TYPES IN SELECTED NOVELS OF D. H. LAWRENCE by Robert W. Millett is a detailed examination of five selected novels. They include a thorough and systematic discussion of The Trespasser, The Lost Girl, Sons and Lovers, Lady Chatterley's Lover and The Plumed Serpent with primary stress given to the nature and disposition of the principal feminine characters. This thesis progressively marks the similarities that exist between the various female characters.

In the first chapter of the thesis, there is an extended discussion of D. H. Lawrence's doctrine and this material is utilized within the separate chapters discussing the novels.

The second chapter deals with The Trespasser with particular emphasis given to the character of Helena. She is discussed according to her idealistic nature.

The third chapter deals with The Lost Girl. The approach for this chapter and each succeeding chapter is always with particular interest given to the heroines and comparing them. The fourth chapter discusses Mrs. Morel and Miriam of Sons and Lovers. The fifth deals with Lady Chatterley's Lover, and the sixth with The Plumed Serpent.

Included in the appendix of this thesis is a chart

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placing the heroines of all of D. H. Lawrence's full-length novels in category according to their nature and disposition. There is also a photostatic copy of a letter from Dr. F. R. Leavis answering a query from the writer of the thesis.

Conclusion is basically that the character-types in D. H. Lawrence are often similar regardless of the social status, marital status or adventures.