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RELATIONS OF DOMINANCE AND EQUALITY IN  
D. H. LAWRENCE

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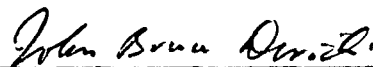
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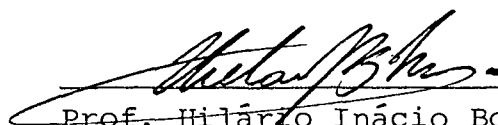
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A todas as pessoas que ainda acreditam na literatura como principal porta-voz da vida, suas lutas e conflitos.

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation basically discusses the pattern of conflict and struggle for domination in five D.H. Lawrence novels - The Trespasser, Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow, Women in Love and The Plumed Serpent - and the novella "The Fox".<sup>1</sup> Conflict in these works is viewed in terms of the relationships between the couples so as to discover whether there is a shift of sympathy (or identification) towards the author's mother or father. Also the pattern of characters exchanging roles in relation to domination and submission will be examined.

This work is divided into five chapters. The first one examines the main critics in D.H. Lawrence's opus. The other chapters analyse the theme of conflict in terms of Lawrence's three main phases. Finally, the conclusion examines the endings of the stories in an attempt to find out the reasons why the author adopts open-endings.

Lawrence's fiction is always marked by the conflict of a duality in the characters. This duality is seen in the division of body and soul. Also this division marks initially a strong preference by the author for soulful women who are always stronger than their partners. In Lawrence's first phase these strong women "win" in the love-battle with their partners. The "defeated" males of this phase represent generally the body and almost always they hardly have a connection with the mind. However, this early phase also has soulful males, as for instance, Paul Morel of Sons and Lovers. The second phase of Lawrence's fiction shows an attempt to achieve balance in the

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<sup>1</sup>All quotations whether from Lawrence or from the critics will be taken from the editions specified in the final bibliography

relationships. Yet, the partners are still divided between soul and body and although certain critics, as Daleski, for example, define this phase as the one in which the couples are in equilibrium, still there is no balance. One partner still dominates the other. The last phase shows the ascendance of the "dark male", the sensual male, and the decline of the soulful women, who are sacrificed to male supremacy. However, the dark male is still inferior and while the story seems to favor him, rhetorically, it is not capped with his victory. The soulful woman is still stronger and fights against domination.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to show how the pattern of conflict varies and shifts its focus in the various phases of Lawrence's career. The main conclusion will lead to the awareness that in this author's opus there is no real balance between the sexes: love is always seen as conflict that moves through cycles of 'polarized flux'. By the end of his career, Lawrence still has doubts concerning which is the ideal partner, a man or a woman. Soul and body are still divided in the fateful patterns laid down in Sons and Lovers.

## RESUMO

Esta dissertação basicamente discute o padrão de conflito e luta por dominação em cinco romances de D.H. Lawrence - The Trespasser, Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow, Women in Love e The Plumed Serpent - e na novela "The Fox".<sup>1</sup> Conflito nestas obras é visto em termos dos relacionamentos entre os casais de forma a descobrir se há uma mudança de simpatia (ou identificação) pela mãe ou pai do autor. Será também examinado o padrão dos personagens que trocam de papéis em relação à dominação e submissão.

Este trabalho está dividido em cinco capítulos. O primeiro examina os principais críticos da obra de D.H. Lawrence. Os outros capítulos analisam o tema de conflito em termos das três principais fases de Lawrence. Finalmente, a conclusão examina os finais das histórias numa tentativa de encontrar as razões pelas quais o autor adota finais abertos.

A obra de Lawrence é sempre marcada pelo conflito de uma dualidade nos personagens. Esta dualidade é vista na divisão de corpo e mente. Também esta divisão marca inicialmente uma forte preferência do autor por mulheres extremamente espirituais que são sempre mais fortes do que seus parceiros. Na primeira fase de Lawrence estas mulheres "ganham" dos seus parceiros na batalha amorosa. Os homens "derrotados" desta fase representam geralmente o corpo e eles raramente têm ligação com a mente. Entretanto, esta fase inicial também tem homens extremamente espirituais, como por exemplo, Paul Morel de Sons and Lovers. A segunda fase da obra de

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<sup>1</sup>Todas as citações tanto do Lawrence quanto dos críticos serão tiradas das edições especificadas na bibliografia final.



Lawrence mostra uma tentativa de alcançar equilíbrio nos relacionamentos. Não obstante, os parceiros ainda são divididos entre corpo e mente e embora certos críticos como Daleski, por exemplo, definam esta fase como aquela em que os casais estão em equilíbrio, isto não acontece de fato. Um parceiro ainda domina o outro. A última fase mostra a ascensão do macho, o macho sensual, e o declínio das mulheres espirituais, que são sacrificadas à supremacia masculina. No entanto, o macho sensual é ainda inferior e apesar da estória parecer favorecê-lo, retoricamente, ela não comprova sua vitória. A mulher espiritual é ainda mais forte e luta contra a dominação.

Portanto, a meta deste estudo é mostrar como o padrão de conflito varia e muda seu foco nas várias fases da carreira de Lawrence. A principal conclusão levará à compreensão de que na obra deste autor não existe equilíbrio real entre os sexos: o amor é sempre visto como conflito que se move através de ciclos de 'fluxos polarizados'. No final de sua carreira, Lawrence ainda tem dúvidas em relação a quem é o parceiro ideal, um homem ou uma mulher. Corpo e mente estão ainda divididos nos fáticos padrões estabelecidos em Sons and Lovers.

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## CHAPTER I

### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

When I first read Lawrence, four years ago, I could not understand why he fascinated me so much. However, now, I can clearly see the reason for it. Lawrence always deals with people, man and woman and the complexity of the relationships they undergo. This is, has always been, a fascinating, though extremely difficult, theme. Human beings are always going through experiences in which they may or may not succeed. They are always 'preaching' theories that do not exactly match their practice. They are always looking for 'balance' in a relation (no matter whether it is between man and woman, man and man or woman and woman). They are always seeking something to fulfil their lives — through friendship, love, power, etc. Whether they achieve it or not is another question. This search for a balance in conflict, and this experience of conflict even in love is, I think, basic in Lawrence: as a man, an artist, prophet and lover. He tried throughout his life to make his readers aware of their existence and this is why I am still fascinated by his works.

To analyse conflict in Lawrence is to try to establish a pattern of how conflict works, increases and is solved among the characters of his fiction. Conflict, it seems to me, is, in Lawrence's case, generally related to a certain inner desire on the characters' part to achieve a degree of self-confidence. Conflict and love are bound together in terms of female and male inner needs — balance, domination, submission — and they form the basic and central battle between man and woman.

The subject of conflict is a very complex one. The great obstacle in writing about such a theme is that it depends on how people define the word 'conflict'. Opinions vary and, in dealing with Lawrence, this fact becomes increasingly difficult since his major critics generally have opposed views, as we are going to see. Critical opinions vary because researchers on Lawrence view conflict according to a pattern of their own sometimes based strictly on psychology, feminism, chauvinism, etc.

My own opinion is that conflict, exactly because of its complexity, must not be defined according to this or that particular approach. Because I do not intend to impose upon the stories a certain fixed idea, conflict will be seen in its strict connection with the texts.

Some critics (such as George Ford, Keith Sagar, for example) define Lawrence's works as having a kind of pattern in which conflict is developed. This pattern divides the opus into three main phases. Phase one implies Lawrence's strong attachment to his mother, a strong woman who is seen as victorious in the family relation. In phase two, as seen by the critics, the shift of sympathy from mother to father is still latent and

because of this, this phase is considered as the most balanced of the three. The third phase is the one in which Lawrence deals with the leadership theme and in it the author tends to defeat the love for his mother in favor of his father. There is also a fourth phase, of less importance. In this final phase Lawrence reverses his previous values and returns to the love scheme which has marked his career, without caring to demonstrate the defeat of the woman. He actually wants to reconcile father and mother, but most critics find this late "return to tenderness" reflects a Lawrence who has weakened not only physically, due to tuberculosis, but also artistically.

All these phases are marked by a division in the self. Mind and body are two separate elements and throughout Lawrence's career he makes an enormous effort to reconcile these two elements. It is a hard battle that goes on within the author and a most difficult and persisting battle for the characters too. These two forces are seen always in opposition, as if they could never meet. Also it can be said that for Lawrence mind is something related to the woman — always the fair woman, highly spiritual. The body is often associated with the dark male, the sensual lover, always seen as inferior in relation to the strong heroine.

#### Review of Criticism

I have the firm impression that critics in general have a tendency to write criticism not specifically for ordinary readers. Their audience is to a certain extent a sophisticated one. Critics very often write for other critics. Sometimes their analyses fail to clarify for the common reader what seems

to be obscure in a text. I dare say that, instead of illuminating the text, they complicate it. This fact seems to occur exactly because their audience is not the common reader. Critics tend to ignore this reader. Sometimes they write "for the sake of [their] own intellectual well-being", as Eliseo Vivas (1960) says in the preface of his book D.H. Lawrence, The Failure and Triumph of Art.

However, I do not mean that all critics are obscurantists. There are others who are concerned to present their views of texts as a way to help us to understand such or such event in a story. This is the case of H.M. Daleski, George H. Ford and others. There are also critics who are too radical in their viewpoint. They belong to the category of people who need to express their opinions saying this is altogether bad or this is altogether good. Kate Millet and Norman Mailer belong to this category. In terms of Lawrence these are some of the critics who sometimes understand him or fail to understand him.

The critics I will analyse in depth in this review are distributed in four areas:

- a. The feminist versus the 'Macho' criticism - Kate Millet and Norman Mailer.
- b. The criticism which deals with the philosophical disciples of D.H. Lawrence, specifically Mark Spilka and Harry T. Moore.
- c. The contextual and non-technical psychological criticism — Eliseo Vivas, H.M. Daleski and R.E. Pritchard.
- d. The criticism which tries to discriminate patterns in D.H. Lawrence's works as a whole — Keith Sagar, George H. Ford and Graham Hough.

The views of these above mentioned critics relate to the novels referred to in the Statement of Purpose. I have tried to select the ideas which seem to me to be a support to my topic and the ones which seem to me to be not faithful to Lawrence's texts.

Kate Millet (1971) and Norman Mailer (1971) form a pair of critics whose ideas are completely opposed. In their analysis of Lawrence they present a radical view of his novels. Millet is the one who thinks that Lawrence is a male chauvinist whose sexuality expresses the idea that "sex is for the man" (p.240). She thinks that Lawrence is an astute politician in relation to the sexual revolution. Lawrence, according to Millet, saw two possibilities in terms of sexual revolution:

it would grant women an autonomy and independence he feared and hated, or it could be manipulated to create a new order of dependence and subordination, another form of compliance to masculine direction and prerogative (p.241).

Millet adds to this idea that the Freudian school has promulgated a doctrine in which feminine fulfilment means "'receptive' passivity", and orgasm comes only through the vagina. Lawrence, says Millet, if aware of these notions would use them "for the perfect subjection of women" (ibid). However, I do not think that this is true in Lawrence. Sex for him has another connotation. Mailer, despite his chauvinist thoughts, has an idea approximate to my own. He criticizes Millet saying that she

will accuse [Lawrence] endlessly of patriarchal male-dominated sex. But the domination of men over women was only a way station on the line of Lawrence's ideas — what he started to say early and ended saying late was that sex could heal, all other medicines were part of the lung-scarring smoke of factories and healed nothing, were poison, but sex could heal only when one was without "reserves or defenses" (p.107).

In relation to Lawrence's novels, Kate Millet starts her analysis by arguing that Lady Chatterley's Lover shows Lawrence making his peace with the female. This is perhaps because it reverses the tendency of the period of the leadership novels (Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo and The Plumed Serpent) in which Lawrence attempted to deny the woman the right to freedom. Millet's most successful argument appears to me to be the parallel that she traces between two heroines: Connie Chatterley in Lady Chatterley and Kate from The Plumed Serpent. Millet argues that sexual intercourse in the former novel is presented according to Freud's directions of "female is passive and male is active" (p. 240). However, she claims that Connie's progress in achieving orgasm is better than Kate's: "Passive as she is, Connie fares better than the heroine of The Plumed Serpent, from whom Lawrencian man, Don Cipriano, deliberately withdraws as she nears orgasm, in a calculated and sadistic denial of her pleasure" (ibid). I agree with Millet's view although I think that this critic forgets to provide enough evidence to prove her points. Again I agree with Mailer's idea that Millet's attacks on Lawrence only fulfil her radical interests. He argues that Millet starts her analysis with Lady Chatterley and ends with The Woman Who Rode Away as a way to prove to her readers the perversity of Lawrence's chauvinism. The end of her analysis is, according to Mailer, provident for her criticism since The Woman Who Rode Away is perhaps the most savage of Lawrence's stories and it concludes with the sacrifice of a woman by the indians. Mailer quotes Millet: "Probably it is the perversion of sexuality into slaughter, indeed, the story's very travesty and denial of sexuality, which accounts for its monstrous, even demented air" (p.103). Mailer's defense of Lawrence points out, "Not every



female reader will remember herself that Lawrence, having purged his blood of murder, would now go on to write Lady Chatterley" (ibid). Mailer continues destroying his rival critic saying that Millet is interested in hiding the dialectic in which authors progress. He adds that what Millet wants is "to distort the complexity of [Lawrence's] brains into snarling maxims, take him at his worst and make him even worse..." (ibid). Millet, he says, belongs to a 'literary mafia' who "works always for points and the shading of points. If she can't steal a full point, she'll cop a half" (ibid).

A good example which supports Mailer's above argument is Millet's analysis of Sons and Lovers. She evaluates the mother and the father according to a criterion which favors her interests in defending women against men. According to Millet Mrs Morel "is a woman tied by poverty to a man she despises, 'done out of her sights' as a human being" (p.247). The mother, Millet says, is

compelled, despite her education and earlier aspirations, to accept the tedium of poverty and child bearing in cohabitation with a man for whom she no longer feels any sympathy and whose alcoholic brutality repels and enslaves her (ibid).

In Millet's analysis everything favors the mother against the drunkard father. What fails in her analysis is the fact that she presents all possible arguments to evoke in the reader a feeling of hatred against the man but she intentionally does not present the reasons why the father started to drink and mistreat the mother. Millet, as Mailer claims, is an oportunist. I agree with Mailer's notion that Millet has 'malignant literary habits' which show little and ignore too much so as to steal the verdict.

Millet also thinks that Mrs Morel is not a possessive

mother. All she does in relation to her sons is done, the critic says, with 'vicarious joy'. In short, the mother is almost treated as a 'saint'. The same quotation Millet uses to express her point about the mother's non-possessiveness proves in fact exactly the contrary: "Now she had two sons in the world. She could think of two places... and feel she put a man into each of them, that these men would work out what she wanted..." (Sons and Lovers, p.101 - My underlining). If Millet had been more careful she certainly would not have quoted the last sentence. It proves the high degree of possessiveness in the mother.

In relation to The Rainbow Millet's ideas are weaker. She claims (without evidence) that Lawrence's theory of education matches Mr Harby's, Ursula's superior in Brinsley Street school. The critic also says that the idea of the new woman in Lawrence's novel is the one of the woman-castrator. According to Millet, the role of women in this novel is to destroy men. Ursula's main quest is what the critic calls "big want", i.e., a husband. As Skrebensky is only an empty shell, Ursula destroys him and will wait for the real 'son of God' personified by Birkin, the protagonist of Women in Love. Millet also considers Ursula's initiation into the 'man's world' as repellent and says that

Lawrence can only sympathize provisionally, stipulating that the moment Ursula "proves herself" (he will allow her to survive but not to succeed), she must consent to withdraw from his territory on the instant she has satisfied her perverse little desire to try the water (p.261).

And this occurs, says the critic, because Ursula is not looking for her independence as a woman. Her "want", as I pointed out before, is a husband.

Millet's tendentious criticism states that in Ursula's homosexual affair with her 'fellow spirit', Winifred Inger, what Lawrence wants is to illustrate the dangers of feminism. She argues that "Lawrence has recourse here to adjectives such as "corruption" and entitles the chapter where it occurs as "Shame" (ibid). Millet does not state in her argument that the pernicious invasion of industrialism in Wiggiston, the dehumanization of men and the rottenness of Uncle Tom are also important factors. This, I believe, is the reason why the chapter is entitled "Shame". Millet's analysis here seems unfair.

In Women in Love, Millet considers that the book is a campaign against modern women who, according to her, are represented by Hermione Roddice and Gudrun Brangwen. "Ursula", she says, "shall be saved by becoming Birkin's wife and echo" (p.263). Birkin's theory of the new kind of relationship "is in effect a denial of personality in the woman" (p.264). Millet does not mention Ursula's awareness of Birkin's view of 'star polarity' between man and woman. Ursula indeed knows that Birkin wants not a balanced relation but the woman as a satellite of the man. Millet does not see this. Her reading is directed to saying that when Ursula and Birkin marry, it is a question of Ursula being 'tamed' and setting women towards 'extinction'. In the end of the novel Ursula is viewed by Millet as a 'model wife' who 'naively' responds to her superior husband. I do not agree with her due to the fact that both Ursula and Birkin are indeed searching for a different kind of relationship. The fact that the book has presented several occasions in which they are seen arguing and defending their points of view plus the ending of the book which shows them disagreeing with each other show

that this is not 'taming', nor 'extinction'. On the contrary, it shows the preservation of their individualities. Each one has the right to exist according to his/her own beliefs.

Norman Mailer who throughout his analysis has shown some moments of lucidity, comes to present almost silly statements to defend Lawrence (and himself) against Millet's attack on chauvinism. He expresses his radicalism in the same way as Millet does. Lawrence was no saint. He really attempted in some of his works to make women fall at the feet of men. Examples of this kind are seen clearly seen in The Plumed Serpent (see chapter "Marriage by Quetzalcoatl"). But to defend him, as Mailer does, is excessive:

If Millet had wished to get around Lawrence in the easiest way for the advance of the Liberation, she would have done better to have built a monument to him, and a bridge over his work, rather than making the mean calculation she could bury him by meretricious quotation (p.109).

This comes close to asserting that Lawrence is a saint. He has, like all writers, defects and virtues. It is neither by calling Lawrence a "counterrevolutionary sexual politician" nor by building him a "monument" that one grasps Lawrence's ideas. Both critics have good ideas but both of them are tendentious.

In general, what Millet considers as Lawrence's aim is implied by the fact that his male characters are always domineering individualists and the female characters must forget that they have individual selves. Therefore, the theme of conflict for this critic is related specifically to men asserting themselves through the struggle to dominate women. Mailer, on the other hand, sees the conflict in terms of a healthy battle in which the art of dominating women is not a tyranny but the way Lawrence found to reach 'equality' between the sexes.

Everyone who writes on Lawrence is very much indebted to his biographer Harry T. Moore. The Priest of Love (1981) is a book which is indispensable in any literary analysis of D.H. Lawrence. Moore, one of Lawrence's more faithful disciples, presents an almost religious view of the author, his ideas and his works. Like all disciples, Moore sometimes seems blind to certain evidences of Lawrence's contradictions. This critic defends Lawrence as a passionate advocate of a god who has no defects, only virtues.

Homosexuality has always been a controversial theme in Lawrence's fiction. Some critics tend to see homosexuality in Lawrence as a feature of his character which he could not project into reality and, therefore, he attempted to portray in fiction by means of his idea of bloodbrotherhood, as presented in Women in Love through Birkin and Gerald (see "Gladiatorial"). Moore, in several passages of his book, defends Lawrence from this attack. Here are some of his arguments:

Lawrence does not seem to have been a homosexual; at least not a complete or continually practicing one. Frieda Lawrence used to insist that her husband was not in any way a homosexual, but towards the end of his life she changed her tune somewhat; as she wrote in 1949 to Edward Gilbert, who was studying Lawrence, 'Murry and he had no 'love affair'. But he did not believe in homosexuality'... (p.84).

and

Certainly no one spoke out on sexual matters more boldly and clearly than Lawrence, and there is no passage in his works in which he writes approvingly of *sexual* relations, that is, of sexual gratification, between men. Indeed, he writes disapprovingly of such things... (ibid).

It may have been as Moore claims but any reader of Lawrence's fiction who reads him carefully is able to perceive that Lawrence does not disapprove and/or approves of homosexuality.

Lawrence does not mention the word 'homosexuality' but he does seem to think that (in his fiction, at least) homosexuality may be added to marriage. The wrestling scene in Women in Love and the subsequent argument between Ursula and Birkin after Gerald's death in the Alps seem to prove that Lawrence has fought to present this 'friendship' between men as something good, not 'disapprovingly' as Moore says. Moore goes on to say,

in Lawrence's celebration of maleness, he may have been the frail boy ('mandarse') forever seeking a wish fulfillment of strength... As Cipriano, the brilliant, small-statured general in The Plumed Serpent, Lawrence could dream himself into an ideal leadership-friendship with the physically powerful Don Ramón, the ritual of whose new religion included a physical — again, *not* sexual — contact between men. Also, in the wrestling scene in Women in Love, the spare and wiry Rupert Birkin astonishes Gerald Crich with his use of jiu-jitsu and his general deftness and agility. Now all this is only a suggested possibility: the suggestion does not carry with it any idea that the process was at all conscious, or was even of the type of unconscious activity motivated by a dominant obsession (p.88).

I prefer to this Daleski's view (1965) who sees homosexuality in Lawrence as "evidence of the pronounced feminine component in his make-up, of a latent or repressed homosexual tendency" (p.185). This seems to me a more accurate view of Lawrence than Moore's faithful defense. However, another disciple of Lawrence, Mark Spilka (1971) has a more radical view of homosexuality related to D.H. Lawrence. In his analysis of the famous wrestling scene in Women in Love between Birkin and Gerald, Spilka fiercely rejects homosexuality. He quotes the end of the wrestling scene in which Gerald declines Birkin's invitation to Blutbrüderschaft. Gerald, at the end of his speech, "smiled as if triumphantly". Spilka analyses the smile:

Gerald's triumphant smile coincides, I think, with our own. We find no place, in our society, for that "unadmitted love of man for man" which Lawrence tried to project throughout his writings...

As for homosexuality (which Moore discounts), the plain fact is that Lawrence was aware of it, and that he rejected it himself as mechanistic and destructive (pp.149-50).

Spilka complements his idea about Lawrence's attitude towards homosexuality by saying that the "Lawrentian brotherhood seems aimed, from the first, at "unison in spirit, in understanding, and in pure commingling in one great work" (p.160). It seems clear that both Moore and Spilka underplay or avoid the theme of homosexuality. For them this is not even worth discussing because they do not believe Lawrence having such a tendency. Furthermore, they find in the author only his conscious intentions and ignore the half-conscious, the latent. Spilka's view falls into moralism and prejudice. Moore's view is more a defense of a friend who is accused of something 'bad' than moralism.

Another critic who does not figure among Lawrence's disciples is R.E. Pritchard (1971) and his view of this theme is psychological. Pritchard explains Lawrence's homosexuality in the following way:

Lawrence had initially feared his father's passionate nature, confusing violence with sexuality ... His inability to achieve the necessary relationship and identification with his father led — as is common in such cases — to a homosexual desire to submit and to be possessed by father-figures of male potency ... So in Lawrence, savagery usually implied a fierce, dehumanising passion or mindless sensuality, often with guilty homosexual overtones; something he desired as a release for his sexual energies, but feared as a separation from the social body and the love of woman (p.23).

As for the theme of domination in Lawrence's novels, Harry T. Moore says that Lawrence has been called a 'male chauvinist'. He disagrees with this view and claims that "Lawrence was aware of his urge to dominate, but he fought against it" (p.342).

I agree with Moore because in Lawrence's fiction it seems clear that this urge to dominate is present in several stories but one cannot say that the author's male doctrine is finally victorious. Moore points out the example of Ursula and Birkin of Women in Love: "even in all their 'therapeutic' quarrels Ursula was his equal" (p.343). Ursula never fully succumbs to Birkin's domination. I only disagree with Moore's idea of Birkin's "consistent plea for 'star-equilibrium'". Birkin says that he wants a communion in which he and his partner are "two equal stars balanced in conjunction" and in fact this is not what he really wants (as Ursula perceives). Moore forgets to mention Ursula's protest that what Birkin wants is a 'satellite'. This idea is perfectly proved in the chapter "Mino" in which a male pet cat chases a wild female cat who is described in submissive terms. The male cat (who stands for Birkin) is 'royal' and domineering. Ursula sees this and questions Birkin's theory of 'star-equilibrium' as being a theory of male supremacy not of a 'balanced conjunction'. It seems clear that, despite my disagreeing with Moore, Lawrence really fought against his "urge to domination" otherwise Ursula would not question the Lawrence-like Birkin. Lawrence the writer is composed of both Birkin, the ideologue, and Ursula, the critic.

The Plumed Serpent, one of the most criticized of Lawrence's works, is considered by Moore as "Lawrence's finest prose" (p. 503). To a certain extent I agree with the critic because of the vivid description of Mexico city and its turbulent citizens. But the story itself is one of Lawrence's worst works. The best criticism of The Plumed Serpent is cited by Moore and it was made by Lawrence's friend, Aldous Huxley:

... after the artistic perfection of the first



two thirds of the book [Huxley] finds the rest of it falling apart because of Lawrence's lack of belief in it. Doubt had crowded in on Lawrence and 'had to be shouted down. Put the louder he shouted, the less was he able to convince his hearers' (p.504).

I would agree with Huxley's view. Lawrence's lack of conviction in the novel may be one of the reasons why soon after he completed it he became severely ill. Frieda, quoted by Moore, told Mabel Luhan, 'I hope Lawrence is taking a new lease of life, that Plumed Serpent took it out of him, it almost went too far' (p. 525).

Mark Spilka, in his fierce defense of Lawrence, can only see the good side of this author. His most ardent defense has already been discussed in connection with Lawrence's homosexuality. However, there are other ideas about Lawrence's novels which are worth noting. One of them is related to Sons and Lovers, specifically to Paul's relationship with Clara Dawes. Paul has his first sexual intercourse with Clara outdoors, in a steep river bank. Before they make love Paul has given Clara a bunch of red flowers which after the love making are smashed and look like blood. Spilka considers that the flowers have given "benediction to the union" (p.54), and that the smashing of them means Paul's "baptism of fire in passion". On the contrary, I believe that the smashed flowers which look like "splashed drops of blood" imply Paul's sin and guilt. Firstly because Clara is a married woman and secondly because later on Paul asks her if they are not 'sinners'. Spilka fails to see this connotation. He prefers to close his eyes to such evidence.

The theme of conflict in Lawrence's novels, as Moore sees it, is related basically to the author's struggle to present the fundamental problems of human relationships in society. Women

in Love best represents this struggle. The 'domination urge' while present in his works is never fully realized because Lawrence's characters have within themselves part of the author's domineering temperament and part of his desire for a balanced relationship. This division establishes conflict. Spilka, on the other hand, sees conflict in Lawrence as the demonstration of his 'love ethic', that is, it represents the author's "impressive and decidedly artistic attempt... to set forth the conditions of manhood, womanhood, and marriage, as he felt or understood them in his own life" (p.31).

The next group of critics whose ideas about Lawrence relate to the contextual and non-technical psychological criticism, comprises three authors: Eliseo Vivas (1960), H.M. Daleski (1965) and R.E. Pritchard (1971). Their ideas are worth considering because the three of them analyse Lawrence's works according to a different point of view from the other critics already discussed. Among these three authors, Eliseo Vivas is the one whose arguments do not always work in relation to Lawrence, as I shall try to show. Daleski strikes me as one of the most complete critics in Lawrence. The last one, Pritchard, seems to me to be a critic who views Lawrence under the light of Freudian criticism.

Vivas starts his analysis by pointing out Lawrence's failure in his art. What Vivas considers as failure include four of Lawrence's works — Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo, The Plumed Serpent and Lady Chatterley's Lover. These novels, Vivas says, are a deterioration of Lawrence's art. They mean a decline in the perfection of style which Lawrence applied when he wrote his first novels. I have concentrated on The Plumed Serpent because it is the only book of Lawrence's leadership phase that I analyse

in this dissertation.

Vivas' view of the novel is divided into two parts: the religious theme and the sexual one. The critic claims that the main defect of the book lies in the ideology which he thinks does not come from the story. He considers the characters who put forth Lawrence's ideas are mere ventriloquists and "Because the primary interest centers in the exposition of an ideology, the characters are mere dummies" (p.67). Vivas' analysis seems to be based on a biased view of religion and its weakness is due to his lack of belief in what he is writing. This is perhaps the reason why in the middle of his analysis of the book, Vivas offers the reader this silly excuse for his religious opinions:

I am not arguing for or against the Roman Catholic Church when I speak of the contemporary polytheism of the Mexican population. I am not a Roman Catholic, although being of Venezuelan birth and ancestry I was brought up one... (p.84).

In relation to the characters of the novel, Vivas' ideas do not seem faithful to the text. He considers that the climax of the story occurs when Kate "accepts apotheosis as the living Malintzi, the wife of Cipriano, the living Huitzilopochtli, and learns to accept the kind of love he offers her, a love beyond love, in which she finds pure fulfillment" (p.66). The question I ask (and answer in chapter V of this dissertation) is whether Kate really finds 'pure fulfillment' with Cipriano. The critic claims this but does not provide any evidence.

Vivas thinks that The Plumed Serpent, as well as Lawrence's other novels, contains Lawrence's assertion that women must submit to men in what refers to sex. Vivas says that this novel presents the conflict between couples in terms of Lawrence

teaching that all women can do is to satisfy their husbands and never seek for orgasm. Lawrence's Women in Love has also presented the same idea but with the difference that Ursula could not accept the kind of love Birkin offered her. The Plumed Serpent, according to the critic, has as its strongest idea, the assertion that Kate learns from Teresa (Ramón's second wife) what she should want from love: Kate learns to "submit".

However, I think that this is not true otherwise why should Kate continue to question herself about staying in Mexico or going away from it? Teresa is seen by Vivas as the 'norm' of women, i.e., the kind of woman who "may find in submission a satisfaction she could not find in any other manner" (p.130). Lawrence may have presented Teresa not as a 'norm', or as an 'exception' but as a way to contrast the two women. Ramón may have chosen the submissive woman, Teresa, because he could not bear the idea of having a wife questioning him as Kate would certainly do. The very fact of the contrast between Teresa and Kate has the purpose, I think, to show that Lawrence's conflict over domination is not resolved. Vivas, it seems to me, has misread the book.

Lawrence's triumph in art includes Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow and Women in Love. I definitely agree with Vivas' classification. But this is not new. What most readers do not share with the critic (at least I do not) is the idea that the mother in Sons and Lovers is a victim of the drunkard father. Vivas says that

Lawrence wants to show how Paul and his mother were forced to come together because Gertrude's husband, the uncouth, drinking, bullying miner, was no husband to her nor was he, properly speaking, a father to his children (p.180).

Vivas' 'failure' in interpreting the book is chiefly due to the

lack of evidence to prove his point. He may defend Gertrude Morel but he must defend her by providing evidence for his defense. His view of the Morels' marriage is full of class prejudice. It seems that Walter Morel 'stinks' because of his lower class upbringing. This is not, in the least, a reasonable argument to defend Mrs Morel, "who rose above her miserable world by virtue of superiority of class and personal endowment, a loving mother and a wife made unhappy by an uncouth, drinking, irresponsible husband" (ibid). If Vivas presented the real reasons why Walter became an 'irresponsible' husband, I would say nothing, but he only sticks to the idea of Gertrude's class superiority. This is not fair to the text, as I will later show in some detail.

Another idea which seems a little absurd, a misreading of the book, is Vivas' interpretation of the outcome of Paul and Clara's relationship. The critic says that at first their affair "appeared to be satisfactory" (p.183) because Clara has given Paul what Miriam could not — the "baptism of fire in passion". But, Vivas says, the affair ends with Paul returning Clara to her husband. And he asks: "What is wrong between Paul and Clara?" (ibid). Vivas seems to be completely blind to the evidence in the book which shows clearly the reason why they broke off the affair. He says that "the book does not reveal the cause and therefore we cannot answer the question" (ibid). One of the reasons presented in the book is that the relation between Paul and Clara is based almost strictly on carnal love. There is nothing beyond sex and therefore Paul could not get along with Clara since what he was looking for in love was the union between soul and body. This he could never achieve with Clara nor with Miriam. In the chapter on Sons and Lovers I

present my own account of the end of the affair.

Vivas is one of the few critics who considers the novella "The Fox" in his analysis. His point about the story relates exclusively to its end when Henry, the personification of the fox, has already married Nellie March, the main protagonist of the story. Henry has wanted to dominate March since the beginning of the novella and the story's end presents this struggle. However, Vivas (whom we classify a contextual critic) seems to fail in his close analysis of the text. He claims that the story

is almost to the end, a perfectly worked out dramatic situation... But all of a sudden, after the marriage of Henry and Nellie, the story takes a wholly unexpected and incongruous turn, because Nellie exerted herself in the love towards Henry and he would not have it:

If she was in love, she ought to *exert* herself, in some way, loving. She felt the weary need of our day to *exert* herself in love... No, he would not let her exert her love towards him. No, she had to be passive, to acquiesce, and to be submerged under the surface of love.

This passage comes all of a sudden, without any relation to what preceded it, without preparation, and the reader is aware that the story has taken, for a reason he does not know, a new turn (p.252).

Vivas has completely misunderstood the text as a whole. This is not a 'new turn'. Since Henry first appeared in the story, its mood is set by his urge to dominate March. By the end, March has not 'exerted' herself as Vivas claims. She wants 'to exert' herself which is completely different. To sum up, it would seem that Vivas is not aware of the 'Double Measure', the contradictory tension that is central in most of these stories.

Daleski's Forked Flame (1965) is, in my opinion, the most complete analysis of D.H. Lawrence's works. It is complete in the sense that Daleski goes through Lawrence as a doctor examines a patient, with care and confidence. His views are based on the

text and supported by the text. I say this maybe because his views are similar to my own.

Daleski is one of the few critics who views the failure of the Morels' marriage in a rational way. I definitely agree with him when he says that what Sons and Lovers

plainly shows, time and again, is that the Morels are — at the least — equally responsible for the failure of their marriage; and yet Morel is here presented as feeling that the ruin is of his making. Indeed, if ultimate responsibility for the ruin must be fixed, then on the objective evidence offered by the book it is Mrs Morel who has the most to answer for (p.48).

Other critics (see Kate Millet and Eliseo Vivas, for instance) fail to see this and put the blame on Morel who is in reality a mere victim of circumstances.

When Mrs Morel dies, Daleski points out, Paul 'kills' her in a 'mercy killing' and the death represents

symbolically, both a repudiation of what [the mother] stands for, and a decisive act of self-liberation, as does [Paul's] turning towards the city at the end of the book (p.57).

I only agree partially with this interpretation because (as I will argue later) I fail to see Paul's turning towards the city as a full self-liberation from the mother's influence.

In The Rainbow, Daleski says, "Lawrence deals with three generations in order to discover what is constant in the lives of men and women" (p.75). This is the period Daleski calls "Two in One". His discussion is more explicit in line with my main theme: the balance of power in marriage.

Tom and Lydia (first generation), according to this critic, achieve a balanced relationship through the recognition of each other's otherness, i.e., they keep their inner divisions apart from the marriage. Each one preserves his/her own identity to

maintain the relationship. This is also my opinion.

The second generation shows through Anna and Will a different 'communion' in marriage. The woman dominates the relation. The flaw in the marriage is due mainly to the lack of respect between the couple. Daleski points out that Anna fails to respect her husband "because Will has ceased to represent anything beyond her" (p.92). This process starts when Anna mocks at Will's view of art represented by his carving of Adam and Eve. Daleski says that Will's destruction of the panel" is in a way a self-destruction, it signifies the extinction, under the stress of a sensual obsession, of the man who appeared capable of utterance" (p.93). And although he tries to keep the authority of the husband, what he achieves is Anna's disrespect and her fighting him off. The crucial moment of this battle between the couple is represented by Anna's dancing naked and pregnant in front of Will. Daleski views Anna's dance as a symbol of "a woman asserting her right to singleness, to separateness of being. It is not in her feminine dominance that she exults but her independence" (p.98). I do agree with Daleski's view but it is necessary to add that later in the story Anna dominates Will in the marriage which becomes a little matriarchal society. Will becomes a mere object of Anna's play. The marriage is only 'balanced' through sex. Anna becomes the mother of nine children but she searches for nothing beyond motherhood. The critic adds that "To the end both Anna and Will are not 'quite personal, quite defined as individuals'" (p.106).

Ursula Brangwen is different from the previous generations and, according to Daleski, "it is in [her], indeed, that the desire for an individual fullness of being is shown at its most intense" (p.107). She sees in her first lover, Skrebensky, a



kind of bridge for her search. However, he fails her because he is weak and can give Ursula nothing. She discovers this in a moonlight night in which Skrebensky "is called on to produce a 'man-being' to match the 'woman-being' of Ursula, a sun rival to her moon" (p.112). But, as the critic points out, Skrebensky is 'annihilated' because "he has no genuine male self to oppose to her; he is no sun but a 'shadow', a 'darkness' which the moonlight destroys" (ibid).

Ursula then has a lesbian affair with her school-teacher Winifred Inger. This affair, Daleski says, means Ursula's "unconscious retreat to a 'minimum' self after her frightening expansion with Skrebensky" (p.113). The affair also fails because of the 'perverted life of the elder woman', and Ursula "escapes from her by contriving to marry her off to her uncle, Tom Brangwen, to whom, in his 'own dark corruption', Winifred is akin" (ibid). The impressive thing about the analysis in The Rainbow is that it links the psychological (i.e., the growth of the Oedipus Complex and its complications, such as homosexuality) to social developments in industrial technology. One kind of mechanism produces another.

The end of the novel in Dalesky's view is as follows:

Ursula's painful approach to a consummated self is convincingly established, and the rainbow, we see is a fitting emblem of her personal achievement. What must be adjudged a weakness in the book, however, is the form given to her vision of the rainbow; being made new herself, it is her facile assumption that she will find the world changed to measure... As F.R. Leavis has remarked, this 'confident note of prophetic hope' is 'wholly unprepared [for] and unsupported, defying the preceding pages' (p.125).

Here, once more, Daleski proves to be a skillful reader because he has grasped the flaw in the end of the book. Such a flaw is

rarely perceived by other critics who can only see in Ursula's view of the rainbow a mere symbol of the book's happy ending.

Women in Love is, according to Daleski

a novel of war, in what it explores the nature of the deep seated disease in the body politic of which war is the ultimate death agony. It is almost as if Lawrence carries out an autopsy on the still-breathing form of pre-war society (p. 127).

The connection between the war and the novel helps to explain, the critic says, the dual motion of the book. Firstly because "there is a continuation of the search begun in The Rainbow, for a lasting relation between the sexes, a search for the 'two in one'" (ibid). The second motion Daleski refers to is related to the couples being "on board a ship which is rapidly heading for destruction". One couple, "Birkin and Ursula, clinging to the life preserver of their own 'unison in separateness', abandon the ship" (p.128). The other couple, "Gerald and Gudrun, by trying to destroy each other, symbolically prefigure in themselves the desire for death of those who do not attempt to leave the ship" (ibid).

Hermione, Birkin's former lover, represents the rottenness of 'mental consciousness' of the old world. Birkin's "breaking away from her is the first movement in a withdrawal from the world she represents" (p.139). In Ursula Birkin searches for a 'love beyond love' represented by the idea of polarity, already discussed previously in this chapter. Daleski has the same opinion as I. The communion of "star polarity" which Birkin wants to have with Ursula does not altogether mean balance. Ursula interprets it as Birkin's wish to have the woman as his 'satellite'. The chapter "Mino" proves that Birkin's theory is false (see Daleski, pp.173-4).

As for the affair between Gudrun and Gerald, we share the same point of view: it is a sado-masochistic relation. The episode of the Arab mare is the starting point of their violent impulse toward aggression in love. The description of the scene

is also an indication of Gerald's attitudes as a lover. The description has insistent sexual overtones... the scene is an intimation of the imperious need for dominance, the desire to bend the other to [Gerald's] will, that characterizes Gerald's relation with Gudrun (p.154).

Gudrun also oscillates between domination and submission. She and Gerald exchange roles. Daleski's view is again similar to mine in what refers to the episode of Gudrun's dance in front of Gerald's bullocks:

Gudrun dances her desire for dominance, matching her will against that of the bullocks and testing her power... Her victory over Gerald's cattle almost at once releases her desire for violence against him, and she suddenly strikes him on the face with the back of her hand (p.156).

Gerald after this blow, instead of being angry with her, says he is in love with her. These two symbolic scenes, Daleski says, culminate with the scene of the rabbit which is a "passion of sadistic cruelty which is at the same time masochistic" (ibid). The three scenes, according to the critic, were deeply linked in Lawrence's mind. He concludes that "These three powerful and original scenes suggest the nature of Gerald and Gudrun's relationship and testify to the rich effectiveness of symbolic action as a technique" (p.157).

Gerald's death at the end of the novel, in Daleski's viewpoint, represents the destruction of what Gerald stands for as a man and is the outcome of his affair with Gudrun. Their love leads to destruction. As Gerald is strong only on the outside but weak inside he is bound to be destroyed.

The Plumed Serpent is Lawrence's attempt to bring the male and the female principle, Daleski says, "into harmonious relation" (p.222) but it proves to be a failure.

The Quetzalcoatt religion, as seen by Daleski, "is essentially a 'female' religion" but what characterizes it is a camouflage of its true principles, i.e., the conflict between the male and female power which is resolved apparently in the female submission to the male. The postures of men and women seen in the opening of the Quetzalcoatl church prove to be the assertion of the male supremacy: "the sitting women are clearly meant to enhance the power of the erect man, are intended, it seems, to be submissive participants in a strongly male affirmation" (p.227).

The prose style of the novel is repetitive and this may be explained by Lawrence's lack of conviction about what he is claiming in the novel.

Kate and Cipriano's marriage is "to be exclusively a meeting in the flesh, for Cipriano's words indicate that it is a serpent night of phallic power that is envisaged, and it emphasizes that the Star is scarcely an opposite emblem of their union" (p.248). Daleski's view of the marriage matches mine in the sense that there is no communion between the man and the woman: it is the woman who is swallowed by the man, as the critic observes:

The twilight in which the marriage ceremony begins, like the twilight in the cathedral in The Rainbow, is deceptive: what it posits... is not a still point between day and night, a meeting of opposites in which separateness is preserved, but a sliding of the day into the night, a swallowing of the woman by the man (ibid).

Daleski's final point about the novel is that it represents

a position Lawrence could not defend "neither as thinker or as artist" (p.256). This is what made him return to the pacific love between man and woman as represented by Lady Chatterley's Lover, his final novel. Within three years Lawrence's attitude towards The Plumed Serpent was one of dislike because he could not believe in the leader of men whom he now saw as "a back number", as he told in a letter to Witter Bynner in March 1928. Lawrence could not believe in a successful relationship between the strong male and the submissive female. Thus, Lady Chatterley attempts to be (as Millet pointed out) Lawrence's 'peace with the female'.

Conflict in Lawrence's novels, as Daleski sees it, can be defined in terms of his duality, of the opposition of the female and male principles. This duality leads to a permanent struggle for domination between the couples.

Pritchard's analysis of Lawrence does not differ in the long run from Daleski's. It would be merely repetitive to state all his ideas here, since the main topics have already been discussed. Hence, I have chosen just a few passages in which Pritchard's ideas do not match with those presented by other critics, especially by Daleski. The passages I have chosen relate strictly to the sexual tones of Lawrence's main novels.

The critic sees Paul Morel's conflict in love in the light of Freud's essay "The Most Prevalent Form of Degradation in Erotic Life". Pritchard says that in this essay

Freud discusses what he terms 'psychical impotence', the inability to achieve satisfaction in normal heterosexual relations, which he claims is caused by the son's early fixation of desire on the mother (p.33).

Therefore, Paul's inability to love Miriam and Clara is due to

his attachment to Mrs Morel.

Pritchard's interpretation of Paul's rejection of Miriam is similar to mine. He says that the reason behind the rejection "is not simply because [Paul] is possessed by his mother but because, having come close to incest, he feels that Miriam, as his mother's representative, must be purged of sexuality" (p.41).

In relation to Women in Love, Pritchard explains Birkin's postulation of two rivers of existence and, according to him, the 'silver river of life' may be seen as the 'seminal flow' whereas the 'black river of dissolution' is the 'excremental flow'. The critic concludes his idea of the two rivers by saying that

Ursula and the conventional idealists accept only 'normal' sexuality, while Birkin demands the acceptance of the entire bodily process, particularly perhaps the excremental, wherein lies 'the real reality'. Where the silver river is conventional morality, Birkin insists that what is conventionally regarded as morally corrupt is equally — and even pre-eminently — part of man's nature, not to be suppressed, but accepted, if that nature is to be fulfilled (p.95).

I think that Pritchard's explanation is plainly acceptable but if he considers Ursula to be a woman who only accepts 'normal' sexuality, how can he claim that in the chapter "Excuse" Birkin and Ursula have anal intercourse? He says that it is after Ursula makes a "violent denunciation of [Birkin's] 'perversity', particularly as associated with Hermione, where sensuality was solely perverse" (p.100) that she is ready to accept anal intercourse. After this mutual acceptance of the two rivers Birkin and Ursula are ready to face marriage without constraints.

Pritchard, as a Freudian critic, defines conflict in Lawrence's novels as a wish for sexual fulfilment, beginning in

the love of the powerful mother, and moving towards the love of potent males who represent father-figures. The central idea seems to be that Lawrence's male characters and mouthpieces, must defeat the female characters so that the author can get rid of his mother's influence to be closer to his father.

The last group of critics includes Keith Sagar (1966), George H. Ford (1965) and Graham Hough (1970). Among these three critics Keith Sagar is the one who establishes a certain pattern relating to Lawrence's career as a writer. The others do not explicitly follow the same view but it can be said that they share a belief in Lawrence's works as having a pattern of quality beginning with Sons and Lovers in which Lawrence favors his mother. Then follows a second phase presenting a certain balance represented specifically by The Rainbow. The third pattern represents a decay in quality and includes the novels of the leadership phase (Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo and The Plumed Serpent). The fourth one is Lawrence's return to 'tenderness'. Lady Chatterley's Lover represents this return and marks Lawrence's rejection of the mother and redemption of his father.

As I have already discussed the majority of these patterns throughout this narrative, I will concentrate here on pointing out aspects of these three critics' views which I have omitted before, although it is almost impossible not to repeat ideas which they share with the critics I have already analysed.

Sagar is another strong advocate of the mother in Sons and Lovers. Ford, in his view, does not side either with the mother or the father. He simply presents arguments for and against both characters. Hough also seems not to side with anybody. For him, Paul's heritage ('the neurotic refusal of life') "is the direct result of his parents' failure. And the parents' failure

is the direct result of the pressure of an inhuman system" (p. 42). Hough does not go far in his evaluation.

Ford considers Sons and Lovers as being a variation of the Persephone/Pluto myth. Mrs Morel/Persephone is invited to descend into darkness (the pits) and her marriage with the miner/Pluto represents her figurative descent. The early years of marriage imply the mother fighting her way out from the dark world.

This same critic says of The Rainbow that "If [the novel] were likened to a symphony in three movements, it is fitting that the first should have the most harmonious resolution of the three" (p.145). And it is here, exactly here that Sagar's interpretation (though repetitive of the other critics) of the first generation is pertinent. He sees in Tom and Lydia's relationship, the 'perfect medium' matching the 'harmonious resolution' Ford refers to in his analysis. Sagar says that

[Tom] also is able to recognize and respect the selfhood and impenetrable otherness of the woman, who will always be a stranger to him, and, for that very reason, a strange angel, all the unknown opening out behind her (p.49).

and

... Tom and Lydia do not go on to explore the new world. The question 'Whither?' is passed to the next generation, and the novel begins to shift its focus towards Anna. The progenitors have achieved what fulfilment is open to them (p.50).

The recognition of the 'otherness' of the partner is where resides the 'balance' of this novel. The other couples (Anna and Will, Ursula and Skrebensky) do not attain what Tom and Lydia do.

Ursula's quest is seen differently by the critics. Sagar, for instance, considers her lover Skrebensky as a first sketch for Gerald Crich of Women in Love. He then says that Skrebensky



can be associated with Dr Frankstone, Mr Harby, and Winifred and Uncle Tom. Sagar says that all of them and 'all other mechanical wills' represent what Ursula has met and rejected. The end of the book, after Ursula's meeting with the horses, "closely resembles the strange rhythm of the mind struggling with its deepest problems and moving, unconsciously, towards a resolution" (p.64). Sagar, therefore, considers Ursula as walking out of her troubles with hope.

Ford, on the other hand, believes that Skrebensky (seen by Ursula) is "the man who had come out of the Eternity "to which she herself belonged"" (p.153). It seems to me that his statement is true only in the first part because in fact Ursula discovers by the end of the novel that Skrebensky was not what she was looking for, and that now that she has 'overcome' her troubles, she is ready to look for this man coming from 'Eternity' "to which she herself belonged". Of course this man is not Skrebensky. Ford's view is erratic. The critic also claims that "Lawrence presents Skrebensky through Ursula's eyes as a free spirit, full of vitality" (ibid). However, it seems to me that he does not point out that Ursula, soon after the excitement of her meeting with Skrebensky passes, starts questioning him and 'destroys' him because of his 'nothing-like' quality. Once more it seems to me that Ford's defense of Skrebensky is inappropriate. Ford analyses Ursula as being a woman who repudiates "the traditional role of passive "beloved"" (p.156), but in the end of his interpretation he says that she breaks with Skrebensky exactly because he could not arouse in her ""the rich fear" that she demands a man to inspire" (p.157). This idea seems contradictory because the 'rich fear' Ford values is associated with submission which, in his words, Ursula repudiates.

Ford's account of the end of the book is, like Sagar's, one of hope. When Ursula sees the rainbow, he thinks the symbolism is

celebrated too stridently, it is some compensation to recall the painful discords that preceded her rebirth. And in Women in Love, the novel that followed The Rainbow, despite Ursula's final resolution of her own individual difficulties, the somber notes are much more persistently in evidence (p.162).

Hough's view of Ursula and Skrebensky's affair is seen in terms of the critic's uncertainty about the sexual scenes. He says doubtfully that "it appears that they enjoy the fullest and completest sexual satisfaction" (p.70). Hough's uncertainty is what marks the weakness of his interpretation of the affair. I could not find in any of the love scenes between the couple where, when and how they are plainly satisfied, as Hough seems to think. I wonder if the critic means 'satisfaction' in the first moonlight night in which Ursula annihilates Skrebensky or if he means the second meeting under the moon in which both lovers are partially destroyed because they cannot fulfil each other. The following day they break the engagement.

Despite Hough's weak interpretation of Ursula's affair with Skrebensky, he does succeed in making plausible his view of the end of the book. He says that the vision of the rainbow

is quite insufficiently based, nothing in the book up to now has led to it. Regenerations are not achieved by mere rejection; the only positive value consistently represented in the text has been fulfilment in the bond between man and woman; and this Ursula has just signally failed to achieve. The new religion has not proved itself on the pulses; and all the end of The Rainbow ultimately expresses is a vague hope and the need to end somehow (p.72).

Sagar finds in Women in Love "The new image is the ebb and flow of the sea — cycles of creation and decay which are

indifferent to human life. Yet ~~humanity~~ is somehow responsible for what is happening to it" (p.78). He claims that in the novel there is integration with nature only among animals and plants, but not man. "Man", the critic claims, "should then be swept away until some revolutionary cycle is ready to begin" (ibid). He adds to his analysis that man may have within himself "the integrity of Bismarck(a rabbit) which can be asserted against hystorical processes", and that "Integrity, or 'truth in being', manifests itself in personal, especially sexual relationships, its presence guarantees creativeness, its absence reduction, disintegration" (ibid). Ursula and Birkin represent a movement "towards distinctiveness and selving through their coming together" and Gerald and Gudrun represent the contrary. They "resolve back towards inanimate matter, symbolised in the novel by ice and snow". Therefore, both couples represent respectively the cycle of creation and decay.

Ford claims that Women in Love still contains "the double rhythms of destruction and creation" (p.164) which were present in The Rainbow. He adds that "the rhythm of destruction is here more insistent and compelling than the creative is" (ibid). However, "In Lawrence's novel, against a background of fetid corruption, a man and woman do discover each other, and their union establishes the possibility of hope and salvation" (p.168). Of course he is talking about Ursula and Birkin.

Hough seems to me to have a moralistic view of the novel. He says that the two couples in the story "are there to illustrate a right and wrong way of love" (p.76). I think that this depends very much on what one takes as a 'right' or 'wrong' way to love. His view is not very clear.

The Plumed Serpent is discussed by these critics (except

by Ford who does not analyse the story) in terms of its validity as a work of art. Sagar discusses the novel in his book in a chapter called "The Lost Trail" and his most important idea is related to the 'execution' of men. The critic says that "the men Don Ramon executes would have been executed by normal processes of law in most countries today... It is rather in the power and licence he gives to Cipriano that Don Ramon compromises with the horror" (p.165). There may be countries which execute men who are like the ones in the novel, but my disagreement with Sagar is due to the fact that he does not consider the fact that the men are executed as a way to frighten the followers of the new religion. Human sacrifices are performed by Cipriano in order to show the natives that the Quetzalcoatl religion means power and those who do not agree with its 'doctrine' are going to be murdered.

Hough differs from Sagar over The Plumed Serpent. He considers the human sacrifices as a degradation of the character of Kate. He says that "Kate, who was disgusted, horrified to the roots of her being by the bullfight, is merely made "gloomy and uneasy", "shocked and depressed" by the killings she has witnessed. She begins to see them as part of the will of God" (p.132). This sense of Kate's degradation "is the nadir of the book; and it might well end therewith the unintended confession that the new religion leads only to death and to a sadistic sexuality without human contact or a human setting" (p.133).

Sagar and Hough seem to concur with the idea that Kate finally decides to stay in Mexico. Sagar says that what holds her there is "the man Cipriano, who must take her to give her life, at forty, some meaning, and prevent her deterioration into another Mrs Witt" (p.167). Hough seems to agree with Sagar for

he says "Yet at the end, when Cipriano says he wants her, she knows she has decided to stay" (p.135). I feel, on the contrary, that there is not, at the end of the book, this assured certainty. What is present there, as I shall try to show in my conclusion, is a whole set of uncertainties. The final nature of Kate's decision is not really defined.

To sum up the theme of conflict in Lawrence: Sagar views it as a deterioration of the search for balance. The first novels present the struggle, not in terms of dominance but in terms of a relation of equilibrium. After Women in Love, Lawrence puts the conflict in terms of male dominance. Ford also seems to agree with this point of view. The difference is in what he qualifies as 'male dominance' in the later novels is Lawrence's attempt to make his peace with his father. As for Hough's view, conflict in Lawrence is always related to an exploration of being in the relations between men and women.

No matter how exhaustively Lawrence's works have been analysed by different people with different ideas, new views are still possible. My view of Lawrence sometimes matches with that of the critics and sometimes does not. Throughout this dissertation I will try to throw new light on his works so as to illuminate the texts to clarify their intentions and effects. I shall return to the critics again to support and clarify my interpretation. Other critics will appear in my discussion when their views are relevant as parallels or contrasts to my own.

### Statement of Purpose

My intention in this dissertation is to examine Lawrence's representative novels and analyse the pattern of conflict and

struggle for domination between the couples in the author's early, middle and late works.

I am going to concentrate this analysis in the following way:

- a. To show how the pattern of conflict varies and extends prototypes found in the autobiographical novel Sons and Lovers;
- b. to show if this fiction of successive phases reveals shifts in the author's sympathy towards his mother or his father;
- c. to show that such shifts of sympathy or identification occur in individual works, where they characteristically are reflected in X-shaped plots and the pattern of characters exchanging roles in respect to dominance and submission.

The line I intend to follow is an independent form of contextual criticism. Priority will be given to the text in an attempt to avoid theoretical preconceptions (including those of the author himself). I will examine plot structure, characterization, imagery, authorial comment — in short, all those areas that cast light on the problem of conflict defined above. Works will be examined both in terms of their individual integrity and in terms of the way they fit into the opus as a whole and reflect the author's total evolution.

The works examined in this dissertation will be drawn from the commonly discriminated phases in Lawrence's works. The first one, the early pattern, covers his first phase, and The Trespasser, Sons and Lovers and The Rainbow are the most representative of this part. In them there is a tendency to present women as the strongest characters. They are maternal,

spiritual, or aggressive women associated with the sky, (the logos) who dominate weaker males who are often associated with the earth or the blood. We might call this the period of the 'femme fatale'. The second, or the middle pattern, is represented by Women in Love and the novella "The Fox". Critics generally have found in this area the greatest element of balance both in terms of authorial style and in the relations of the sexes. Yet, I will argue that there is no true balance in the latter sense, only a special complexity in the 'one up one down' discriminated by Daleski (1965). The third pattern, the late, will be represented by the novel The Plumed Serpent. Here, in an attempt to assert values associated with his 'blood conscious' father, Lawrence portrays men as the dominant figures. Women who show traits originally associated with Gertrude Morel (the mother) are shown to submit or are 'sacrificed' to patriarchal authority. The 'fatal male' dominates this period. The fourth pattern, the last one, represents Lawrence's return to 'tenderness'. In Lady Chatterley's Lover, Lawrence rejects the problem of power developed in his leadership phase to return to the peaceful love between man and woman. This last phase we will not examine, since it is only a reformulation of the author's initial phases.

As a final point, the endings of these works will be compared so as to show the inner division of the author in presenting the conflict between liberated, critical heroines and the male ethic asserted by their mates. This inner division occurs mainly due to the author's own conflict between his intention and his feelings. Conscious, prophetic intention is contradicted most of the time by the less conscious, artistic feelings. The endings of the stories show quite clearly that the author may have, for instance, intended to make his characters

achieve balance in their relations, but there is a kind of resistance to this aim in the characters' feelings and they do not match the author's prime wish. This conflict leads the characters to fall short of so-called perfection in their relations. The endings also show intense struggle on the author's part to unite soul and body, but this proves to be impossible since some characters are allegorized as the soul and others as the body. The union of body and soul is never possible therefore, as I will demonstrate in my final conclusion.



## CHAPTER II

### THE PATTERN OF CONFLICT IN *SONS AND LOVERS*

Sons and Lovers by D.H. Lawrence develops the story of a post Victorian family in which domination is an important characteristic. The novel represents a microcosm of the society of that time and its themes are continuing modern preoccupations. The struggle for dominance in the Morel family establishes the pattern of Lawrence's later novels since the conflict in Sons and Lovers is qualified basically by the strength of the mind (in his mother) against the body (in his father). The struggle is shown in terms of the mother's rejection of the father exactly because of her superior mind. This, as I shall show in this chapter, leads her to dominate the whole family; and, in so doing, she makes her sons entirely divided in themselves, and unable to achieve a balance in their emotional lives. They cannot find in love a communion between soul and body. Therefore, at the same time that the mother destroys her own marriage, she helps to create in her sons, especially in Paul, an enormous dependence on her and this fact leads them to fail in their love lives.

## 1. The Morels' Marriage - The Strength of the Soulful Woman

There began a battle between the husband and wife — a fearful, bloody battle that ended only with the death of one. She fought to make him undertake his own responsibilities, to make him fulfil his obligations. But he was too different from her. 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. (p.23 - My underlining)

Early in Sons and Lovers Lawrence provides the key to the story of the Morel family. This is to say that there must be a death in order to restore, or to initiate a path towards freedom in the family. Since the very beginning of this novel the author makes the readers aware that this is not a story with a 'happy-ending'. On the contrary, he is warning them of the difficult struggle between people who are weak and people who are strong. There is no real balance in this novel, at least in the sense that strength is not always shared among the characters. Some are too strong, others are too weak. In the novel there is always a feeling of people dominating people and, therefore, there is also the reverse: people submitting to people. They rarely share anything (except perhaps in the case of Paul Morel and his mother, who must be considered separately). What they do not have they look for in those who have and as soon as they get what they want, they feel tired and go to search for others to fulfil their necessities. The idea seems to be that of possessiveness and selfishness. Most of the time they only want to take, but they hardly give anything, especially when the subject is love.

One full example of this is Gertrude Morel who is one of the main protagonists of Lawrence's Sons and Lovers. She is the personification of 'power', 'authority', 'integrity'

and mind superiority. She is what can be called 'a decayed aristocrat' who declines more when she marries a mere lower class miner. Here is her genealogy:

Mrs Morel came of a good old burgher family, famous independents who had fought with Colonel Hutchinson, and who remained stout Congregationalists. Her grandfather had gone bankrupt in the lace-market at a time when so many lace-manufacturers were ruined in Nottingham. Her father, George Coppard, was an engineer — a large, handsome, haughty man, proud of his fair skin and blue eyes, but more proud still of his integrity. Gertrude resembled her mother in her small build. But her temper, proud and unyielding, she had from the Coppards. (pp.14-5)

This is not to say that, being of a higher class, Gertrude Coppard could not marry a man of a lower class, but to say that belonging to a 'learned' family, she could never face the simple life of the colliers. After all, her husband hardly knows how to sign his own name and she is too 'intellectual' to tolerate the low vocabulary of such people. Gertrude only marries Walter Morel due to the fact that she is fascinated by the "well set-up, erect, and very smart" (p.16) man. Walter, a handsome and attractive miner, spellbinds the 'lady' so that for some months she forgets the simple man he is, to love passionately the male she has by her side in bed. However, as soon as she opens her eyes to reality and sees that sex is not everything in life, she despises him. And here is the point where life becomes like hell in the Morels' home. This is only the seventh month the young couple has been married! Besides this unhappy discovery, Gertrude learns from Walter's mother that he does not even own his house — he pays rent to his mother, and what is worse: he pays a higher rent for the house whereas the other people pay less. Mrs Morel cannot stand this lie. Walter, it seems, for the sake of appearing well-off in the eyes of his lady-like wife, has hidden

from her his true monetary state. After she comes to know the real situation of her married life "She said very little to her husband, but her manner had changed towards him. Something in her proud, honourable soul had crystallized out hard as rock." (p.22). In what refers to Walter the situation is not different for "The estrangement between them caused him, knowingly or unknowingly, grossly to offend her where he would not have done." (p.23-4)

The first child of the couple, William, is born and it is he who makes the mother's life endurable: "He came just when her own bitterness of disillusion was hardest to bear; when her faith in life was shaken, and her soul felt dreary and lonely. She made much of the child, and the father was jealous." (p.23)

As the Morels' marriage has been developed without any grounds of equality — social position, education, view of life, and so on — there is really nothing enduring in it. The only link between the couple is the child. Therefore, Mrs Morel turns to it and runs from the father. The only place where she accepts him is where there is no social scale, nor any talking — which is in their bed. In it she forgets the humble man Walter is and faces him just as a male. As a result of this carnal love comes the other children: Annie, Paul and finally Arthur.

The birth of Paul is the hardest one. He comes in a moment of terrible conflicts. There is the enormous gap between Morel and Gertrude; there is his hard drinking; there is the lack of money. Paul is then rejected even before being born:

The world seemed a dreary place, where nothing else would happen for her — at least until William grew up. But for herself, nothing but this dreary endurance — till the children grew up. And the children! She could not afford to have this third. She did not want it. The

father was serving beer in a public-house, swilling himself drunk. She despised him, and was tied to him. This coming child was too much for her. If it were not for William and Annie, she was sick of it, the struggle with poverty and ugliness and meanness. (p.12)

Morel, feeling the heavy burden of her scorn, turns to drinking. There is no space for him at home. There only an atmosphere of fight and coldness exists. Gertrude tries to create in her husband her ideal of man — well educated, moral and religious. Here, the resemblance between Mrs Morel and Helena from The Trespasser is considerable: both neglect their real and living men to idealize them according to their minds, and both women somehow destroy their men because of this dreaming idealization. In Mrs Morel's case, she tries to transform Walter but as she cannot, she hates him and makes his life horrible. There is no love and she only scorns him:

If he sinned, she tortured him. If he drank, and lied, was often a poltroon, sometimes a knave, she wielded the lash unmercifully.

The pity was, she was too much his opposite. She could not be content with the little he might be; she would have him the much he ought to be. So, in seeking to make him nobler than he could be, she destroyed him. (p.25)

Walter differs from Helena's lover, Siegmund, in the sense that Siegmund is weaker, he commits suicide. Walter in his hard drinking is only escaping from a battle with his wife because he unconsciously knows that he has no strength of mind to fight Mrs Morel. Although the miner is physically strong, his undeveloped mind allows him to be defeated by the strong coldness and righteousness of Mrs Morel.

The Morels' home becomes a battlefield: on the one hand, the powerful military woman with the brains and the force (her mind and her children); on the other, the poor soldier trying to escape from power and whose only weapon is his money and the "name"

he has given his wife. They are tied up to one another with fearfully strong handcuffs: the children. These handcuffs are the reason why they cannot get divorced, as Mrs Morel is forced to admit in one of their fights:

'The house is filthy with you', she cried.  
'Then get out on it — it's mine. Get out on it!' he shouted. 'It's me as brings th' money whoam, not thee. It's my house, not thine. Then get out on't!'

'And I would,' she cried, suddenly shaken into tears of impotence. 'Ah, wouldn't I, wouldn't I have gone long ago, but for those children. Ay, haven't I repented not going years ago, when I'd only one' — suddenly driving into rage. 'Do you think it's for *you* I stop — do you think I'd stop one minute for *you*?'

'No!' she faced round. 'No,' she cried loudly, 'you shan't have it *all* your own way; you shant do *all* you like. I've got those children to see to. My word,' she laughed, 'I should look well to leave them to you.' (p.33)

Walter, despite appearing strong and severe with his words, is nevertheless afraid of his wife. She is stronger than he is. However, the conflict is not so simple. Mrs Morel fights with the support of an interior and deep force that is brought out into truthful words. Walter in his rage is only using his physical force because in his mind he is afraid of her. He will not do anything mainly due to the guilt his wife inflicts on him. He has no courage to really confront her. This point can be supported by the fact that later on, in another battle, he arranges his bundle pretending to leave home. But he does not. It is only Walter trying childishly to blackmail his wife, perhaps wishing to frighten her or to see how important he is in his family. It is a useless joke because Mrs Morel knows her husband and even before she sees his bundle behind the door, she soothes her children about his returning. This unhappy event shows that, up to this point of the novel, Mrs Morel has already established who is the 'almighty' in the family. She is able to

the control the whole family without being contradicted. The poor husband has then to creep back to his shell and the only refuge that is allowed to him is the bars. Even the children he is not allowed to love, for his wife, in a certain way, forbids him to love them. Apart from this 'prohibition' the children cannot feel the father as part of the house. They take the side of the mother in the fights in which they are always present. The mother forces the children to side with her because she lets them see the flaws of the father. Mrs Morel thus lives for her children and Walter for his work and drinking. Home means rage, fear and unhappiness. Walter resents the fact that he has no love from the children. He knows that they do not belong to him, as he sneers to his wife:

'Look at the children, you nasty little bitch!' he sneered 'why, what have I done to the children, I should like to know? But they are like yourself; you've put 'em up to your own tricks and nasty ways — you've learned 'em in it, you've.' (p.77  
- My underlining)

Few peaceful moments between the couple are presented in the book. One of them happens when Morel gets sick and his wife is 'forced' to take care of him. As he recovers, life seems a little better for husband and wife stop fighting for some time (it may be because Mrs Morel does not have any reason to go into a fight — her husband is at home and for a while is not drinking). It is in this sort of 'ceasefire' that the last son Arthur is born. What is most interesting to notice here is that, for the first time, the couple together chooses the name of the boy (William and Annie's are not mentioned, and Paul's name is only chosen by the mother). This seems to be the only moment in the novel that the couple agrees to do a common thing (besides, of course, going to bed). Moreover, Arthur is the only son who

does not reject the father from the beginning. He is the only one who seems to belong to both father and mother:

They called the baby Arthur. He was very pretty, with a mop of gold curls, and he loved his father from the first. Mrs Morel was glad this child loved the father. Hearing the miner's footsteps, the baby would put up his arms and crow. And if Morel was in a good temper, he called back immediately in his hearty, mellow voice... (p.63 - My underlining)

However, this 'ceasefire' is as short as the life of a soap bubble. It really does not last any longer. A new battle begins. This time it involves the children, especially William who confronts his father because of a swollen eye Mrs Morel has got from Walter. In the confrontation he calls his father a coward, and Morel cannot stand being challenged by his own son. They become murderously aggressive: "Another word, and the men would have begun to fight. Paul hoped they would. The three children sat pale on the sofa." (p.77 - My underlining). The conflict here has a close connection with the Oedipus complex: it is the rivalry between son and father because of the mother. The fight ends with Mrs Morel's interference.

The battlefield (though the winner is already known) of the Morels' home changes from one place to another. The family moves to another house, away from the Bottoms where they used to live. The new home brings a new element of a very deep symbolism: "In front of the house was a huge old ash tree. The west wind, sweeping away from Derbyshire, caught the houses with full force, and the tree shrieked again." (ibid.). It means joy for Morel and hate for the children.

The sound of the wind shrieking in the ash tree is like music for the father, but the children identify the noise with the coming fight of their parents. It means the father is



returning home drunken and certainly a fight is about to happen. The children become terrified with the signalling of the tree. They think that the noise of the tree is like a bad omen. Paul is the son who senses it more painfully and he shares with his brothers and sister the terror of the parents' quarrel. The feeling of pain, expectation and desperation is so strong that they are always shaken with the terror of the fight, as if one of the parents were going to die. The almost 'demoniacal noise' of the tree frightens the children in such a way that they cannot feel any ease at home. Morel arrives and

Then [Paul] heard the booming shouts of his father, come home nearly drunk, then the sharp replies of his mother, then the bang, bang of his father's fist on the table and the nasty snarling shout as the man's voice got higher. And then the whole was drowned in a piercing medley of shrieks and cries from the great, windswept ash-tree. The children lay silent in suspense, waiting for a lull in the wind to hear what their father was doing. He might hit the mother again. There was a feeling of horror, a kind of bristling in the darkness, and a sense of blood. They lay with their hearts in the grip of an intense anguish. The wind came through the tree fiercer and fiercer. All the cords of the great harp hummed, whistled, and shrieked. And then came the horror of the sudden silence, silence everywhere, outside and downstairs. What was it? Was it a silence of blood? What had he done? (p.78)

The sense created by this description is one of total horror. As if the book itself were telling a ghost story, or a murder. It may be said that there is also an association of violence and sex here. The children do not know what is going on but the idea of battle between the parents may be taken as if in sex the father were also violent with the mother.

Up to now Mrs Morel has full control over the situation of the family and, although she suffers a lot, she has the children's support for "She never suffered alone any more: the children suffered with her." (p.79) What seems rather selfish

in this suffering is the fact that Mrs Morel could free her children from this pain. This does not mean that she could hide from them the problems of her marriage, but to say that she seems pleased to share with the sons the problems for which she and her husband have the entire responsibility: they have decided to marry; they have the guilt of their failure (though I believe that she is more responsible than Walter due to the fact that being more 'rational' she should have avoided the marriage).

What actually happens in the development of the novel is that Morel becomes an absentee father in his own home. Nobody is tender to him. Nobody tells him anything. He is an outsider in his family. It is as Lawrence points out:

He was shut out from all family affairs. No one told him anything. The children, alone with their mother, told her all about the day's happenings, everything. Nothing had really taken place in them until it was told to their mother. But as soon as the father came in, everything stopped. He was like the scotch in the smooth, happy machinery of the home. And he was always aware of this fall of silence on his entry. But now it was gone too far to alter. (p.81)

How can he go along with all these troubles? I believe that he can only turn to drinking in order to forget the lack of love, of interaction with his family. Out of his home, with his 'friends', he can find peace, friendship and companionship. All he does not have at home he finds in his work and at the bars. He feels he is not welcome at his home, so, why go home sober? What would be the advantages? To come home, sit on his chair, terribly guilty and see that "conversation was impossible between the father and any other member of the family. He was an outsider. He had denied the God in him." (p.82) ?

Mrs Morel makes little effort to minimize this situation, but she cannot be blamed for it entirely. Sometimes she tries

to reconcile the children with the father, because as Lawrence says, "He would dearly have liked the children to talk to him, but they could not." (p.81) And the wife tries to make the children go to the father: "... 'You ought to tell your father.' ... 'Now you'd better tell your father when he comes in, 'said Mrs Morel, 'You know how he carries on and says he's never told anything.'" (ibid.) The example of an 'interaction' is the prize Paul wins in a competition because of one of his paintings, and following his mother's advice, he tries to tell his father. But conversation breaks down between them. Walter cannot say much. Paul cannot be convincing in his effort to talk with his father mainly because of Paul's contempt for him. They exchange a few meaningless words, just for the sake of not being silent. This lack of emotion, of companionship in the family makes the atmosphere of the house become as heavy as a storm about to fall on the earth.

The Morels' home is a 'house of waiting'. It seems there is an enormous bomb ready to explode in the middle of the house. This 'waiting' means the state of tension in which people are just silent, frightened, scared and willing to know whether it is time for the detonation to occur: "The minutes ticked away. At six o'clock still the cloth lay on the table, still the dinner stood waiting, still the same sense of anxiety and expectation in the room." (p.80)

The sense of hatred against the father is shared with the family. The poor father is seen as if he were a monster which could devour all the 'victims' at once, if he were bothered. Silently the family dismisses the father with their hate. It would be better if Morel just died in order to free the family. It is a terrible feeling for the family to have. Morel is really

a burden. Thank the mother for this. The sensation of him as a burden can be apprehended when once Morel broke his leg and had to stay for some time at a hospital. The family feels relieved over the fact that the father is not at home. They would do well without the father. In fact it would be better not to have him back. Paul says

'I'm the man in the house now,' he used to say to his mother with joy. They learned how perfectly peaceful the home could be. And they almost regretted — though none of them would have owned so such calousness — that their father was soon coming back. (p.112 - My underlining)

Again here the motive at the back of the author's mind in this son-father hostility is Oedipal. The rivalry is once more provoked by the mother.

From this point on, Morel's significance in the novel diminishes considerably. He almost does not participate directly in any event of the family. He is only mentioned through sentences which in fact have no great importance. What actually happens is that most of the characters of the novel can be said to be rising in life whereas Morel, instead of growing, declines more and more. It seems that the overdose of spite and authoritarianism his wife has given him makes of him a kind of cloth which shrinks more and more each time it is washed to become clean.

## 2. Mother and Sons: Lovers in Conflict

As soon as Morel loses importance, his wife turns to her sons (her daughter seems not to be so important since Mrs Morel is more a mother of men than of women). And her authoritarianism is different from that one she uses with her husband. She seems

more persuasive to her sons in the sense that she does not have to fight with them to see them walking the path she wants them to follow. Thus, William and Paul blindly follow the directions their loving mother 'imposes' over them. I will try to explain this part more clearly.

As I said in the beginning of this chapter, William, the first child, is born under bad conditions, but his birth means for Mrs Morel a fearful hope in life. She grasps this hope with an inner strength to overcome, through the baby, the failure of her marriage. All her efforts are directed to this child. And in a certain way, as he is growing up he really corresponds to her expectations. He walks through the paths she has designed for him. As an example, William's first job is at the 'Co-operative Wholesale Society'. This job, arranged by the mother, causes a discussion between his parents. Morel cannot understand why the boy does not go to the pits like him. The discussion presents the opposing ideas of father and mother. Mrs Morel does not want her son to follow the same kind of life of her lower class husband. In William's job the mother wants to feel her son 'rising' in respectability. Therefore, she will never allow her son to work at the pits. She will do her best to make of her son a man with perspectives in life, not a man whose horizons are cut off, like the father's. That is why she disagrees with her husband. Or, better saying, she does not disagree, she simply says "'He is not going in the pit... and there's an end of it'" (p.69).

Later on, when William is older, there is a sense that he shares the virtues and 'defects' of his parents. He is clever and 'learned' like his mother, but he also likes dancing as did his father. This, of course, is condemned by the mother.

In the dances William occasionally meets some girls and, being a handsome young man, he awakens in them some interest for him. These girls sometimes go to his house looking for him. Through a dialogue between William's mother and a young girl he met at a dance, it is easy to infer that Mrs Morel's sons will have terrible and troublesome emotional relationships. She is entirely jealous of her son (now it is William and then Paul). She says: "'I don't approve of girls my son meets at dances...'" (p.70) and also as William says "'I'm sure she was a nice girl'," the mother replies " 'And I'm sure she wasn't'" (p.71). She is as jealous as a very possessive girlfriend.

At the age of twenty William gets a job in London and leaves the family. Going to the big city is part of the mission William is set to perform by his loving mother. There he will earn money and 'trophies' for her and, thus, give her a vicarious sense of wider horizons and the 'upper' world. In the beginning, Mrs Morel, instead of being happy, becomes disillusioned. The point is that William in London is far away from her dominance. Furthermore, she will not have her beloved son near her to dedicate all her possessive love. Perhaps there is also the fear of him becoming independent due to the fact that being away from her, he can decide his life without having to ask his mother whether he can or cannot do this or that thing. William cannot see that his mother "might be more hurt at his going away than glad of his success. Indeed, as the days went near for his departure, her heart began to close and grow dreary with despair..." (p.72).

William goes to London without carrying on his shoulders the burden of the sick possessive love of his mother. He loves her, knows her love for him, but life goes on and he wants to

succeed in life. This is an unconscious escape from his mother and, ironically, he dies because he could not find a girl who would replace Gertrude.

Life in London seems really good to William: he earns good wages, sends money to his mother and is happy. At Christmas he is back to visit his family. He, as a good son, "had brought them endless presents. Every penny he has spent on them..." (p.104). In the Morels' home "Everybody was mad with happiness. Home was home, and they loved it with a passion of love, whatever the suffering had been" (p.105). But William goes back to London. Happiness is gone.

Under these conditions, Mrs Morel's marriage does not exist anymore in the sense that there is no interaction between wife and husband. But one may say that William in London reproduces, or rather continues, his parents' marriage. In other words, William falls in love a girl whose main 'virtue' lies in her sensuous appeal (like mother, like son!). If William belongs to both Walter and Gertrude, it is certain that he has inherited from them the 'magic' blind of sensuality, i.e., he has fallen in love due to the fact that Gypsy's physical appeal arrested him (as his mother was fascinated by Walter's attractive figure, so is he by Gypsy's lady-like appearance and behavior). William is literally blind to her inner side. He only sees the seductive girl 'Gyp' is, and that is the impression shown by the photograph of her he sends to the family. The photograph depicts the girl's sensuality, as Mrs Morel points out in a letter to her son:

'the photograph of Louie is very striking, and I can see she must be attractive. But do you think, my boy, it was very good taste of a girl to give her young man that photo to send to his mother — the first? Certainly the shoulders are beautiful, as you say. But I hardly expected

to see so much of them at the first view.' (p.126)

Walter also does not like the photo: "'H'm! 'Er's a bright spark, from th' look on 'er, an' one as wanna do him owermuch good neither...'" (ibid.).

The girl can be compared to Morel. To a certain extent, she is worse than he. For one thing, Morel is a humble man who does not disguise his ignorance. Neither does he pretend to be a 'gentleman'. He is entirely dominated by his wife in all senses: his money, his ignorance, his (hidden) tenderness, etc. Gypsy, on the other hand, is supposed to be a 'lady' and it is she who dominates William by means of sex (that is all they have) and money (since she comes to live under his expenses). The only characteristic which she shares with her father-in-law is in what refers to mind: both are narrow-minded characters. They are completely illiterate. They cannot tolerate any piece of writing. They are unable to read. A great difference between these twin-marriages is that Morel is a miner, and Gypsy is a well-dressed, ambitious girl. She tries to look like a lady. Morel cannot do the same. This perhaps explains my point in saying that William is the heir of his parents' same behavior before getting married: Gypsy looks like a lady (Mrs Morel) but is illiterate (Mr Morel). The problem is that William only discovers this feature in 'Gyp' when it is too late to stop the relationship. This fact may be accounted for by the idea that William subconsciously chooses a girl that will not work out, thus he preserves the priority of his link to his mother.

When William finally discovers the empty character of his lover, he is already tied up by these powerful handcuffs: they are not married but they have a sexual life. How can a relationship last under these circumstances? There must be something deeper



to strengthen the relation. This means mind interaction and that does not exist in Gypsy because. "She could understand nothing but love making and chatter" (p.163). William senses the difference and complains to his mother in a painful way: "'That's it mother,' he replied gratefully. But his brow was gloomy. 'You know, she's not like you, mother. She's not serious, and she can't think'" (p.148 - My underlining). Defining his fiancée like that, William anticipates the failure of his relation with Gypsy. It is a total reproduction of his parents' frustrated marriage.

However, William's affair with the girl does not go far. They do not marry. In a sense the relationship reaches its peak with William's decline. What seems rather awkward is to notice that the boy has gone to London to become better positioned in the social scale, like his mother so much wanted, but what really happens is different. He indeed climbs the stairs of high society but there he meets Gypsy who leads him to fall and also leads him to death. Apart from Gypsy's 'help', there is his mother's yearnings for him which certainly have a deep influence in his fall and subsequent death. William due to his despair in not overcoming the shortcomings of a frustrated and unresolved relationship gets sick and finally dies. Another idea is that in trying to become independent from his mother, he gets far beyond the limits permitted by the nylon string Mrs Morel has tied on his neck (symbolically represented by his collars which caused erysipelas on his neck). As a consequence, he has a death which might be associated with a kind of hanging. His Gypsy soon forgets him (as he predicted some time before dying). His mother becomes for a period out of her senses till she transfers her possessive love to her other son, Paul.

In spite of the importance William has in his mother's life, he is not the key to the role of dominance presented by Lawrence in Sons and Lovers. Neither William, nor his father: Paul Morel, the third son, is this key. He is the one who has the most intrinsic and sick relationship with his mother, in whose hands lie the definition of a contradictory, self-repressive personality. It is in Paul that the mother's life centers when William dies. It is he who most concentrates the exasperating love for his mother. And although the reverse is also true, it must be said that Gertrude Morel did love her first son best, and in fact Paul was jealous of this, and aware that he was 'second-best'. Paul's relationship with his mother matches Freud's theory of Oedipus Complex (the symptoms are clearly stated by the author throughout the novel).

Paul's birth, as I have already pointed out, is the most troublesome. His mother has rejected him even before he was born. This fact implies that the child will have the sequels (either good or bad) arisen through his mother's rejection. The child has all the elements to become a mentally disordered one. His health is weak and hence he depends too much on his mother's attention and care. I think that his illness, if it is, is hypersensitiveness. Paul is the son who is able to share his mother's pains much more than the other children, and because of this 'quality' he is also the one who suffers more. His character goes from one extreme to the other: at one moment he is all love and soon after he is transformed into a flood of anger; at another moment he is all nervous, soon after he is as calm as a day without wind. That is Paul Morel: he concentrates all feelings at once without distinguishing them clearly. Up to the end of the novel he cannot be said to know with determination what he

really wants. He goes from one decision to another. And this tricky and unbalanced personality is a direct result of his mother's influence and also of her frustration in her marriage.

The repudiation of Paul's birth makes Mrs Morel feel terribly guilty and this guilt she transfers to her son. Such a state of mind makes the mother's attachment to Paul a kind of serious commitment she must endure all her life without giving up. It begins when she consciously assumes that she does not love the child so much as she loves William or the other children. One important scene which supports this point occurs after a fight between husband and wife, in which the father hurts the mother in her brow. It bleeds and drops of blood are spilt on the baby. This 'baptism' of blood is something dreadful since it may reinforce the sense of catastrophe related to the child's upbringing. It is the mother's blood spilt on the child, therefore Lawrence implies that Paul's descent comes only from the mother's side. The father is not allowed to interfere in the child's life. It is true that this interference is not allowed to Walter earlier in the novel when Mrs Morel alone chooses the name of the baby. At that moment she did not know why she had decided to call him Paul. However, her reasons are not difficult to understand: she feels guilty towards the infant, therefore she must find a way to compensate for the fact that she did not want his birth. Since Paul is the name of the apostle her father was devoted to, she is praising the father unconsciously. And also, by choosing the name herself, she may be implying that she will direct his life whether Paul wants it or not:

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 that had connected its frail little body with hers had not been broken. A wave of hot love 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 (pp.50-1 - My underlining).

Her guilt is so strong that she senses a kind of reproach through the eyes of Paul when the baby painfully looks at her. That is why she must do something to compensate for all these feelings.

As Paul is growing up his life is like the shadow of his mother's life. He is a guilt haunting the mother. His weak physique represents in its essence the failure of the parents' marriage. One may say that power and domination is linked with guilt: Mrs Morel made Walter feel guilty and now the unwanted child makes her feel guilty. His mother seems not to understand Paul's almost always sad mood, it is definitely the symbol of his 'unconscious' awareness of his parents' problematic relation and that he is one of its main result.

Paul and his mother are alike in constitution and in mind. His hypersensitiveness makes him appear older than he actually is: "He was so conscious of what other people felt, particularly his mother. When she fretted he understood, and could have no peace. His soul seemed always attentive to her" (p.75). Besides this close association with the mother, Paul is also the child who most shares with Mrs Morel the hatred for the father: "All the children, but particularly Paul, were peculiarly against their father, along with their mother" (p.76 - My underlining). Paul's hatred for his father is so strong that he

prefers to think of death instead of a way to mend the situation. He knows his mother's suffering because of Walter's drunkenness, but his way of solving the problem is different: he wishes his father's death. This thought lives within his inner heart and belongs to his daily prayers. As he cannot make his father stop drinking, he pleads with God to help his parents:

Paul hated his father. As a boy he had a fervent private religion.

'Make him stop drinking,' he prayed every night. 'Lord let my father die,' he prayed very often. 'Let him not be killed at pit,' he prayed when, after tea, the father did not come home from work (p.79).

What is strikingly moving here is that Paul is only a little boy, yet has such a feverish consciousness of problems. His weak constitution implies the total abstraction of the outer world and its problems in his mind. Despite having a weak body, his mind is like a giant on comprehending the other's (his mother's) suffering. His suffering seems bigger than his own mother's and the children's together.

When Paul gets sick for the first time in the novel, it is accompanied by the mother's sense of guilt. This asserts once more the idea that Mrs Morel MUST commit herself entirely to her son. It is her fault if he is weak; his suffering is her fault:

Again rose in her heart the old, almost weary feeling towards him. She had never expected him to live. And yet he had great vitality in his young body. Perhaps it would have been a little relief to her if he died. She always felt a mixture of anguish in her love for him (p.85 - My underlining).

Paul's illness may be explained by the fact that the little boy feels impotent to improve his mother's unhappy life. He cannot help; he cannot make it up. Therefore, he psychologically becomes much weaker in his impotence and allows illness to take his body:

It hurt the boy keenly, this feeling about her that she had never had her life's fulfilment and his own incapability to make up to her hurt him with a sense of impotence, yet made him patiently dogged inside. It was his childish aim (ibid.).

The fact that Paul is ill provides the definition of his love for his mother and hate for his father. Paul only wants his mother to take care of him, to nurse him. He cannot even stand his father's proximity to him. His mother is all he wants. This possessive love allows one to think that love is sometimes too selfish, for it does not allow strangers to interfere in the relation. It is at this point that Lawrence becomes mixed with Paul, and presenting Paul's wish to sleep with Mrs Morel, the author seems to express his own desire to sleep with his mother. Lawrence interferes in Paul's feelings with his personal opinions. The reader gets confused then: is it Paul or Lawrence expressing this exasperated love for the mother?

Paul loved to sleep with his mother. Sleep is still most perfect, in spite of hygienists, when it is shared with a beloved. The warmth, the security and peace of soul, the utter comfort from the touch of the other, knits the sleep, so that it takes the body and soul completely in its healing. Paul lay against her and slept, and got better; whilst she, always a bad sleeper, fell later on into a profound sleep that seemed to give her faith (p.87).

It seems here that Lawrence is speaking, quite without irony, and unaware of the 'Oedipal' dimension of all this.

Paul and his mother complete each other in thoughts and actions. Since he is her 'shadow' or counterpart, or twin-soul, all he does is for her and vice-versa. Up to now there is no domination, or rather there is a kind of 'happy marriage' going on. Paul submits to her and submits her to his love. She is dominated and dominates in her love. There is what I call a

mutual acceptance between them. Paul identifies with his mother. Everything done means pleasure. They are always pleasing each other. They accept each other as a normal rule. There is no ruler in the strict sense. Only there is the reader's knowledge of what is going on: Mrs Morel is 'punishing' herself for not having loved Paul since he was conceived. Thus she must commit herself (with pleasure) to her love for the boy. Mrs Morel even thinks aloud near her son and it is as if he were not her son but a part of herself in front of her, like a mirror:

So she talked to her son, almost as if she were thinking aloud to him, and he took it as best as he could, by sharing her trouble to lighten it. And in the end she shared almost everything with him without knowing (p.111).

Life has always been hard for lower class people. It is an old practice for poor families to throw their children into the world early in their teens, so that they can help at home. The Morel family is not different. William is the first one who gets a job in town, then goes away to London and, for a while, sends money to his mother. However, as soon as Gypsy appears in his life he stops supporting his family. Now Paul, at the age of fourteen, is thrown into the world to work in order to help his family. He applies for a job at the Jordan's office (a factory which deals with surgical appliances) and gets it. The most interesting point in this passage of the novel is that Paul applies for the job and it is his mother who guides him into this business. She feels responsible for her son's first job, therefore, she must command his initial steps otherwise her poor child will feel lost. Before Paul enters Mr Jordan's room where he will be interviewed, a very funny scene occurs. Paul follows his mother shyly as if afraid of being 'punished' for his application. Mrs Morel looks like an enormous chicken protecting

the little chick from any dangerous enemy. She directs everything and Paul, behind her, just looks afraid and nervous. It is indeed funny (almost tragical I should say): "Mrs Morel went first, her son followed her. Charles I mounted his scaffold with a lighter heart than had Paul Morel as he followed his mother up the dirty steps to the dirty door" (p.118). Despite the nervous mood of Paul in the interview, he gets the job. Paul's nervousness, I think, is plainly explainable: he is a boy who is only used to treating with his own family. His environment is restricted only to his home and surroundings. It is natural that he becomes frightened with the presentation of a world which seems unpleasant and hostile. This is his first contact with another, unfamiliar world. His mother's directions can be seen as one more hint that she will never allow him to face life alone while she lives. She will be near him, helping (suffocating) him whenever she feels she must. . . . Behaving like this, instead of helping Paul, the mother is spoiling his life. If he cannot walk with his own feet, he will never be prepared to get along with life alone. He will always depend on her.

Mrs Morel's selfishness and sense of dominance over her children (especially William and Paul) is asserted when Paul gets his job and she proudly thinks of her two sons:

Now she had two sons in the world. She could think of two places, two great centres of industry, and feel that she had put a man into each of them, that these men would work out what she wanted; that they were derived from her, they were of her, and their works also would be hers (pp.127-8 - My underlining).

I think that this is a monstrous statement to be supposedly the thought of a mother who really wants her sons to do well in life. They should do well not for their own growth, but selfishly for her, the almighty mother. The narrative above



implies definitely the mother's sense of controlling her sons' lives. She will live for this and she will never make a step backward. She will never give in. She will always treat her sons as her properties, completely dependent on her.

In trying to make Paul's life enjoyable and to distract him from his hard work, Mrs Morel invites him to go to Mr Leivers' farm to visit his wife. Here life traps Mrs Morel: at the farm, Paul will meet Miriam Leivers — the main rival of Mrs Morel's love for her son. Had the mother known that at Willey Farm her son would first fall in love with another woman, and cease exclusively loving her, she would never have had the thought of taking Paul there. But as she does not have any kind of premonition, she takes Paul and, one may say "gives" him to Miriam.

It is easy to feel the deep love son and mother exchange on the way to the Leivers' farm. Their love seems to ignore their different ages. In fact Paul would never admit old age could come to his mother: "'What do I want with a white-haired mother?'" (p.153). For him, the mother has always to look young, like a sweetheart to whom he will ever give flowers and love:

'Here's a bit of newmown hay,' he said, then, again, he brought her forget-me-nots. And, again, his heart hurt with love, seeing her hands, used to work, holding the little bunch of flowers he gave her. She was perfectly happy (p.155).

At Willey Farm the first person they meet is Miriam who looks shy in her dirty apron and resentful of the strangers. Later on, while his mother is talking with Mrs Leivers, Paul makes friends with the Leivers' children. Miriam, at first, establishes a distance between them. She is not used to becoming friends, especially with boys, for her brothers mistreat her. They take her as somebody common. She herself feels she is like

the 'Lady of the Lake'. As a romantic girl, she does not feel she is common. Miriam, like Paul, is very sensitive, soulful and beyond ordinary people with their ordinary thoughts. This seems to be the first link between the girl, Paul and his mother. They look alike in feeling the world in a different way, with a certain superiority which distinguishes them from ordinary people. But as Miriam does not know the strangers, she is not able to present, for Paul especially, this similar feature.

When mother and son leave the farm to go home, an interesting scene occurs. In it Mrs Morel, although thinking aloud to Paul, thinks about what she could do if she were Mrs Leivers. The impression is that Mrs Leivers is not fit for farm working whereas Mrs Morel would do better than she does. Miriam's mother is a very passive woman without determination. Mrs Morel feels she could play a different role if she were not tied up to a 'useless' poor miner. In a way, Mrs Morel is comparing her own frustrated marriage with the Leivers':

'Now *wouldn't* I help that man!' she said.  
*Wouldn't* I see to the fowls and the young stock!  
 And I'd learn to milk, and I'd talk with him,  
 and I'd plan with him. My word, if I were his  
 wife, the farm would be run, I know! But there,  
 she hasn't the strength — she simply hasn't the  
 strength. She ought never to have been burdened  
 like it, you know. I'm sorry for her, and I'm  
 sorry for him too. My word, if I'd had him, I  
shouldn't have thought him a bad husband! Not that  
she does either; and she is very lovable.' (p.160 -  
 My underlining).

Through this long speech is asserted once more the wrong step she has taken marrying a poor man who has nothing in common with her ambitious mind.

From the time of this visit to the Leivers, Mrs Morel's life becomes much more problematic than ever. When this new family appears in the novel, one character disappears, i.e.,

William. He dies. Mrs Morel's life up to this time has been shared in terms of love with her two sons, Paul and William. With the death of the latter, it can be said that Mrs Morel enters in a kind of darkness for she is not able to feel life the same anymore. She comes to a state of deep depression and she seems blind to the rest of her family (I mean her children). Paul is to a certain extent being once more rejected, for his mother does not care for him. She cultivates in her inner heart the light of love for her dead son, only for William. She refuses to see what is going on outside the invisible mask of pain she wears. Her eyes can only see her dead son. Paul feels unable to stand this rejection mainly because he knows that his mother's love is entirely directed to his dead brother. Paul's mind seems to work in a kind of projection of what happened to his dead brother William. We should say that Paul thinks that Mrs Morel loves her dead son and that he died of pneumonia (plus erysipelas), therefore, he (Paul) must have a (similar) illness to become loved by his mother and that he must also die so as to feel his mother's love fully directed to him. This is why he says "'I s'll die, mother!' he cried, heaving for breath in the pillow" (p.175). Thus, his health declines in such a way that his illness is the same as William's: pneumonia! This psychological trick plus Paul's real illness achieves its goal: Mrs Morel awakens from her deep depression and turns to Paul. The result could not be worse: "Mrs Morel's life now rooted itself in Paul" (ibid. - My underlining). This is worse because this means that from now on the mother will forget herself and live her son's life. He will never have peace till she dies.

When Paul gets better and feels able to return to work and to his 'routine', he goes straightway to the Leivers. Miriam and

her brothers become Paul's best friends. His attachment to Miriam is at first difficult because of the girl's resentment in having her 'inner world' invaded by a stranger. However, as soon as she senses that Paul is different from the others, she accepts him. Paul, for her, is "a new specimen, quick, light, graceful, who could be gentle and who could be sad, and who was clever, and who knew a lot, and who had a death in the family" (p.178). Thus, gradually, they become intimate. They talk, they walk together through the fields and, silently, they begin loving each other in the most spiritual sense. There is no space for carnal thoughts since the girl is too spiritual and religious, and Paul is too worried in trusting in her as the best friend he has.

Assuming that every true friendship has ups and downs, Miriam and Paul's is not different. As they grow intimate, they begin discovering features of their personality that sometimes appear as defects. They then (Paul especially) seem to be repelled by these features. An example of this is Miriam's deep demonstration of endearment to her younger brother. She is all emotion. It is as if she could only express her love through an exasperating show of caresses. Paul cannot understand this, or he cannot tolerate this demonstration, since he is not used to expressing his emotions so fervently. Hence, he rejects her in these moments. He becomes hard to her:

'What do you make such a fuss for?' cried Paul, all in suffering because of her extreme emotion.

'Why can't you be ordinary with him?'

She let the children go, and rose, and said nothing. Her intensity, which would leave no emotion on a normal plane, irritated the youth into a frenzy. And this fearful, naked contact of her on small occasions shocked him (p.190).

The next two sentences represent accurately the way he is used to such 'demonstrations' of love: "He was used to his mother's

reserve. And on such occasions he was thankful in his heart and soul that he had his mother, so sane and wholesome" (ibid.). Here we have two options: either Lawrence is being very sarcastic, or he for the moment is identified with Paul. It seems to me that Paul is in fact transferring to Miriam an unconscious reproach for his mother's exaggerated love (though the sentences show the contrary). Mrs Morel is not this saint Paul thinks she is. Miriam's love for her brother is somehow mad with emotion, possessive and strong and she expresses it without hiding her deep feelings. Mrs Morel does the same, but in a different way. She may be reserved, but the reader knows that her love is equal to Miriam's.

Mrs Morel and Miriam mean to Paul a parallel of forces. He feels that what he gets from his mother is completed by what he gets from Miriam. Their forces interact in such a way that the two fulfil Paul thoroughly, at least in what refers to his art. Paul needs both. His mother now has to share with Miriam Paul's love and life:

He was only conscious when stimulated. A sketch finished, he always wanted to take it to Miriam. Then he was stimulated into knowledge of the work he had produced unconsciously. In contact with Miriam he gained insight; his vision went deeper. From his mother he drew the life-warmth, the strength to produce, Miriam urged this warmth into intensity like a white light (p.196 - My underlining).

Paul and Miriam's 'spiritual' relationship grows day by day, step by step. It is a love which is beyond any kind of carnal contact. Paul accepts this because in the course of his relation with the girl he unconsciously identifies her with his mother. In Miriam's mind things are quite different: despite the fact that she seems much more interested in Paul's soul

rather than in his male body, she sometimes forgets this spiritual love and stimulates Paul to see her as a woman. This may happen unconsciously but Miriam contradicts herself when she takes Paul's hands or in similar attitudes. These are times when Paul repels her (he cannot feel her as a female). It is by this time that Mrs Morel's control over Paul's love is menaced. And feeling menaced, Mrs Morel becomes hard (and jealous) to Miriam. Thus, she concentrates her distaste for Paul and Miriam's affair in reproaching her son. She is cruel to the point of making sarcastic remarks concerning Paul and Miriam's relationship. Paul resents her because of this. He is not able to feel that his mother is deeply jealous and afraid of losing him to a strong enemy:

Always when he went with Miriam, and it grew late he knew his mother was fretting and getting angry about him — why, he could not understand. As he went into the house, flinging down his cap, his mother looked up at the clock. She had been sitting thinking, because a chill to her eyes prevented her reading. She could feel Paul drawn away by this girl. And she did not care for Miriam (p.199).

Her thoughts represent the way she herself has been treating her son since he was a baby. The mother's identification with Miriam is entirely stated here, as she thinks:

'[Miriam] is one of those who will want to suck a man's soul out till he had none of his own left,' she said to herself, 'and he is just such a gaby as to let himself be absorbed. She will never let him become a man; she never will' (ibid. - My underlining).

Mrs Morel's anger and jealousy towards Miriam mean her fear of losing Paul to another Mrs Morel. Miriam and the mother are the same. They both want to devour the boy's soul. Neither of them will let him become a man. Paul, dependent as he is, will always have this conflict: as if he were in a quicksand, trying

to go out of it and he has on one side his mother and, on the other, Miriam. Both women manage to pull Paul out of the quicksand but they are on different sides. Therefore, instead of being saved, Paul is being destroyed by both women. He loves both, he wants to be helped, but he cannot be saved, unless they allow him. Neither Miriam nor his mother will allow him to try by himself. They will always interfere in his life. They will not admit defeat. They will never give in. The two women will then be in a position of self-sacrifice for their own sakes, not for Paul's.

I think that if it were not for Mrs Morel's malicious comment, Paul would never become so troubled over his relationship with Miriam. Mrs Morel is jealous of her son with the girl and she cannot stand the idea of Paul and Miriam together without judging them as if they were courting. Boys and girls together mean love affair. She cannot accept the idea of pure friendship between the two. Thus, she is the one who throws the seeds of sin into Paul's ear:

'You know, whoever you went with I should say it was too far for you to go trailing, late at night, when you've been to Nottingham. Besides — her voice suddenly flashed into anger and contempt — 'it's disgusting bits of lads and girls courting' (p.200 - My underlining).

The jealous mother does not accept Paul's reply — "'you wouldn't say anything if I went with Edgar'" (ibid). Mrs Morel thinks she is the owner of the truth. Her son senses that this happens because he is involved in the matter. When he refers to his sister Annie, his mother's answer comes straightfoward to the purpose: "'Our Annie's not one of the deep sort'" (ibid. - My underlining). Annie is an ordinary girl. Miriam belongs to the same root that has given life to Mrs Morel. The 'deep sort'

implies the difference between ordinary girls and special ones. The special ones are soulful women. Hence, Mrs Morel and Miriam are of the 'deep sort', made of the same tissue. They are special creatures. Mrs Morel asserts once more through this declared rivalry that Miriam is her twin sister. The competition between them starts right here.

The sense of competition is clearly stated when Paul and Miriam agree in not going together every Thursday to the library in Bestwood. Mrs Morel's feelings are those of someone who has won a battle, for "The Thursday evenings which had been so precious to [Miriam], and to [Paul] were dropped. He worked instead. Mrs Morel sniffed in satisfaction at this arrangement." (p.213 - My underlining).

The Morels' home turns again into a battlefield. Instead of Walter being the enemy, Miriam replaces him. She is not welcome there and Mrs Morel does not hide her disgust in seeing her rival there: "'Good evening Mrs Morel,' she said, in a deferential way. She sounded as if she had no right to be there. 'Oh, is it you Miriam?' replied Mrs Morel coolly" (p.215). However, Mrs Morel knows her son well enough to sense that being hard to Miriam, she will lose grounds in her love for Paul. Thus as a shrewd person she will not give her son the opportunity of reproaching her.

Miriam is blamed for every little change the mother notices in her son: "Mrs Morel hated her for making her son like this. She watched Paul growing irritable, priggish, and melancholic. For this she put the blame on Miriam" (p.221).

The problem is that Mrs Morel cannot bear the sense of



failure. She is losing her son to a woman who has many more advantages than she does: Miriam is young, she is old; Miriam is not genetically attached to Paul as she is. The girl has more chances than she does to conquer her son. That is why she feverishly hates Miriam;

'She exults—she exults as she carries him off from me.' Mrs Morel cried in her heart when Paul had gone. 'She's not like an ordinary woman, who can leave me my share in him. She wants to absorb him. She wants to draw him out and absorb him till there is nothing left of him, even for himself. He will never be a man on his own feet—she will suck him up.' So the mother sat, and battled and brooded bitterly (p.237).

In contrast to this scene of bitterness and hatred, Paul feels his mother and his lover as two worshipful creatures whom he would never raise his fist to hurt: "It was wonderfully sweet and soothing to sit there for an hour and a half, next to Miriam, and near to his mother, uniting his two loves under the spell of the place of worship" (p.236). However, his love is not constant for he has moments in which he hates Miriam and loves his mother. That is his main conflict. When his mother is present in his mind he hates Miriam and he cannot understand why: "And why did he hate Miriam and feel so cruel towards her, at the thought of his mother? If Miriam caused his mother suffering, then he hated her - and he easily hated her... How he hated her! And then, what a rush of tenderness and humility!" (p.238).

Another contrastive point in this useless competition lies in the fact that when the mother is no longer able to hide her anger and jealousy towards the girl, she opens her thoughts to Paul in such a desperate way that it makes the boy step backwards and admit also with desperation that there are differences between his girlfriend and his mother. However, he is also

forced to admit his choice to belong to his mother as a lover who will never replace her with anybody else: "'No mother — I really don't love her. I talk to her, but I want to come home to you'" (p.261). The scene that follows is one of bitter revelation of Mrs Morel's total identification with Miriam. She admits that she "'could let another woman — but not her. She'd leave me no room, not a bit of room --'" (ibid). Moreover, she implicitly declares her love for Paul as one she would give to a husband: "'... I've never — you know, Paul — I've never had a husband — not really --'" (p.262). I believe that this revelation makes Mrs Morel even worse than she has hitherto appeared and it seems that Lawrence here is not really setting out to deliberately show the mother's evil side. It just slips out of him.

That night, when Paul and his mother give themselves to a set of declarations, the father comes home drunk and takes a piece of pork-pie which is destined for Paul. Mrs Morel mistreats Walter who starts arguing with the mother. Paul interferes and decides to fight with his father. Had Mrs Morel not had a faint (her health is declining), son and father would certainly hit each other. Paul's words to his mother as she recovers sound not like a son talking to a mother but like a lover who is extremely jealous of his sweetheart going to bed with a rival:

'Sleep with Annie, Mother, not with him.'  
 'No, I'll sleep in my own bed.'  
 'Don't sleep with him, Mother.'  
 'I'll sleep in my own bed.' (p.264)

When Paul goes to his own bed, he is tormented: "He pressed his face upon the pillow in a fury of misery. And somewhere in his soul, he was at peace because he still loved his mother best. It was the bitter peace of resignation" (ibid). His feelings once

more are related to his impotence to 'save' his mother from her bitter life and 'rest' with her peacefully ever after somewhere in the world.

It may be said that from this night on Mrs Morel has almost won the battle with her twin-rival, for Paul decides to break up with Miriam. The girl wants his soul but his soul is already with his mother. Miriam's mind is superimposed over her body and Paul can only feel her spirit. And for him to accept her body he must forget her spirit. It seems a nonsense however, because if he really loves Miriam as a spirit and wants her as a female, he should mix both things. True love means the reunion of spirit and flesh. One cannot love flesh in one woman/man and love the spirit of another if s/he really loves. The problem for Paul is that he misunderstands his own arguments. If he is soul he is only soul, if he is flesh he is only flesh. He himself (because of his mother) is not prepared to put these two halves together. In his life as in his love he is an extremist. (Here, the inner conflicts go back to the struggle of his parents' marriage — the soul of the mother vs the body of the father). Because of this Paul is back to his mother:

He had come back to his mother. Hers was also the strongest tie in his life. When he thought round, Miriam shrank away. There was a vague, unreal feel about her. And anybody else mattered. There was one place in the world that stood solid and did not melt into unreality: the place where his mother was. Everybody else could grow shadowy, almost non-existent to him, but she could not. It was as if the pivot and pole of his life, from which he could not escape, was his mother (pp.272-3).

However, Miriam does not give in to the mother. The girl thinks that she still "held the key to his soul" (p.273).

Meanwhile, another figure appears to disturb Paul's life

for some time. It is Clara Dawes, a woman of thirty, separated from her husband. It is Miriam who invites Paul to Willey Farm to meet Clara. Paul's first impression of this woman is not very pleasant. Clara is described as a 'man-hater'. She looks too self-sufficient and this seems why Paul resents and also feels attracted to this 'phenomenon' of woman. He is used to his mother who, in spite of suffering the burden of a wrong marriage, remains tied up to a man she does not love. Paul is also used to Miriam who is submissive to people's opinion and who is never satisfied with herself if she cannot please whoever she loves. Clara seems different. She looks like a woman who knows what she wants and, for the moment, she is not very much interested in a man who looks like a fool. She is not interested at all in Paul or any other man. They are both disagreeable to each other. This is what impels Paul towards the separated woman. He wants to tease her till the moment she submits to his will.

What mostly attracts Paul in Clara is her sensuality. He does not care to go beyond her physique: he notices her neck, her throat, shoulders and breasts. Things he could not see in Miriam. It is interesting to notice how Lawrence describes Paul's attitudes looking at Clara:

Clara's hat lay on the grass not far off. She was kneeling, bending forward still to smell the flowers. Her neck gave [Paul] a sharp pang, such a beautiful thing, yet not proud of itself just now. Her breasts swung lightly in her blouse. The arching curve of her back was beautiful and strong; she wore no stays. Suddenly, without knowing, he was scattering a handful of cowslips over her hair and neck saying:

'Ashes to ashes, and dust to dust,  
If the Lord won't have you the devil must' (p.292).

The first point which seems important in this new-born relationship is that Mrs Morel is not hostile to the idea of

Clara. The idea is that through Paul's impressions about the woman, the mother seems to guess that what her son is looking for in Clara is totally different from what he was looking for in Miriam. Clara does not belong to the 'deep sort' type. She is perhaps like Gypsy, though Clara has more brains than that. Clara is simply a woman to whom her son may have a love affair without any serious consequence. That is why she does not fear Clara as she fears Miriam.

Paul begins to meet Clara for a while. But Miriam still intermediates between them. Paul has different tones for the two women:

Miriam did not satisfy him. His old mad desire to be with her grew weaker. Sometimes he met Clara in Nottingham, sometimes he went to meetings with her, sometimes he saw her at Willey Farm. But on these last occasions the situation became strained. There was a triangle of antagonism between Paul and Clara and Miriam. With Clara he took on a smart, worldly, mocking tone very antagonistic to Miriam. It did not matter what went before. She might be intimate and sit with him. Then as soon as Clara appeared, it all vanished, and he played to the newcomer (p. 305).

It seems clear that the antagonism between the three people refers to Paul's split consciousness: Clara stands for the appeal to the body and Miriam's appeal is the mind. Yet Paul is still a virgin. Clara awakens in him the desire for sex. That is the point of Paul and Miriam's breaking up:

This was the end of the first phase of Paul's love affair. He was now about twenty-three years old, and, though still virgin, the sex instinct that Miriam had over-refined for so long now grew particularly strong. Often, as he talked to Clara Dawes, came that thickening quickening of his blood, that peculiar concentration in his breast, as if something were alive there, a new self or a new centre of consciousness, warning him that sooner or later, he would have to ask one woman or another. But he belonged to Miriam. Of that she was so fixedly sure that he allowed her right (pp. 308-9).

Paul's inconsistency is sometimes boring. He does not know where he can put his hands with safety. His extreme points of view make the reader angry with the young man. For instance, he hated Miriam for her unreserve in showing feelings. Clara makes him angry because she hardly expresses her inner feelings. Paul cannot stand this, nor the feeling of disdain and superiority with which Clara often treats him. Because of this he tries to boss her. If he cannot do this as a man, he tries to do it professionally:

'Here, I say, you seem to forget I'm your boss. It just occurs to me.'  
 'And what does that mean?' she asked coolly.  
 'It means I've got a right to boss you.'...  
 'I don't know what you want,' she said,  
 continuing her task.  
 'I want you to treat me nicely and respectfully.'  
 'Call your "sir" perhaps?' she asked quietly.  
 'Yes, call me "sir". I should love it.'  
 'Then I wish you to go upstairs, sir.' (pp.325-6)

The impression is that this relationship can be taken as a 'duel' in which hostility is mixed with desire. Clara seems distant and this makes Paul wish to bring her close to him. To achieve this, his way is to diminish her importance (and larger size) by mistreating her in her work since he is superior to her there.

As with Miriam who first resented Paul's proximity, but gradually accepted him, Paul and Clara grow intimate. Their first serious talk refers to the subject of marriage and, later on, Miriam. The first part of their marriage conversation is somehow unilateral. At least in the sense that Paul is not able to understand what Clara means by being nearly asleep all her life before getting separated from her husband. Paul's questioning of Clara's reasons for separation are not in fact directed to her. He seems to be asking his mother about her marriage. What may seem important here is the fact that Paul does not feel Clara answering, but puts his mother to a vicarious trial: whose fault

was the marital failure? Who was victim or victimizer?

'But why did you leave him? Was he horrid to you?...

'And was he always dirty?' he asked

'... But did you — were you ever — did you ever give him a chance?'

'I believe he loves you,' he said (pp.335-6).

These questions are definitely related to his parents. The first three suggest Walter Morel and the other one Mrs Morel. It seems that, unconsciously, Paul knows how wrong his parents' marriage has been. He seems to be aware of what has happened to his parents. However, in his questions, Paul is not so clear up to the point of presenting his knowledge of who is most guilty. He seems to balance between mother and father. The last statement 'I believe he loves you' seems exactly what he wants from his father — to love his mother (it can be said that under Paul's 'hate' for his father is latent love and sympathy). But actually, there is no balance in the questioning for Paul does not ask if she — Clara/his mother — loves him — Baxter/his father.

The idea that Clara's marriage is related to his parents' is also reinforced in another talk Paul has with Clara where he presents her with his view of what has happened to his father because of his mother. He goes back to the first question he asked her before, but now the tone is not directed to Baxter (his father) but to Clara (his mother):

'Were you horrid with Baxter Dawes?' he asked her. It was a thing that seemed to trouble him.

'In what way?'

'Oh, I don't know. But weren't you horrid with him? Didn't you do something that knocked him to pieces?'

'What, pray?'

'Making him feel as if he were nothing — you know,' Paul declared (p.338 - My underlining).

I believe that Paul definitely blames his mother for her marriage's failure. But he still has doubts. His mind does not

have the answer but it has the seeds of the problem. It is possible that here is evidence that Lawrence too latently 'knows' that his mother is not so good, nor his father so bad as he had supposed.

Another point that anticipates the failure of Paul and Clara's affair lies in the fact that while having tea in a cottage, Clara takes her wedding ring off and starts playing with it on the table and Paul watches her fascinated. The anticipation I refer to is that, despite being separated from her husband, Clara still keeps her ring which means that she is somehow tied to Baxter and that, Paul being a puritan, he will never feel free or guiltless in having an affair with a still legally married woman. And for the moment he pretends "he believed in simple friendship" (p.337). He also feels he is still bound to Miriam. These mixed feelings disturb him, but the idea of having Clara as a female only haunts him.

The second point of their relationship is that Clara, being much more experienced in life, is able to 'teach' Paul to define more clearly his concept of failure. This occurs when they talk about Miriam. Paul tells Clara why he has broken with the girl. Clara cannot accept Paul's arguments. For one thing: how can Paul predict the failure in his relationship with Miriam if all they had was a relation of mind? How can he be so sure of the failure of his relationship (mind and body) if he has only been able to feel Miriam as a 'mind-eater'?

Like an obedient son, Paul goes again to Miriam to 'experience' what is lacking in their relation. The big mistake in Paul's return is that now he goes straight to Miriam's body, forgetting her mind. He takes her just as an object with which



he can have pleasure. Miriam is forgotten as a human being. Sex becomes the aim. Miriam, in her turn, is only a sacrifice. If it will return Paul to her, she will accept the dirty business of sex (as her mother taught her). She is not there. She offers her body for the sake of Paul's initiation. Paul is not even able to perceive this in Miriam. He simply obeys his instincts. His male instinct is superimposed over his mind.

His mother at this point feels she cannot do anything to prevent her son from going to Miriam: "He went to Willey Farm as a man now, not as a youth. She had no right over him" (p.342). However, the fact that she is aware of having 'no right' over Paul may be ambiguous: first, Paul is a man, Miriam is a woman. He can go and sleep with her. Second, the mother may be becoming aware that Paul in fact does not belong to her like a property. He must have his way without her interfering. But the doubt still persists.

Paul and Miriam fail again. This time it seems definitive (though Miriam, like his mother, is always sure he will come back to her). As soon as they discover the impossibility of facing a relationship where there is no connection between soul and body, they decide to break. But they both blame each other. The circumstances of the failure are evident. Miriam cannot give Paul body and soul together and neither can Paul give Miriam all of himself. He is only the male in the second attempt he has with the girl. Therefore, the consequence is this terrible sense of frustration and failure. As they cannot blame anybody they turn to blame themselves. Paul's egocentric personality cannot be fulfilled without worship. It is too late when he realizes this: seven years have elapsed and only now he seems to know Miriam (but does he?). Miriam seems to be more rational than Paul in the sense

that when Paul tells her he does not want to marry her, she evaluates their affair:

'Always — it has always been so!' she cried. 'It has been one long battle between us — you fighting away from me.'

It came from her unawares, like a flash of lightning. The man's heart stood still. Was this how she saw it?

'But we've had *some* perfect hours, *some* perfect times, where we were together!' he pleaded. 'Never!' she cried, 'never! It has always been you fighting me off.'

'Not always — not at first!' he pleaded.

'Always, from the very beginning — always the same!' (p.362).

Paul's mind is only stuck to the idea that Miriam has deceived him:

She had despised him when he thought she worshipped him. She had let him say wrong things, and had not contradicted him. She had let him fight alone. But it stuck in his throat that she had despised him whilst he thought she worshipped him... All these years she had treated him as if he were a hero, and thought of him secretly as an infant, a foolish child. Then why had she left the foolish child to his folly? His heart was hard against her (p.364 - My underlining).

It is important to present Miriam's thoughts and the way she evaluates her attitudes towards Paul:

She sat full of bitterness. She had known—oh, well she had known! All the time he was away from her she had summed him up, seen his littleness, his meanness, and his folly. Even she had guarded her soul against him... Only why, as he sat there, had he still this strange dominance over her? His very movements fascinated as if she were hypnotized by him. Yet he was despicable, false, inconsistent, and mean... Why was she fastened to him? Why, even now, if he looked at her and commanded her, would she have to obey? She would obey him in his trifling commands. But once he was obeyed, then she had him in her power, she knew, to lead him where she would. She was sure of herself. Only this new influence! Ah, he was not a man! He was a baby that cries for the newest toy. And all the attachment of his soul would not keep him. Very well, he would have to go. But he would come back when he had tired of his new sensation (ibid - My underlining).

Miriam seems to be the only one (besides Mrs Morel) who knows

who she is and what she wants. The problem with her is that although she knows Paul and his influence over her she has let this knowledge destroy her relation with Paul. Also she feels that in her submission to him she dominates him. The point is perhaps that neither she nor Paul wants really a balanced relation. Both want to have power in the relation. These conflicting impulses annul mutual love. Both man and woman are stubborn in their misconception. And here is the very reason for their failure.

"After leaving Miriam [Paul] went straight to Clara" (p.368). This is enough to think that Paul in fact does not really care to resolve his conflicts. Now all he wants is sex and sex is with Clara, a woman whom he does not need to have to share his mind.

There is always a sense of the forbidden in their affair. The scenery is always described as if dirty, muddy as if implying sin all the time. This may be seen as a heavy indication that things are not all right. Clara is still married. Since the author presents the description of the affair and scenery in such a way, he is again anticipating to the readers that this liaison is from its beginning doomed to a dead end, and when both Clara and Paul reach that point, they will see that there is no way back to a successful union between them. This is actually what happens to the couple. While there is novelty Paul remains inflamed with passion, but as soon as he gets tired of Clara he grows irritated and ready to break with her. Furthermore, every time they crave for love making there are lots of obstacles forbidding consummation:

'Let us try going forward,' he said, and they struggled in the red clay along the groove a man's nailed boot had made. They were hot and flushed. Their barkled shoes hung heavy on their

steps. At last they found the broken path...

Suddenly, coming on the little level, he saw two figures of men standing silent at the water's edge. His heart leaped. They were fishing. He turned and put his hand up warning Clara. She hesitated, buttoned her coat. The two went on together.

... He looked across at every tree-foot. At last he found what he wanted. Two bench trees side by side on the hill held a little level on the upper face between their roots. It was littered with damp leaves, but it would do. The fishermen were perhaps sufficiently out of sight... (pp.377-8).

When Paul and Clara finish making love, the sense of the aftermath is of sin. It seems that there is blood everywhere as if Paul had bitten himself and Clara. Guilt is perhaps the most reasonable answer for this. It may seem a speculative point to say that Paul's feelings towards Clara at this moment are the same as if he had made love to his own mother for there is blood (symbolically) on the black wet beech-roots and on Clara's bosom. This may mean guilt and sin at the same time. Also because Paul assumes his father's way of speaking. He 'thees' Clara. Paul becomes like his father, and Clara like his mother. What Paul says afterwards is the definitive proof of this sense of guilt: "'And I'll clean thy boots and make thee fit for respectable folk,' he said..." Not sinners, are we?' he said, with an uneasy little frown" (pp.379-82 - My underlining). Just as an observation, it may be useful to remind that Paul used to clean his mother's boots ("Mrs Morel was one of those naturally exquisite people who can walk in mud without dirtying her shoes" (p.152)). It is one more hint of his identifying Clara with his mother who stands for 'a respectable folk'.

Paul's passion for Clara might be seen like fire in a bunch of straw: it is big, red, hot; but it also has too much smoke. A few moments later it vanishes, not gradually, but almost at once leaving only a few ashes, no fire, no smoke, nothing remains.

This is like Paul's passion for Clara. As soon as he feels tired of passion and understands Clara's attachment to him as one more submissive woman by his side, he loses interest. Clara is still "very gentle, almost loving. But he treated her distantly with a touch of contempt" (pp.401-2). Now Paul does not feel uneasy when Clara is not near him. He also does not need her all the time as before. Clara becomes a figure of the night, only to be met indoors. It is time then for Clara to replace Paul and become uneasy till she has him in her arms. Paul is tired of all these demonstrations of love. At work mainly he is rude to her, saying that there are times for everything. Work is work, love is love — but in different places and hours. (He seems to have forgotten how he became inflamed and uneasy because of her, wherever he was, when he could not have her). During the day they behave (mostly Paul) as if they were strangers, but in the darkness they meet, exchange meaningless words and are tender to each other. Their meaningless words express the big gap that leads any unbalanced relation to fail. Paul and Clara can only understand their feelings (separately) when making love. Apart from this, there is nothing between them.

Clara, like Miriam, inevitably falls on to the web of submission. Paul has dominated her and she feels that "she took him simply because his need was bigger than her or him, and her soul was still within her. She did this for him in his need, even if he left her, for she loved him" (p.430 - My underlining). Clara implies, again like Miriam, that she does not care for her own feelings. Paul is more important. It is rather monstrous to think that this "balanced" woman turns out to be so annulled in relation to a man. And how strong this man seems to be in manipulating this woman so as to transform her into this kind of

doll without will. And this same man does not know what he wants from love.

Their love affair declines, but they do not break definitely, though they still meet sometimes, they do not share the same bed anymore. The relation is worn out; nothing is left. It is time then to compensate Clara somehow for this failure. Paul arranges to return his lover to her husband. It looks as if he were 'gifting' his rival with the same object he (Paul) used and then returns it to its proper owner, i.e., Baxter Dawes. It seems disgusting to understand a man like Paul. Still more difficult to understand is how the author values Paul's character. To what extent does Lawrence criticize Paul's cowardly withdrawal both from Clara and Miriam or sympathize with Paul? I think that Paul is like a child, as Miriam pointed out to him previously, who gets a toy, a new one and plays with it till he loses interest. Then he places it somewhere where he cannot see it, nor play again. He wants another toy. The old one means nothing. Most strange also is the fact that Clara accepts being presented as a gift to Baxter. She does not complain but, instead, she reasons about what sort of man Paul is:

... Yet Clara realized that Morel was withdrawing from the circle, leaving her the option to stay with her husband. It angered her. He was a mean fellow after all, to take what he wanted and then give her back. She did not remember that she herself had had what she wanted, and really, in the bottom of her heart, wished to be given back (p.495 - My underlining).

The last sentence seems to be Lawrence's own evaluation of Clara, but it does not entirely reflect the truth. Lawrence is being hard on her because of her evaluation of Paul's mean character.

While Paul returns Clara to Baxter, Mrs Morel's thread of life is dwindling. She has gotten cancer and doctors cannot

operate on her, since her heart would not stand the surgery. Her cancer seems to be a result of her frustration in being happy and the sterility of her emotional life. As she could not share her frustrations with the others, though she tried hard, the manifestation of her cancer is the only way to project all the bitterness of her failure of being a woman, a wife and even a mother of her children. It may be seen as the physical manifestation of her psychological state. As a reinforcement of this point, there is the fact that she has been suffering deep pains for a long time and her family hardly noticed it till the moment she begins to have fainting pills and goes to see the doctor.

What may seem rather strange is the fact that sometime before Paul's mother gets ill and needs extreme care, Paul feels that he wants her to disappear from his life. He may have meant her death or to free himself from her in another way. This moment is one in which he seems to be against her, he hates his mother (but his hate is mixed with love for love and hate exchange places):

... There was a certain silence between them, and he felt he had in that silence, to defend himself against her. He felt condemned by her. Then sometimes he hated her, and pulled at her bondage. His life wanted to free itself of her. It was like a circle where life turned back on itself, and got no farther. She bore him, loved him, and his love turned back into her, so that he could not be free to go forward with his own life, really love another woman. At this period, unknowingly, he resisted his mother's influence. He did not tell her things; there was a distance between them (pp.419-20 - My underlining).

It is this impulse that makes him unconsciously wish her death because only death could save him in order to start a new life without the sick dependence on her.

When Mrs Morel's illness reaches its apex and she can no more bear the strong pains, she starts using morphine to lessen

her suffering. She is now depending on other people. But the woman's strong personality makes of her an actress, for she disguises her pains with smiles. She will not give in. She is not fit for others to pity her. If she felt it, it would be the complete failure of her strength. She, in her strong will, seems to grasp life. She will not give death the chance to take hold of her. That is why she does not die quickly. Her family cannot stand her alive anymore. They feel her intense suffering and, besides this, her strong will not to die. Death means defeat for her. Death means freedom for her family. She will not give in. She belongs to that group of people who grasps life as if it meant everything. Death means the total darkness, seeing nobody, controlling nobody. It is chaos. Hence, even dying, she will take hold of the last breath as a way to remain alive torturing her family:

'And she won't die. She can't. Mrs Renshaw, the parson, was in the other day. "Think!" he said to her; "you will have your mother and father, and your sisters, and your son, in the Other Land." And she said: "I have done without them for a long time, and *can* do without them now. It is the living I want, not the dead."She wants to live even now' (p.471 - My underlining).

So says Paul to Clara.

Paul is the one who most suffers from his mother's illness. The fact that she is gradually getting worse and worse, ceasing to exist, makes him want feverishly her death. It is as if she were broken into pieces, like Annie's doll which Paul broke when he was a child. At that time Paul felt guilty: he hated and suffered seeing Arabella in pieces. He felt impotent to restore it. Thus he proposed to burn it as if it were a sacrifice: a sacrifice because it could not be mended. Arabella could then be safe from her mutilation:



'Let's make a sacrifice of Arabella,' he said.  
'Let's burn her.'

[Annie] was horrified, yet rather fascinated. She wanted to see what the boy would do. He made an altar of bricks, pulled some of the shavings out of Arabella's body, put the waxen fragments into the hollow face, poured on a little paraffin, and set the whole thing alight. He watched with wicked satisfaction the drops of wax melt off the broken forehead of Arabella, and drop like sweat into flame...

'That's the sacrifice of Missis Arabella,' he said. 'An' I'm glad there's nothing left of her' (pp.75-6).

The same idea is brought out when Paul is mad with torment with his mother's suffering. He tells Annie he will give an overdose of morphine to their mother so that she will cease suffering and die peacefully, freeing them of the hard task to take care of an invalid mother whom they love. Annie is horrified and fascinated at the same time, but she agrees. Paul smashes all the morphine pills and puts the powder in a glass of milk. After taking this decision Paul and Annie "laughed together like two conspiring children. On the top of all horror flickered this little sanity" (p.479).

The mother, even after having drunk her potion of death, resists till the next day. Finally she dies. One may be horrified with Paul and Annie's attitude because they do not feel guilty. It has been for the sake of freeing both mother and family. It was simply a sacrifice like Arabella's.

Is the family really free now that the mother is dead? Walter Morel is more humble and pure than ever, as he tells Gertrude's 'superior' people:

He had striven all his life to do what he could for her, and he'd nothing to reproach himself with. She was gone, but he'd done his best for her... He'd nothing to reproach himself for, he repeated. All his life he'd done his best for her (p.488).

Therefore, he, a guiltless man, goes to live with a 'friendly family'. His unique bond with his family — his wife — does not exist any more. The house which meant his hell is empty. He goes away. William is already dead. Annie has returned to her ordinary life. Arthur? The reader only knows he has come for her burial. He was not so attached to the family after all. It means nothing. But, what about Paul? Is he finally free from his mother's domination? No. I would rather say that he is partially free from Mrs Morel. He still has a big road to cross...

Mrs Morel, throughout her married life, has struggled not to be defeated so that she could demand from her family the sense of success lacking in her frustrated choice in marrying the wrong man. Had she not been 'forced' to die because of her cancer and because of the overdose of morphine Paul gave her, I am sure she would have lasted as long as she could to force the family to remain under her control. She can be seen as that kind of person who, though suffering the most horrible pains, is still able to germinate evil seeds in the minds of the others. Throughout her life she has distilled in the conscience of her family, and more specifically in Paul's, the poison of guilt and the inferiority complex. Through her poison she destroyed her life and that of her husband, who has never been able to grow as human beings grow as they get old. She also destroyed William's life making him feel guilty for having chosen a woman who was not like his mother, and also she has contributed to Paul's near destruction. I say near due to the fact that he is the only one who is still able to redirect his life taking another road which is not the same as that one she tried to make him follow.

She destroyed Paul's relationship with Miriam because she could not allow her beloved son to marry a woman who had the same

characteristics as she had. She was always present, interfering in what Paul wished to do. She was there, always haunting him, making him feel guilty and making him see her through Miriam. Paul could never marry Miriam because "He could not have faced his mother" (p.340). Moreover, Mrs Morel in her possessive love, made Paul think that any woman "was like their (men's) mother, and they were full of the sense of their mother" (p.341). It is definitely Paul identifying Miriam (or any other woman) with his mother. As he cannot marry his mother, he can never marry Miriam. Therefore, Mrs Morel has, besides destroying Paul's love for Miriam, also destroyed Miriam's life. The girl will never be able to love another man while Paul exists and as he does not want her, she will keep herself waiting for him, the eternal life of self-sacrifice and annulment.

Paul, unconsciously because of his mother, has destroyed his relationship with Clara because she was a married woman, and for him "Marriage was for life" (p.340). It is necessary to stop feeling guilty and thus, he returns Clara to Baxter.

His mother has divided his own consciousness into two parts: the soul which is opposed to the body. So, in transforming Paul into a divided man, she has directly made her son (or sons) fail in his emotional life. This feature of Mrs Morel is where Lawrence establishes the main conflict of his own life and the battle to put soul and body together becomes the major subject of his novels.

What is left for Paul at the end of Sons and Lovers is impossible to say since, as I said previously, Paul is a man who is totally contradictory. He goes from one extreme to the other. He loves or hates. He wants life or death. He is sad or happy.

He wants soul or body. There is never a balance of which he wants. He cannot reconcile things. It would also be possible that his next choice could include suicide or, a more daring alternative, Blutbrüderschaft in the big city.

When Mrs Morel dies Paul is hollow — no feelings, no love, no hate, nothing. He turns to Miriam again. But as soon as he takes from her some strength to go on living, he leaves her. He does not need her anymore. He then turns to his dead mother who "was gone abroad into the night" (p.510) and wants to follow her because "he was with her still. They were together" (ibid). Her strength still dominates him. He finally decides "he will not give in" (p.511). He wants to go on living, perhaps this time under his full responsibility, without his mother's control. However, this only happens in the last page of the book and, in the previous page, he still thinks of dying. Although Lawrence attempts to make his book have a positive ending, the strong evidence is that Paul has no speech apart from "'Mother!' he whispered — 'mother!'" (p.510). This implies a controlled narrative in which the author seems afraid to let his character take his own decision. Therefore, Lawrence indeed forces a rebirth for Paul in the 'gold phosphorescent city'.

Some may claim that the ending is positive, but no one guarantees that the book provides the definitive answer to Paul's life of conflict. In view of the novel's open end, the doubt still persists: is Paul really free from his almighty mother? I doubt that. Also in view of the contradictory endings of the other novels, I shall return to them later on in the conclusion so as to make a more close analysis and find out why this happens so frequently in Lawrence.

My last point about Sons and Lovers refers to the controversial idea defended by several critics (like Eliseo Vivas, Mark Spilka, Kate Millet, etc.) that the view of the mother in the novel is far too sympathetic. As I have shown throughout this chapter, I do not agree with this view. Lawrence may have had the intention to show in Mrs Morel a strong woman who suffered too much in her marriage and who overcame her justified suffering. She is indeed presented by the author as victorious in the family struggle. This is part of Lawrence's first phase in which the powerful mind-conscious woman wins. Indeed Mrs Morel is presented like this. But the intention of the author in so doing is somehow denied by what his tale shows: the powerful mother in terms of the author's feelings is transformed into a rough woman with her emotions based exclusively on selfishness, coldness and possessiveness. The mother is instead of having a justified behavior, culpable, no doubt. This split between the author's intention and his feelings is very frequent then. It seems a law in Lawrence's works. The more he consciously asserts one side of disagreement (body vs soul, mother vs father) the more the other, denied side, returns to make itself felt by an artistic balancing process.

## CHAPTER III

### I

#### THE 'FEMME FATALE' IN *THE TRESPASSER*

Lawrence's second novel, The Trespasser, is based on parts of a manuscript of his friend Helen Corke (later she expanded her material into Neutral Grounds). Helen's story is autobiographical and in it her heroine suffers a violent shock because her lover, a married violin teacher, after spending a holiday with her in which both make themselves miserable, returned to London and killed himself. Lawrence's story is his personal view of Helen's experience. Moore (1981) says that "Miss Corke said that Lawrence, while writing his version of the story, had identified himself with Siegmund, had 'felt personally in the same way as his character'" (p.132). Lawrence published his version in 1912 and Helen's was published in 1934.

The idea of the 'fatal female' seems to be closely related in Lawrence's version of The Trespasser, to a woman who has a strong potential in her mind to idealize her sweetheart. However, this idealization becomes an enormous conflict, for the woman cannot tolerate the real man who is by her side. The ideal and the real man are completely different and this fact provokes disillusion, conflict and distance. All of this makes the

relation unbearable up to the point that indirectly the woman causes the death of the lover. The woman's powerful mind which makes of her a 'dreaming woman' defeats reality.

I would like to make a contrast between Helena's, the main protagonist of The Trespasser, 'quality' as a woman and Mellors' (Lady Chatterley's Lover) view of women before he met Constance Chatterley:

[Helena] belonged to that class of 'dreaming woman' with whom passion exhausts itself at the mouth (The Trespasser - p.30).

'... Then I took on with another girl, a teacher, who had made a scandal by carrying on with a married man 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...' (Lady Chatterley's Lover - p.216).

I have chosen this particular passage from Lady Chatterley, because it suggests a similarity between Helena's dreamlike quality and Mellors' early lover. I do not mean that Mellors' lover and Helena are the same person, but both women can be categorized as women who cannot project into reality their fierce dreamlike quality. What is real for them is what they idealize. They are aware of this but they cannot reconcile dream with reality. Helena, like Mellors' lover, cannot go beyond her mind. This fact, in Helena's case, leads to a frustrated relationship which culminates with the death of Siegmund.

Past and present frame the story of Helena and Siegmund. The point is that the past, like dreams, stands for what is already dead or for what cannot be projected into reality. Yet,

the past would seem to be about to repeat itself again for, at the novel's beginning, the 'dreaming woman' meets another man who is potentially like Helena's dead lover. Again like dreams, the purpose of the past is to interfere strongly in the personality of Helena and not let her live strictly in the sphere of reality. The past takes up the longest part of the novel. The present serves just as a means to strengthen the flashback section of the book and to prove that there is no real present, nor real future. Present and future will perhaps be a repetition of the same story Helena has gone through with Siegmund.

The heroine's personality is described in the very beginning of the story, when Siegmund is already dead, by Cecyl Byrne, Helena's next 'victim'. He tells her: "'you stretch your hand blindly to the dead; you look backwards. No, you never touch the thing,'" (p.11). One may read 'dead' as 'past' or as 'dream' for they exchange places in Helena's mind. The next sentence reinforces this idea since when one lives 'ideally' s/he can never 'touch the thing'. It is too far beyond any touch.

Helena can also be characterized as being the ancestress of Mrs Morel. The reason to claim this is that both are women who live too much for the mind. The difference between them is that Helena is more unreal; she is depicted as an untouchable goddess, beyond human grasp. Mrs Morel, on the other hand, has her feet on the earth; she is more touchable in her virtues and defects. This occurs maybe due to Lawrence's immaturity as a writer who, in The Trespasser, was just beginning his career. If Sons and Lovers shows a more mature narrative, it certainly marks his improvement and growth as a writer.

Helena, a student of music, falls in love with her music



teacher Siegmund. He is a married man, thirty eight years old, almost ten years older than his pupil. His marriage has become a terrible routine and through Helena he tries to regain strength in life. Even before they really start the affair, Lawrence hints to the reader that Siegmund must go through an adulterous relation to escape from the burden of his marriage:

For years he had suppressed his soul, in a kind of mechanical despair doing his duty and enduring the rest. Then his soul has been enticed from its bondage. Now he was going to break free altogether, to have 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 new birth (p.13).

The situation is typically Lawrentian: a character is at the end of an old life, seeking rebirth into a new one. What is not hinted here is that all this breaking of the routine of his marriage, this 'sort of new birth', will lead to death. Ironically the 'birth' is his suicide.

We see Helena's dominance over Siegmund when she commands him to go for a five days holiday on an island: it is she who will pay the expenses. The important point here is not the money but the fact that she does not invite him, she orders him to go with her. She says he "must come away" with her. It is like mothers saying to children that they must not play, must not cry, and so forth. And this is quite true in relation to this couple. Though Siegmund is older than Helena, he is like a little child in his dependence on her. In fact there are few moments in the story in which he takes a decision by himself.

Before Helena and Siegmund leave for the island, the man tells his wife he is going on a holiday. This fact leads the wife to suspect that her husband is having a love affair.

Beatrice, Siegmund's wife, is like Mrs Morel. Beatrice is another woman whose power lies in her dominance over her children. She turns them against her husband. Because of this "Siegmund hated his wife for drawing on him the grave, cold looks of condemnation from his children" (p.18). Sons and Lovers differs in this particular from The Trespasser. In the former novel Lawrence gives apparent reasons for the mother to direct the children against the father. In the latter novel, this does not occur. Mr Morel is deeply criticized whereas Siegmund is not. In fact, he is almost praised for his attitudes. The reader does not have any account of the marriage before Helena appears. Lawrence is not being critical enough. He tends to lead his reader to take sides with Siegmund who, despite the boredom of his marriage, has not any apparent good reason to look for an escape, as Morel does have in his heavy drinking. Again, Lawrence is immature in his early novel.

The adulterous couple meets in the boat ironically named 'Victory', which will take them to the island. The meeting of the lovers strikes us as the encounter of a mother and her adolescent son. His looks are naïve, sweet, immature as contrasted to Helena's. She is quite proud, like a mother looking at her growing son:

Helena appreciated him, feature by feature. She liked his clear forehead, with its thick black hair, and his full mouth, and his chin. She loved his hands, that were small, but strong and nervous, and very white. She liked his breast, that breathed so strong and quietly, and his arms, and his thighs, and his knees (p.23).

Besides her motherly observance, there is also the female looking at her male, admiring his physical attractiveness. She is, in his eyes, different: she "was a presence. She was ambushed, fused in an aura of love. He only saw she was white,

and strong, and fully fruited, he only knew her blue eyes were rather awful to him" (ibid). Definitely his looks express his passivity if one observes his fear of her eyes. They, in a way, make him feel naked. Helena seems to be the active element in the relation. Moreover, she is the one who looks at him critically, and feels amazed because of his trouble: "His eyes were full of trouble. To see a big, strong man anxious eyed as a child... amused her" (ibid). His strength is only physical. Hers is more spiritual which proves that in relation to mind he is the child, uninitiated in life. She is the deeply experienced one who will guide him to learning.

Helena, as I said, dominates Siegmund. This is clearly seen in her authoritarian way of treating her lover. He leaves everything for her to decide and, thus, he obediently follows her instructions. Helena always initiates and ends their conversations. She always leaves questions unanswered when the answer does not convey her. Even when they caress each other, it is Helena who first kisses him and takes him in her arms. However, she does not allow him to make love to her. She tempts him as far as she can and then she rejects him when he is not able to control himself. She frustrates him. She stops the storm of passion at 'the mouth'. Helena idealizes and dreams but as soon as love is ready to turn into eros she rejects the dream, leading her partner to a bitter sense of frustration. The reality of her dreams can never be projected into physical reality.

Helena in fact rejects Siegmund's existence. He is not for her a man of flesh and blood. This means nothing to her. As I said, his existence is only real within her. Yet Lawrence does not criticize her overtly for her behavior. He only points out

what she does to Siegmund:

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 (p.30).

This is very important since it shows that everything Helena does in relation to the man leads to frustration, more specifically, to sexual frustration. Her strong virginal mind reduces Siegmund almost to nothingness. The worst is that the man simply accepts it as if it were fate. She frustrates him and he does not complain. Furthermore, Helena is identified as an example of the castrating woman, as Lawrence says:

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 (pp.30-1).

Women like Helena cannot go beyond their imagination. They cannot face sex when it nears their flesh: they deny it, become cold as ice and quickly try to change the subject. In the later novels such types are made to submit to dark, blood conscious males. But at this early phase, the Dark Gods have not yet emerged in the male and the spiritual woman is triumphant.

When the couple arrives at the island we see neither are free from repression. Helena introduces herself and Siegmund to the landlady as 'friends'. This implies that she wants to preserve appearances. Siegmund, on the other hand, is embarrassed. His embarrassment demonstrates his fear of their proximity and his guilty feelings over the illegality of the lovers' situation. More clues are given throughout the narrative of Helena's lack of desire to be near Siegmund, to be exposed to a situation of 'danger'. The firelight in their lodging symbolizes passion: but

though Siegmund wants her, she rejects his sensual proximity and decides they must go into the moonlight outside the house. Consider the fire as proximity and warmth, and the moon as symbolizing distance and coldness. Of course Helena feels much more confident under the moonlight, which is cold as she. There she can direct what they do. The fireplace is dangerous. It is linked with instinct and she does not want to lose herself in passion. After all, if this happens she will become frustrated since she is a woman to whom passion is only an idea, not a thing of the senses.

The moon draws Helena into isolation:

The moon was wading deliciously through shallows of white cloud. Beyond the trees and the few houses was the great concave of darkness, the sea, and the moonlight. The moon was there to put a cool hand of absolution on her brow (p.36).

Under the moonlight Siegmund identifies Helena with the moon: moonlike are her qualities of possessiveness and self-sufficiency. He tells Helena: "the darkness is a sort of mother, and the moon a sister, and the stars children, and sometimes the sea is a brother: and there's a family in one house, you see" (p. 37). On top of the same page he said that "The sea seems to be poured out of the moon, and rocking in the hands of the coast. They are all one, just as your eyes, and hands and what you say, are all you". What I claim here is that there is perhaps a sense of incest in their affair: Helena is compared to the moon, Siegmund to the sea and Siegmund refers to the moon as 'sister', the sea as 'brother'. It can also be said that there is a feeling of guilt under the surface of the statement. As further corroboration, their affair may be considered in terms of the mother goddess myth. The goddess is Helena, the devouring mother, and her consort is Siegmund, the son who dies at the end

of every year. The mother will then look for another son-lover. Consider the following:

[Helena] was the earth in which strange flowers grew. But she herself wondered at the flowers produced of her. [Siegmond] was so strange to her, so different from herself. What next would he ask of her, what new blossom would she rear in him then. He seemed to grow and flower involuntarily. She merely helped to produce him (p.36).

Thus not only is their affair illegal because adulterous, but it also bears mythic overtones of incest.

Their first night on the island they sleep separately. Helena keeps her room 'inviolable'. Siegmund, though frustrated, keeps laughing immaturely all the time. This implies another important feature of his character, narcissism. There are several passages in the novel which show Siegmund admiring himself. I think that these passages imply his lack of self-confidence as a man. This can be explained by the fact that he finds in his body a sense of self-pleasure as compensation for his frustration in sexual relationships with female partners. As Helena frustrates him sexually, he turns to his own body to be sexually fulfilled. See, for example, this passage in which he goes to the beach alone:

He threw his clothes on a high rock. It delighted him to feel the fresh, soft fingers of the wind touching him and wandering timidly over his nakedness. He ran laughing over the sand to the sea, where he waded in, thrusting his legs through the heavy green water (p.40).

The 'fingers of the wind' here are a substitute for Helena's fingers. Siegmund's pleasure is immature and it serves as a way to escape from the sexual frustration Helena makes him feel. His laughing implies his immaturity; he is again behaving like a child. He then goes into the water and the sea is a substitute,

an analogy for Helena. Siegmund, like almost all Lawrence's male heroes (and D.H. Lawrence himself), is a poor swimmer. Helena is cold, the sea is cold and he shrinks from the contact with the water. In his 'play' with the water there is a clear reference to his affair with Helena: "It is splendid to play, even at middle age, and the sea is a fine partner" (ibid). This reference implies what is happening with him and Helena and, even though she keeps him at a certain distance, he wants to play, even if he is hurt:

But in his playing he drifted towards the spur of a rock, where as he swam, he caught his thigh on a sharp, submerged point. He frowned at the pain, at the sudden cruelty of the sea; then he thought no more of it; but ruffled his way back to the clear water, busily continuing his play (ibid).

This scene is definitely a metaphor for sex with Helena. The rock hurts him as does her concealed hostility. However, just as he does not stop the affair with Helena, neither does he stop his play with the sea and some pages later a similar accident occurs. Siegmund is either a narcissist or a masochist. It may also be said that the wound he has got in the sea implies a sense of guilt. It comes to him unconsciously because while wanting sex with the woman, he worships her as a goddess: he is, in his own eyes, committing a sin.

Siegmund, however, knows that Helena rejects him:

'I am at my best, at my strongest,' he said proudly to himself. 'She ought to be rejoiced at me, but she is not; she rejects me as if I were a baboon under my clothing' (p.41).

This knowledge is soon replaced by his narcissism:

He glanced at his whole handsome maturity, the firm plating of his breasts, the full thighs, creatures proud in themselves. Only he was marred by the long raw scratch, which he regretted deeply (ibid).

One must remember that while up to this point Siegmund and Helena have slept separately, the man has slept deeply whereas Helena, the dreaming woman, "had tossed, and had called his name in torture of sleeplessness" (p.42). This implies that though Siegmund could not make love to her, he had fallen asleep heavily without questioning the rejection. Helena, on the other hand, is frustrated and cannot sleep because she, too, wants sex but her repressive mind consciousness does not allow her to have it. Consequently she is a bad sleeper. This implies that for her it is better to be awake "dreaming" than to sleep because in sleeping she would release her unconscious sexuality which her conscience rejects.

The split between the couple is so strong that while one goes to the sea the other remains at home. First Siegmund meets the sea, alone, and later on Helena goes without him. It is a game in which the pieces can never meet and be in communion to finish the game. On her going to the sea by herself Lawrence presents us with the idea that in his early stories there is no connection between the world outside and the characters' lives. In fact, the only real connection of the lovers with the outer world is through the landscape, but they are out of contact with any realistic social context, they are abandoned to purely inward and selfish concerns. This is perceived through Helena's selfish assertion that she does not care for people. She lives in a world of her own, built on the basis of her dreams. Even Siegmund does not really enter the reality of her world; he is there but without flesh and blood. It is a world of fairies which is a childish escape from the real world:

She wanted to see just as she pleased, without any of humanity's previous vision for spectacles. So she knew hardly any flower's name nor perceived



any of the relationships, nor cared a jot about an adaptation or a modification. It pleased her that the lowest brown florets of the clover hung down; she cared no more. She clothed everything in fancy... The value of all things was in the fancy they evoked. She did not care for people; they were vulgar, ugly and stupid, as a rule (p.43).

Besides this disconnection from the world outside which we will later find in Miriam of Sons and Lovers, there are more hints of her autistic self-sufficiency. In the sea she tries to get rid of the "dirt" which she feels passion to be. It is dirt because it goes beyond her dreams. And also her admiration of the sea's self-sufficiency mirrors her own feelings about human relationships. Helena does not need males to fulfil herself. They are mere objects which inhibit her proud self-sufficiency. She, too, seems a little narcissistic. The difference between her bath and Siegmund's is that his was a passionate sensual bathing. Hers is a frigid, disinfectant one. Her only concern is with herself. The rest does not matter:

The sea playing 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 passion upon itself. Helena was something like the sea, self-sufficient and careless of the rest (ibid).

I have said that Helena is the ancestress to Mrs Morel: similarly, Siegmund may be seen as the ancestor to Paul Morel. Several analogies are evident. One of them is Siegmund's entire dependence upon Helena, as Paul is dependent on his mother. Siegmund is totally subject to Helena's will. Without her he is nothing. Helena decides everything and even if the man does not agree with her, he expresses his position. He prefers to take the truth of what she says. He is weak, he has no proper opinion. The difference between Paul and Siegmund is that the former,

though dependent at first, tries to overcome his mother's influence. This does not occur to Siegmund, as I shall try to show later on.

Helena and Siegmund's relationship is not one in which there is a struggle for power. From the start Helena is the owner of the truth and Siegmund is the passive agent. He is the lamb, she is the tiger. There are no grounds of equality. He does not vindicate any right. She also does not usurp power because she is the powerful one to begin with and she knows it. And as she knows everything, she does not claim rights or feel menaced by him. Helena underestimates Siegmund because he allows her to see him as the weakest.

One way of exercising power is exemplified in their walk towards the cliffs. Helena goes first, showing her protective and assertive superiority, whereas Siegmund follows her, afraid of the different path. She is always provoking situations of danger but as soon as the danger comes too close to her she escapes. She also mocks at his fear:

'Come back, dear. Don't go so near,' he pleaded following as close as he might. She heard the pain and appeal in his voice. It thrilled her, as she went a little near. What was death but one of her symbols, the death of which the sagas talk - something grand, and sweeping, and dark...

She watched the beautiful birds, heard the pleading of Siegmund, and she thrilled with pleasure, toying with his keen anguish (p.45).

Helena's provocation of the man seems clear: she seems to feel pleasure in torturing her weak sweetheart who is all anguish. This scene may be compared with their sexual life. She tortures him but escapes from love-making: sex, like the seagulls she sees, is "'so fine down there'". She prefers things at a distance. The birds which are beaked can also be related to

Helena's sharpness, and will-to-destruction, to the male's annihilation, quite like Ursula in The Rainbow. There is also in this quoted passage the will-to-death which may be an anticipation of Siegmund's suicide. Helena, later on, draws him on to death.

Her sense of superiority is even greater than one might think. Observe, for example, the following passage in which the couple sees some ships:

'That is a schooner. You see her four sails, and -'

He continued to classify the shipping, until he was interrupted by the wicked laughter of Helena.

'That is right, I am sure,' he protested.

'I won't contradict you,' she laughed, in a tone which showed him he knew even less of the classifying of the ships than she did (pp.46-7).

She does not trust his knowledge and she does nothing to conceal her mockery of him. Siegmund is utterly ignorant of why she laughs: "'So you have lain there amusing yourself at my expense all the time?' he said, not knowing in the least why she laughed" (p.47).

Sexual intercourse in this early novel is expressed almost completely through symbols. Lawrence seems to feel not able yet to present it as he does in Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow, Women in Love, etc. In The Trespasser, sex is visualized not through the act, but through a set of images. The imagery of the sea, cliffs, rocks, foam, etc., stands for Siegmund and Helena having sex. Take the allegory of the following passage:

When they rounded the first point, they found themselves in a small bay jugged out to sea; in front of the headland was, as usual, grooved. This bay was pure white at the base... With the huge concave of the cliff behind, the foothold of massed white boulders, at the immense arc of the sea in front, Helena was delighted.

'This is fine, Siegmund!' she said, halting and facing west. Smiling ironically, he sat down on a boulder. They were quite alone, in this great white niche thrust out to sea. Here, he could see, the tide would beat the base of the wall (p.50).

This passage seems to describe a female genital in preparation for the sexual act. Notice Helena's delight and Siegmund's ironical smile. As the narrative goes on Siegmund seems to become possessed by hard sensuality and wants to get closer to Helena, so as to make love to her. However, the woman does not want to stay in the place because it is for her a situation of danger in which she cannot control her senses:

She looked sharply at the outjutting capes. The sea did foam perilously near their bases. 'I suppose it *is* rather risky,' she said; and she turned, began silently to clamber forwards (ibid).

The man does not want to go but she cannot accept what he wants because "Now it was a question of danger, not of inconvenience". She is feeling menaced. As they go on in their walking there is a sense of crisis in the narrative. Helena is afraid and clings to Siegmund but he seems to be as brutal as the sea: "She had no weapon against brute force" (p.51). The point of this crisis may be explained by the idea that she can dominate him only through the strength of her mind and if physical force is used, she cannot do anything. It is useful here to return to a comment Lawrence makes about Helena's character. He says that

[Helena] fled as soon from warmth as from cold. Physically, she was always so; she shrank from anything extreme. But psychically she was one extremist, and a dangerous one (p.44).

This, I think, reinforces the idea that her strength is in her mind but physically she can be of no harm, especially when she is menaced by somebody physically stronger than she. In comparing the sea's brutality with Siegmund's, Helena does not

like him:

She glanced up at Siegmund. Tiny drops of mist greyed his eyebrows. He was looking out to sea, screwing up his eyes, and smiling brutally. Her face became heavy and sullen. He was like the heart and the brute sea, just here; he was not her Siegmund. She hated the brute in him (p.51).

This hatred for the 'brute' occurs because here Helena cannot exert power over him. Therefore, Siegmund could easily take her and rape her. The man she likes is the one who she can mock at and who is afraid of taking decisions, who depends entirely on her. This Siegmund she rejects and hates is the man of instinct that she cannot control with her mind.

This mood of sudden courage and brutality does not last any longer. As soon as Siegmund comes to his conscience again, he reverts to the coward he has always been: "When at last he turned from the wrestling water, he had spent his savagery, and was sad. He could never take part in the great battle of action. It was beyond him" (ibid). He also feels guilty over his previous attitude. The goddess he loves should never be offended by a poor humble mortal. He tries to justify his mood as a kind of vengeance because she could not make love to him. He even excuses her rejection of sex as being something she is not ready yet to accept. It is as if her refusal were his own fault.

As the narrative proceeds, the reader notices that Helena somehow resembles Miriam of Sons and Lovers, especially as the latter is related to religious imagery or to self-sacrifice. At home Helena decides that "She must minister to him, and be submissive" (p.55), but there is a conflict between what she says and what she does: "she kissed him, clasped him fervently, roused him till his passion burned away his heaviness..." and then Lawrence says "she let Siegmund predominate". However,

Siegmund does not know that it is his turn to 'predominate': he "as usual, submitted to her". This looks much more like a game of words which does not fit the action itself. To further complicate the understanding, the author adds: "Helena's pride battled with her new subjugation to Siegmund". Who is submitting to whom? Helena wants to submit but directs the action; Siegmund is to 'predominate' but he submits to Helena and, finally, Helena's conflict over her 'submission' does not help to clarify this set of confused statements.

I said that Helena resembles Miriam and the following statement makes their resemblance clear: "[Helena] wanted to sacrifice to him, make herself a burning altar to him, and she wanted to possess him" (p.56). In Miriam's case, the idea is the same: "[Miriam] was to be a sacrifice. But it was God's sacrifice, not Paul Morel's or her own" (p.212).

It is in this mood of self-sacrifice that Helena accepts love-making with Siegmund. This night she offers herself to the sacrifice and "It restored him in the full 'will to live'. But she felt it destroyed her. Her soul seemed blasted" (p.56). On the following morning she 'cleans' herself in the cool water of the sea, and "Nothing, she felt, had ever been so delightful as this cool water running over her" (ibid). Miriam also offers herself in the sacrifice of love-making so as to keep Paul Morel with her:

Yes, she would let him have her if he insisted, and then, when she thought of it afterwards, her heart went down... He said that possession was a great moment in life. All strong emotions concentrated there. Perhaps it was so. There was something divine in it; then she would submit, religiously, to the sacrifice... And at the thought her whole body clenched itself involuntarily, hard, as if against something; but Life forced her through this gate of suffering, too, and she would submit (p.347).

Siegmund, usually a bad swimmer, swims well the morning after the night of passion. Helena is compared to a maiden bay with cold lips — a vampire in other words. Helena looks like a predatory creature and he is as the victim which feeds her. Here the narrative is again an allegory for sex. Siegmund in the sea, makes love to it as if making love to the virgin bay which stands for Helena. He feels proud "at having conquered also this small, inaccessible sea-cave, creeping into it like a white bee into a white virgin blossom that had waited, how long, for its bee" (pp. 57-8). The man 'hugs' the sea, laughs, and feels pleased as in a real intercourse with Helena. He says: "'Surely... it is like Helena" (p.58). What is rather strange to the reader, but common to the narrative as a whole, is the fact that everything that relates to the woman is cold. After Siegmund has compared the symbolic scene with the sea with his lover,

he laid his hands again on the warm body of the shore, let them wander, discovering, gathering all the warmth, the softness, the strange wonder of smooth warm pebbles, then shrinking from the deep weight of cold his hand encountered as he burrowed under the surface wrist deep... He pushed in his hands again and deeper, enjoying the almost hurt of the dark, heavy coldness... Yet, under all, was this deep mass of cold that the softness and warmth merely floated upon (ibid).

One may infer in this passage that below Helena's kind and warm appearance she is sexually frigid and Siegmund achieves pleasure in this painful discovery.

Then, the narcissist replaces the abstract lover. Siegmund feels he must purify himself of the 'dirt' he has been playing with:

Siegmund looked at himself with disapproval, though his body was full of delight and his hands glad with the touch of himself. He wanted himself clean... Then he soused himself, and shook his head in the water, and splashed and rubbed himself with his hands assiduously. He must feel perfectly clean and free — fresh, as if he had washed away all the years of soilure in this morning's sea and sun and sand. It was the purification (pp.58-9).

This self adoration seems, when it comes to the surface of Siegmund's conscience, to become a kind of sin which must be cleaned. However, the attitude he takes in rubbing his body, touching his flesh, instead of diminishing his sense of sin, amplifies it because he expands his self-love in the touch.

After Helena actually becomes Siegmund's lover (the night in which she offers herself as a sacrifice) the idea of their separateness still persists. Helena still thinks that love is better when Siegmund is not near her, touching her. She also has her 'purification' after the night of passion. In bathing in the sea, she compares her lover with sea: "... 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" (p.63). The momentariness of this joy means that she cannot live thoroughly in her dreaming world. Siegmund is a living creature. He exists and is present near her. Therefore, she must wake up and turn to him if only to explore the surroundings of their island. I said previously that this couple does not exist for the outside world. They exist in their shell, abstracted from the rest. Even in relation to one another, they hardly matter. Each one has his/her own sphere of self-love which seems much more important than the union of them both.

The moonlight nights which follow their first real sexual intercourse imply love making. On one of these nights Helena seems possessed by strange desires and recites poetry in German. This is the first of a series of demonic love-scenes in Lawrence where the moon symbolizes the destructive power of the woman. She kisses her lover in the throat, like a vampire, leaving him somehow "afraid of the strange ecstasy she concentrated on him" (p.73). The moon is up in the sky and the woman lays on Siegmund as if possessing him and, at the same time, being possessed by



the moon: "Rocked thus on his strength, she swooned lightly into unconsciousness" (ibid). When Helena comes to herself she says she has "'been beyond life. I have been a little way into death!'" . What is strange is that she does not direct this to the man under her, but to her own soul which may imply that Helena has once again rejected the real presence of Siegmund to play with her own selfish dreaming mind. The presence of the moon, as always in Lawrence's works, is a symbol for the domineering female. That may be why Helena becomes aware that "she must be slowly weighing down the life of Siegmund" (ibid). This moment seems to make the man go insane, for he is aware of her possession and domination of him: "some other consciousness inside him murmured: 'Hawwa-Eve-Mother!'" (p.74). Now Lawrence states that Helena "tall and pale, drooping with the strength of her compassion, seemed stable, immortal, not a fragile human being, but a personification of the great motherhood of women" (ibid). This statement places Helena among the almighty goddesses who are the Magna Maters. Here the contrast between Helena and Mrs Morel is severely traced: Mrs Morel is really an earthly creature. Helena is not. She is beyond human defects. That is why she exerts such a powerful influence over the dependent child that Siegmund proclaims himself to be. In his own words: "'I am her child too'". Siegmund accepts his inferiority towards the mother-goddess Helena. In presenting this idea Lawrence indeed differs from his later novels, especially Sons and Lovers, because later protagonists are not like this foolish baby. Siegmund is not at all criticized. He is no hero. He is more of a victim of Lawrence's immature and uncritical early style.

In trying to return home after the love scene under the moonlight, the couple loses the trail. Helena does not really care about being lost. She does not lose control over herself.

She does not even notice that Siegmund is feeling sick. For her the world is resumed in her self-sufficiency which has been entirely restored after she has 'predominated' under the moonlight. Siegmund, on the other hand, is sick within himself, as if he had lost his soul to the moon through Helena. He feels lost twice. First, he and Helena have lost the trail. He feels insecure and leaves his lover to find the way home. He simply follows her like a little child follows his strong mother who always knows the best way to go. Finally, he feels lost within himself and seems to go into a strong crisis which leads him to question his situation with Helena. Siegmund feels as if he had dissolved within the limits of his soul. The trouble is that he is not aware that the woman is causing him to feel like this. She is the male in the relation: the one who is active and directs the intercourse. What is left for him is a deep sensation of almost disintegration. His role becomes the one of the passive female. This is perhaps why he diagnoses his sickness as follows:

'Surely,' he told himself, 'I have drunk life too hot, and it has hurt my cup. My soul seems to leak out — I am half here, half gone away...'

Then he came to the hour of Helena's strange ecstasy over him. That, somehow, had filled him with passionate grief. It was happiness concentrated one drop too keen, so that what should have been vivid wine was like a pure poison scathing him (p.77).

Notice here that Helena is the one who has 'strange ecstasy' which 'fills him' with passionate grief. Is this, the female role in a sexual intercourse? Siegmund is transformed into a 'cup' which is the container of passion. There is also the sensation of guilt for the sexual act since he feels hurt by what is supposed to give him pleasure. Instead, it becomes like 'pure poison scathing him'. Helena is the castrating woman hurting him. This thought makes Siegmund unconsciously condemn the relation. Not because it is adulterous but because he feels hurt for being an agent of sin (the sexual relation may have this

connotation in his mind). In fact Siegmund, as well as Helena, is a puritan (like Paul Morel and his mother). However, this crisis is within the man. He does not share it with his partner since he talks to himself and not to her. Even consciously he is not aware of his emotional state. Helena is hardly aware of the man behind her. She is living the ecstasy of walking under the moonlight. She is not lost. There is another important comment Siegmund makes to himself which shows that from within he knows that Helena is killing him: "'I suppose,' he said to himself for the last time, 'I suppose living too intensely kills you, more or less'" (ibid). This is directed to his love affair with Helena and because of her he is dying gradually, day by day. When Siegmund comes to reality, he continues following Helena and watching the night and the moon. Helena, delighted by the idea of being lost, directs the way and continues to ignore Siegmund's presence. They are so separate that she dreams about dreaming while they walk. In this dream, she imagines

herself lying asleep in her room, while her own dreams slid out down the moonbeams. She imagined Siegmund sleeping in his room, while his dreams, dark eyed, their blue eyes very dark and yearning at night-time, came wandering over the grey grass seeking her dreams (p.79).

Even here the lovers do not meet. They are in different rooms and it is his dream seeking hers. Her dreams do not seek his.

In their search for the way home, a religious sign appears: a chapel and Christ upon His cross. All the description seems to be reminding the couple of sacrifice. It is through Siegmund that Lawrence places the burden of a new Christ in sacrifice. The point is that Siegmund feels like a sacrifice because of Helena. But neither the author nor the character blames the woman:

'Thirty years of earnest love; three years' life like a passionate ecstasy — and it was finished. He was very great and very wonderful. I am very insignificant, and shall go ignobly. But we are the same; love, the brief ecstasy, and the end. But mine is one rose and His all the white beauty in the world.'

Siegmund felt his heart very weary, sad, and at fault, in the presence of Christ. Yet he derived comfort from the knowledge that life was treating him in the same manner as it had treated the Master, though his compared small and despicable with the Christ tragedy (p.79 - My underlining).

Christ and Siegmund are seen as the same: both he and Christ have only one end: death. The man feels relieved from his guilt because he is being given the same treatment as the Master. Siegmund does not even seem to be frightened at the idea of death. It is near him but he seems to see it at a certain distance. This is time for him to diminish himself and show his audience he is a failure: "'I am small and futile: my small, futile tragedy!'" (ibid). This is full of self-pity and Lawrence is hardly aware of how boring the reading of his book becomes because of statements like this. That is why he repeats and repeats them throughout the narrative. The trouble is that Lawrence seems to identify with his self-pitying adolescent hero. He has no distance from Siegmund.

Up to the moment Helena finds the way home, Siegmund keeps following her, still not sure of where he is. Helena holds the direction, totally in control of herself and of the situation. He, as usual, is dependent on her.

Siegmund meets a strange man named Hampson the following day who appears only in chapter 13 and vanishes at the end of it. This man and Siegmund have a strange conversation which leads to a doom in Siegmund's life. One may think of them being doubles because of the number of similarities between them. Hampson seems to be a projection of Siegmund's superego. His function

is to warn Siegmund of the danger that women like Helena may represent to men. He also makes Siegmund aware of external agents which are always present as a sign of conscience. In other words, these agents are the conscience of repression. For example, Siegmund is told by Hampson to observe two battleships, a recurrent image in the book, in the bay. These battleships represent a kind of conscience which is ready to catch one if one is not aware of what he is doing. In Siegmund's case, they may imply the idea of his unawareness of what Helena represents to him. If he does not become aware of her will-to-destruction, the conscience of repression will catch him and he will be destroyed. I say this due to the next thread of conversation Siegmund and Hampson take. They talk about women--women who are soulful like Helena. The idea of Hampson being a projection of Siegmund's mind relates to the 'perturbing intimacy' Siegmund feels towards the man. Hampson looks at Siegmund in the same way Helena looks at him: evaluating details of his throat. Furthermore, "This Hampson seemed to express something in his own soul" (p.82). A simple acquaintance Siegmund has had in the past, as the text explains, does not account for the deep knowledge Hampson seems to have of him. He is capable of recalling in Siegmund the same idea he has had in the night under the moonlight with Helena. Hampson says:

'I mean,' the man explained, 'that after all, the great mass of life that washes unidentified, and that we call death, creeps through the blue envelope of the day, and through our white tissue, and we can't stop it, once we've begun to leak' (p.82).

This is almost exactly what Siegmund said to himself previously (quoted on page 112). In the moonlight night Siegmund has gone through a crisis and he was unconscious of what he said. Now his

projection tells him in the daylight what his conscience could not hear that night. Siegmund also implied death in his unconscious speech, now Hampson mentions it clearly.

There is also a sense of latent homosexuality in what Hampson says which may lead to the strong sense of narcissism present in Siegmund's personality. His self-love in the sea bathing may be a hint of his desire to love somebody of his own sex. That is what seems implicit in Hampson's speech:

'...Do you remember Flaubert's saint, who laid naked against the leper? I could not do it.'  
 'Nor I,' shuddered Siegmund.  
 'But you've got to — or something near it!'  
 Siegmund looked at the other with frightened horrified eyes (p.83).

This is the only chapter where Lawrence shows so much knowledge of his hero. More hints come in the end of the chapter when Hampson observes his hands: "'I can scarcely believe they are me, I should not be surprised,' he said. 'If they rose up and refused me. But aren't they beautiful?'" (p.85). Siegmund thinks that he has got a beautiful and fresh body but he has not the courage to ask anybody whether they are beautiful or not. The hands here may symbolize the whole body. And again I think it implies a latent homosexuality.

What Hampson says about women fits Helena perfectly. In fact, Hampson's statements repeat Lawrence's early idea that women are castrating creatures. Hampson implies that Siegmund must get rid of Helena. Observe the following:

'The best sort of women — the most interesting — are worst for us,' Hampson resumed. 'By instinct they aim at supressing the gross and animal in us. 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...' (p.84)

and the passage already quoted:

... 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 (pp.30-1).

These two quotations are in essence the same. But Lawrence repeats the idea through Hampson perhaps as a way to put it aloud to Siegmund. The author has presented it before for the readers and Hampson now throws it up to Siegmund because he is living with a woman of the same kind. I believe that only a projection of Siegmund's superego could do this for his sake.

Hampson continues the ritual of showing Siegmund the dangers of Helena's type:

'She can't live without us, but she destroys us. The 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' (p.84).

And this is exactly what is happening with Siegmund and Helena. She is destroying him gradually but he does not perceive this. Hampson is working to make him aware of his doom. He even says this clearly to Siegmund in a form of question which implies the necessity of an answer: "'... - why will she help to destroy you, when she loved you to such extremity?'" But there is no answer. Both Siegmund and Helena are too separate to perceive the damage. She is too worried to use Siegmund as her dream and he is too tied up in his self-pitying, narcissistic and masochistic character to realize this. The episode of the hands shows this self-preoccupation quite clearly:

Siegmund glanced from the stranger's to his own hands, which lay curved on the sea-wall as if asleep. They were small for a man of his stature, but, lying warm in the sun, they looked particularly secure in life. Instinctively, with a wave of self-love, he closed his fists over his thumbs (ibid).

Siegmund is too absorbed in self-love to perceive the danger of his woman. This separateness is what makes him dumb and deaf to reality. Indeed, he can also be called a 'dreaming-man' with different but complementary qualities to the 'dreaming-woman'.

It seems, however, that the presence of the strange man has aroused in Siegmund a certain fear of his future for "he felt a sense of doom". Despite this feeling he does not want to believe in it because "He laughed, trying to shake it off." Hampson finally warns Siegmund to wear a hat because of the sun. This may be ironic because later on Siegmund will be struck by the sun getting swollen and hurt. Hampson then disappears from the story.

From this part on the story changes its course, that is, we follow Siegmund's decline towards self-punishment and Helena's subsequent guilt complex.

Just before Siegmund returns from the beach where he has met Hampson, Helena reads a strange verse. Its words are as follows:

A late, harsh blackbird smote him with her wings  
As through the glade, dim in the dark, she flew  
And now she takes the scissors on her thumb...  
Oh then, no more unto any lattice come (p.87).

The simple presence of a verse like this is a forewarning of who will be the winner in the love affair. The victory is of the castrating female over the weak male.

When Siegmund comes to Helena, he talks about his meeting at the beach. Helena tells him that the landlady has talked to her about their coming late the previous night. It seems to me that the landlady has the same function as the battleships in the bay, in the sense that both work as the repressive conscience. Helena feels guilty because of the landlady's 'reproach'. But



she alone will not bear the guilt. She makes Siegmund feel guilty too: "Siegmund writhed within himself with mortification, while Helena talked as if her teeth were on the edge" (p.88). The guilt is set so strong in Siegmund that he even says that he knows he is "a moral coward". Helena does not help him to feel better. She adds: "'But you *do* continue to try so hard to justify yourself, as if *you* felt you needed justification'" (pp. 88-9). One may think that it is not he who tries to justify himself, but Helena herself who tries to make him feel guilty. Siegmund, weak as he is, swallows what she says and feels repressed or about to be repressed: "'I thought you were so sure we were right,' she said. He winced again. 'In myself I am. But in the eyes of the world -'" (p.89). This means that he feels afraid of other people's opinion, which certainly implies that he is not so sure about his rightness in the affair with Helena. Thus, Helena becomes more critical about Siegmund's character as she diminishes him as a human being: "'What is myself?' he asked. 'Nothing very definite,' she said with a bitter laugh" (ibid). With this statement Helena seals his destiny. And from now on Siegmund will start punishing himself. She has hastened his process of destruction.

They go for a walk. As the sun is very hot, Helena wears a hat. Siegmund does not. The scalding sun can be contrasted with the moon. The bright light of the moon does not hurt physically only mentally, which implies the relation of power between the woman and the man. She does not protect herself from the moonlight because it is her symbol, but in the sun she protects herself. Siegmund cannot protect himself against the moon because near him the strong woman is an extension of it. In the sun he does not want to protect himself. The sun biting

vigorously his head and body implies the presence of a Nemesis, a strong conscience reminding him of his guilt, his compulsion to punish himself. So he drops asleep. That is, he consciously wants punishment otherwise he would look for a place to hide himself from the pain caused by being exposed to the sunlight. Helena looks for shade, i.e., she does not want self-punishment. (The curious thing is that in the beginning of the book, six months after Siegmund's suicide, Helena has her arm inflamed by the sun. This inflammation, according to the narrative, Helena has got in her holiday with Siegmund on the Isle of Wight). Being exposed to the sun leads Helena to feel more guilty for she thinks about the future as being beyond reach:

'No more sea, no more anything,' she thought dazedly, as she sat in the midst of this fierce welter of sunshine. It seemed to her as if all the lightness of her fancy and her hope were being burned away in this tremendous furnace, leaving her, Helena, like a heavy piece of slag seamed with metal...

'It is impossible,' she said; 'it is impossible! What shall I be when I come out of this? I shall not come out, except as metal to be cast in another shape. No more the same Siegmund, no more the same life. What will become of us — what will happen?' (p.92).

When Siegmund wakes up he tells Helena he is happy. She, although seeming very sad, decides not to spoil his mood of sunny happiness, the happiness of a victim. Again they are separate. He does not notice her preoccupation and she does not want to destroy his mood:

She saw him lying in a royal case, his eyes naïve as a boy's, his whole being careless. Although very glad to see him thus happy, for herself she felt very lonely. Being listless with sun weariness, and heavy with a sense of impending fate, she felt a great yearning for his sympathy, his fellow suffering. Instead of receiving this, so as not to shrivel one petal of his flower, or spoil one minute of his consummate hour (p.93).

The idea which is implicit here is that Helena does not want to spoil the last day of happiness of her lover. That is why she hides her own sadness. It is a way to prevent him from knowing that she sees no future for them both. The idea of separateness is strong since Helena feels as if it were 'his consummate hour' not hers, too. Here she betrays all her resolve to get out of the affair alone, whether victorious or not, she does not say, but Lawrence implies that the woman will survive.

The hot day goes on. Siegmund talks to Helena about his past. Beatrice, his wife, is seen by him as superior to him when they first met. Helena listens to him and expresses her feelings about marriage as something one cannot get out of. It is forever. This certainly implies her sense of guilt. Siegmund repeats he is a moral coward. Helena also talks about herself. This part of the book shows their vague knowledge of each other. Helena tells Siegmund about her difficulty in putting reality inside her mind. This emphasizes more her dreamlike quality, now confirmed in her own words.

The sun keeps the couple at his mercy. Both lovers are morally wounded by its punishing rays and by self-reproach. Only Helena seems to feel this: "The heat had jaded her, so that physically she was full of discord, of dreariness that set her teeth on edge. Body and soul, she was out of tune" (p.99). This sense leads her to feel more at fault because of the affair: "Being a moralist rather than an artist, coming of fervent Wesleyan stock, she began to scourge herself. She had done wrong again" (ibid). Within herself she admits her destructive quality: "anyone she embraced she injured". This implies her consciousness of what will happen to Siegmund. She will destroy him since she does not do anything to control this power of

destruction in herself. She looks for help in her lover but he is too distant from the image of him she has dreamed:

She suffered the agony of disillusion. Was this the real Siegmund, and her own 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. There was an awful blank before her (p.100).

Helena will continue destroying because she is unable to unite what is real and what she dreams. The real Siegmund is miles away from her mind: "The secret thud, thud of his heart, the very self of that animal in him she feared and hated, repulsed her. She struggled to escape" (ibid). The way Lawrence describes this passage lacks the skillful hand of the late writer. He is too melodramatic in his presentation of Helena's feelings. He expresses her tragic conflict as if he wanted to pluck out the reader's heart. However, all he achieves is the boredom of an adolescent magazine one reads just for the sake of reading something:

She began to sob, dry wild sobs, feeling as if she would go mad. He tried to look at her face, for which she hated him. And all the time he held her fast, all the time she was imprisoned in the embrace of this brute, blind creature, whose heart confessed itself in the thud, thud, thud (ibid).

Siegmund asks her what is going on, and seems generally dumbfounded. Then he wants to die, unable to do anything to save his beloved from her oppressive sobs. After all this conflict Siegmund detaches his soul from his real being and realizes more sharply the fault they are committing against life. He accepts his damnation:

'My fate is finely wrought out,' he thought to himself. 'Even damnation may be finely imagined for me in the night. I have come so far. Now I must get clarity and courage to follow out the theme. I don't want to botch and bungle even damnation'... Staring in the darkness, he seemed to feel his course, though he could

not see it. He bowed in obedience. The stars seeming to swing in token of submission (p.103).

He will not struggle against his fate. He accepts the impossibility of changing the course of his life if it tells him to die. Helena is not present in his soul now. She is outside the sphere of his mind.

When the crisis passes, Helena tries to be gentle to Siegmund. She does not tell him why she behaved the way she did. She only says that he is unable to understand. In her brief explanation she mentions her guilt complex in relation to his family, which in fact is not the real motive. This makes him feel guilty. The conversation leads to his renewed feeling of inferiority towards her. He is weak and, therefore, she must lead him:

'Sometimes,' she murmured, in a low, grieved confession, 'you lose me.'

He gave a brief laugh.

'I lose you!' he repeated. 'You mean I lose my attraction for you, or my hold over you, and then you -?'

He did not finish. She made the same grievous murmuring noise over him.

'It shall not be any more,' she said.

'All right,' he replied, 'since you decide it.'

...

'You mustn't be bitter,' she murmured.

'Four days is enough,' he said. 'In a fortnight I should be intolerable to you. I am not masterful.' (p.106 - My underlining).

Helena continues playing with her intermittent sense of guilt, trying to force him to admit their fault: "'I think dear... I have done wrong'... 'I shall send you back to Beatrice and the babies — tomorrow — as you are now'" (p.107). Helena has got the right to 'send' Siegmund back to his family. Even in her guilt she maintains control over the situation. Even if he does not want to go, she will send him back.

During another bath in the sea, in his 'virgin bay',

Siegmund is again hurt. Like in his first sea bath (he receives an injury), he hurts his elbow on a rock. The sea, like Helena, is capable of inflicting severe wounds. She is warm and tender in appearance — like the sand on the surface — but she is cold and harsh inside: "He could not believe that the lovely, smooth side of the rock, fair as his own side with its ripple of muscle, could have hurt him thus" (p.112). But soon he forgets the wound when he returns to his narcissistic self-admiration. This idea comes mixed with his feeling that, seen from inside, he is worthless: "'And I,' he said, lying down in the warm sand, 'I am nothing. I do not count; I am inconsiderable'... 'Well,' he said, 'if I am nothing dead I am nothing alive'" (p.113). Siegmund is already thinking about death. However, it is a long distance there, and he must pass through a strong conflict between thought and action.

Helena also takes her last bath. Again she compares the sea with her lover and in the same way that she rejects the man as a lover, she rejects the sea. Her immaturity in relation to sex leads her to see it just as a box of treasure into which she will only peep now and then to discover its content. But before she achieves her goal she recoils from the danger sexuality may cause her. That is why she refuses both man and the sea: "She wandered back to her rock-pools; they were bright and docile; they did not fling her about in a game of terror" (p.114).

When the lovers meet again, their mood changes. Helena is happy because of her childish explorations and Siegmund is tormented by guilt. He (as Helena did before) disguises his feelings so as not to spoil her happiness. There is an attempt to evaluate the holiday and Helena again feels that she is responsible for everything that happened to them. She claims the

laurels of having given Siegmund a good time. In her words is implicit the sense that she is the fatal female because she has guided him to the island; she has kept him under her control. Again her role is the one of the mother-figure, responsible for the well-being of her little child:

'I did well, didn't I, Siegmund?' she asked. Helena felt the responsibility of this holiday. She had proposed it; when he had withdrawn, she had insisted, refusing to allow him to take back his word, declaring that she should pay the cost. He permitted her at last (p.116).

To Siegmund is left only the submissive answer: "'You are everything,'" which certainly avoids the problem of evaluation. She did everything. He did nothing. She is the goddess to whom he must bow and submit. His submission is asserted when she presses "his head on her bosom" soothing him and, at the same time, counselling him not to say anything anymore. Next he must consider her total competence versus his own cowardice, self-pity and nothingness:

'She is sufficient to herself — she does not want me. She has her own private way of communing with things, as is friends with them'... 'She cannot render herself to the intelligence. So she is alone a law unto herself: she only wants me to explore me, like a rock-pool, and to bathe in me. After a while, when I am gone, she will see I was not indispensable...' (pp.119-20).

He finally seems to understand what Hampson told him about the soulful women. Helena, now, in his eyes, is a clear example of those who make use of men for their own sake. He seems aware of his own destruction. Only it is too late to remedy the situation. He is entirely at her mercy and cannot escape except through death. And this death progressively takes hold of his soul. The woman is responsible for his whole emotional sickness:

the sense of humiliation, which he had got from her the day before, and which had fixed itself,

bled him secretly, like a wound. This haemorrhage of self-esteem tortured him to the end (p.121).

And Helena, instead of helping him, "had rejected him". Now Siegmund concludes that he is not the God whom she has fancied he was, but he persists in seeing her like a goddess. Thus, he declines more and more to self-destruction as a direct consequence of her. The guilt belongs exclusively to him. It is he who is the culprit. She, as a goddess, is beyond failure. She, as a mother, cannot be blamed for anything. The problem with Siegmund's realization that Helena only uses him is then mixed with his assuming the entire guilt for their failure. He is incoherent and contradictory. That seems why Helena continues being the white goddess:

'Is that why I have failed? I ought to have had her in love sufficiently to keep her these few days. I am not quick. I do not follow her or understand her swiftly enough. And I am always timid in compulsion. I cannot compel anybody to follow me' (p.123).

Again and again Siegmund assumes his failure as a man. And in this introspective conflict he lets the sun burn his head and (in extension) his own spirit. Masochistically "he gave his face and his hot black hair to the sun". He does not care about being hurt. Helena has caused him the most horrible damage but this he does not perceive for he is too much worried about finding fault in himself. In fact, "he wanted the intoxication" of the sun to punish his own failure.

In this mood of self-destruction Siegmund blinds himself to the outside world and thinks of suicide: "'Whatever I do I must not tell her'" (p.129). Some pages later Siegmund reinforces the idea of suicide, although he does not use the exact word: "Helena would be left behind; death was no way for her" (p.132). With this thought they arrange their return to London. Helena,



as always, is not aware of Siegmund's feelings. Although the couple is together in the boat to return home, they seem apart from each other. Siegmund locks himself up in introspection and Lawrence supports the idea of death as the only possible solution to the affair: "Already [Siegmund] felt detached from life. He belonged to his destination. It is always so. We have no share in the beauty that lies beyond us and our goal" (p.134). In his thinking about the future Siegmund provides all the possible excuses for not divorcing his wife. He is too much of a conformist to face a new situation with Helena. It is better to escape from his problems through death than to face them. As a consequence of his mood, he starts to reject Helena, maybe as a way to make her feel released by his death. For the first time he permits himself to say something against Helena's authority. She asks him to come with her in the morning to gather some roses of Sharon. He says 'no' without justifying himself. Of course she is displeased with his refusal, but she says nothing.

They separate. Siegmund goes home. There, his family takes no notice of him as if he did not exist. Here there is a parallel to Sons and Lovers again: the children all side with the mother and Siegmund, like Walter Morel, is despised by his family. The children condemn the father as soon as he leaves for his room: "'The damned coward! Ain't he a rotten funker?'... 'Ne'er mind, Ma; we'll be all right to you'" (p.152). On the following morning Siegmund is afraid to get up because of his children. His cowardice does not allow him to face them. Even his youngest daughter, a girl of five, frightens him. To face her he must 'buy' her sympathy with chocolate. She refuses him anyway. He goes to the bathroom and licks his shoulder which tastes of salt. His narcissism is so strong that he does not

want to wash it off. He turns to the mirror to admire the 'splendour' of his almost forty years. Siegmund feels as if he were a boy of twenty: "'What can I do? It seems to me a man needs a mother all his life. I don't feel much a lord of creation'" (p.159). When he thinks about men and women Siegmund is again reminiscent of Paul Morel. Paul says that

A good many of the nicest men he knew were like himself, bound in by their own virginity, which they could not break out of. They were so sensitive to their women that they would go without them for ever rather than do them a hurt, an injustice. Being the sons of mothers whose husbands have blundered rather brutally through their feminine sanctities, they were themselves too diffident and shy... 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 (p.341).

This certainly has its roots in what Siegmund has said: mothers are needed more than women. That is why he is 'no lord of creation'. This idea applies to Helena's nature too. Men, when they are not sons, are too brutal to women, when they are not mothers. They perversely do violence to women's virginity. That is why Siegmund takes Helena as his mother-goddess. He is never able to destroy the virgin in her. He prefers to destroy himself rather than expose his manhood to the woman, whom he takes for his mother.

Helena, on the other hand, is welcomed at home by her parents. She finds everything repulsive. She feels guilty though her parents do not question her. Louisa, Helena's best friend, comes and both go on a midsummer holiday. When she is back home again, the friendly atmosphere is the same, but she feels her father's disapproval. In her room, Helena looks at the mirror but, unlike Siegmund, she cannot bear the sight of her own condemning eyes: "As she stood before the mirror to put

on her hat, her eyes, gazing heavily, met her heavy eyes in the mirror. She glanced away swiftly as if she had been burned" (p. 166). This seems to be one of the most realistic scenes in the book because it expresses directly, not through dreams or symbols, what the character is feeling. It is worth noticing that this happens without Siegmund's presence. Now that he is absent, his presence is much more vivid. He exists now as her guilt and that is why Helena cannot face her own eyes.

After this brief scene Lawrence is back to Siegmund's home. Beatrice explodes in anger towards Siegmund. She throws back at him all his irresponsibility towards the children and the home. He has gone from one oppressive woman to another. The first with the claims of the dreaming woman, and the other with the claims of earthly problems to oppress him more and more. Beatrice is cross and bitter to him; she calls him "coward", and he silently accepts what she says:

'You coward-you miserable coward! It is I, is it, who am wrong? It is I who am to blame, is it? You miserable thing. I have no doubt you know what I am.'

Siegmund looked up at her as her words died off... His eyes were bloodshot and furtive, his mouth was drawn back in a half-grin of hate and misery. She was goading him, in his darkness whither he had withdrawn himself like a sick dog, to die or recover as his strength should prove (p.169).

Lawrence here presents the woman with no sympathy. The man, the poor dog is a victim. The author seems to identify himself with Siegmund for he never condemns him directly. On the contrary, Siegmund is always presented as the victim.

The last time Helena and Siegmund meet is at the station. Their conversation is full of overtones of death. He tells Helena that she must promise to go on living no matter what happens to him: "'Remember, dear, two wrongs don't make a

right'" (p.176). This certainly implies his suicide. Helena feels powerless — "Siegmund was beyond her grasp". And she, too, implies her death: "'... I won't live a day after you'" (p.177). They separate once more, this time forever. Helena goes to Cornwall, the land of Tristan and Isolde. And this association is very meaningful since there are several passages in the book in which these two lovers are mentioned at the background of Siegmund and Helena's love affair. The only difference is that in the Tristan and Isolde story both die, and in this novel of forbidden love, only Siegmund seeks death.

Back home Siegmund feels ill; his thirst for sleep is an anticipation of his death. His brain seems to work like a machine out of control. His agony is described in terms of pleasure and pain:

It seemed to him as if he ought to have endured the heat of his body, and the infernal trickling of the drops of sweat. But at the thought of it he moved his hands gratefully over his sides, which now were dry, and soft, and smooth; slightly chilled on the surface perhaps, for he felt a sudden tremor of shivering from the warm contact of his hands (p.183)

That night there is a mixture of lightning and moonlight. Siegmund likes the cool night, but the moon is defeated by the coming of the sun and becomes "a dead mouse which floats on water" (p.184). This may imply Siegmund's death at the return of a punishing reality. He thinks deliriously about Helena. She has castrated him and as he cannot feel released from her, he comes to think about death as if it were impossible to make a decision. He recalls the saying. "'If thine hand offend thee, cut it off.' He could cut himself off from life. It was plain and straight forward" (p.185). This is self-castration, as a complement to what Helena has caused him. Yet, he is not ready

to perform the action. The narrative continues vacillating back and forth between his suicide and his surviving. There are two possibilities: either to use a razor to cut his wrists or to hang himself. Then Helena comes to his mind again and he seems to give in the idea of suicide. In the following day his body is found by a window-cleaner Beatrice has called to help her. Siegmund has finally hung himself.

Helena comes to know of his suicide through a newspaper. She falls delirious. Beatrice, on the other hand, does not seem to suffer much. Lawrence tries to make us believe she feels guilty, but it is not convincing. One may think that the author tries to do this because he does not sympathize with Siegmund's wife. He seems to want to show that Beatrice is in fact better off because of Siegmund's death, because soon after his burial she moves to South London to reorganize her life. She becomes a successful landlady.

After this long flash-back the story comes back to to the present, almost a year after Siegmund's death. Helena is with Cecyl Byrne, a new friend of hers. She is trying to reorganize her life. Byrne represents another possible sweetheart. The point in the new affair is not new, though. Byrne is a potential Siegmund. He also seems to be about to fall under the woman's spell as Siegmund did. The couple starts their affair by going to the same places Helena has been with her dead lover the previous year. Helena is again dealing with a dependent male who "Like a restless insect hovered about her" (p.213). The idea of a repetition in the story of the dreaming woman is clear: they walk through the same paths she has walked with Siegmund; the same larch-fingers which stole her pins are the same ones. The man wants to fulfil the gap Siegmund left. He does not think in

terms of a new kind of love, but wants to repeat what Helena has lived with her dead lover. Byrne says "'History repeats itself'" (p.212). This certainly implies the return of the mother goddess myth. The new son is born a year after the death of the mother/Helena's son/lover personified as Siegmund. The idea of the 'femme fatale' who wins over the weak male does not end here, for the story suggests a continuation of the past experience.

The past is still present, as a dream, in Helena's mind. She has on her arm an inflammation caused by the sun. What is surprising is that this sun-burn is not new: it has persisted since the holiday with Siegmund. She projects her mental suffering to her arm to keep Siegmund's memory alive in her. Cecyl Byrne, as a potential Siegmund, is near her to try to heal her. (Cecyl is like the author himself because Lawrence has tried to help his friend Helen Corke after the death of her lover, a married man who killed himself after a frustrated holiday on an island). The question now is whether Byrne is strong enough to help Helena overcome the past or whether he will really submit to her.

Helena's type of woman — the soulful dreaming woman or the 'femme fatale' — recurs in Lawrence's early novels. The most important point about this kind of heroine is that she lives by her mind and because of this she destroys weak males who are unable to compete with her. These men, dependent as they are, are swallowed by the fatal female. Siegmund, this victim of Lawrence's early style, foreshadows Paul Morel exactly because of his extreme dependence on a strong woman. Another important aspect of this early phase is that love is the semi-liberated sort: the couple is ostensibly 'free', and both suffer from

extreme splits of soul/body. 'Balance' at this early stage is quite out of the question. And related to this is the pattern of the male in early Lawrence. Later on there is the rise of the allegorical dark blood-conscious hero. But here the males are spiritual and 'dreaming'. Later on, too, the male protagonists tend to be 'fair', not dark — like Will Brangwen, or Gerald or Birkin. It could be that these characters are realistically complex — in comparison with Lawrence's later creations, who are simply the personification of the male genitals. There seems to be a pattern though: the early fair males get dominated by the fair women — or destroyed, like Siegmund. But the later dark males dominate the fair women (like Cipriano and Kate), or at least that is the way Lawrence wants to push the story. Siegmund is surely the most adolescent, docile and masochistic protagonist in Lawrence. The temptation of the hero to commit suicide drops out of Lawrence's novels after Women in Love. It is characteristic of his earlier protagonists: George in The White Peacock, Siegmund, Paul Morel and Gerald Crich. The women, on the other hand, never really change, with the possible exception of Ursula. From the beginning to end, from Helena to Kate, they are mental, spiritual, willful and domineering — based on Mrs Morel, the strong and powerful Magna Mater. Only the author's attitude towards them really changes.

## II

### *THE RAINBOW - THE MODERN WOMAN IN QUEST*

Critics generally agree that The Rainbow is one of Lawrence's best works in fiction. It is, I may say, Lawrence's most daring story because he shifts from the analysis of the inner life of a single character, like in Sons and Lovers and The Trespasser, to a critical plunging into the lives of several characters. The story of the Brangwen family is not only the story of three generations. It is indeed a family chronicle, but the idea of the book is not just to present the story of a family through its three generations. The novel marks the historical changes. England was going through from the year of 1840 on. At the same time that the novel denounces the invasion of 'civilization' (industrialism) which destroys the life of an agrarian society (The Marsh farm) it also shows a deep and progressive modification in the main quests of the characters. What Tom Brangwen wanted in his search for balance with Lydia Lensky is transformed into a different quest in the second generation through Anna and Will, and is totally changed in Ursula's generation. It may also be said that one generation



prepares the path to the other. As time goes by the search becomes more difficult. It is as if one generation had opened a final door to the next but the door is never really the last one. It is just one door followed by an infinity of other doors so that the search does not seem to finish, even in the third generation where the story ends.

It is characteristic of the Brangwen family that the men and women face life differently. The Brangwen men have their sights turned to the earth. They are men linked with the unconscious. We can say that they are somehow conformists because they do not question life. Life is what it is and they do not manage to change it. They are lovers of the land and take from it what it can offer them. They do not look for more than they deserve:

It was enough for the men, that the earth heaved and opened its furrows to them, that the wind blew to dry the wet wheat and set the young ears of corn wheeling freshly round about; it was enough that they helped the cow in labour, or ferreted the rats from under the barn, or broke the back of a rabbit with a sharp knock of the hand. So much warmth and generating and pain and death did they know in their blood, earth and sky and beasts and green plants, so much exchange and interchange they had with these, that they lived full and surcharged, their senses full fed, their faces always turned to the heat of the blood, staring into the sun, dazed with looking towards the source of generation, unable to turn round (pp.8-9).

Nature and the Brangwen men live in perfect communion. The women, however, are completely different. Whereas men are 'inward-facing', women are 'outward-facing'. They are not conformists. For them the 'blood-intimacy' either with their men or with nature is not enough. They look "to the spoken world beyond" and want "to enlarge their own scopes and range and freedom". They want to take from the world more than simple communion with the earth. Therefore, it seems that they are

stronger than the men. However, it may be fair to say that despite their eager wish to go 'beyond' the limits of the Marsh farm, they are never able to see beyond the church-tower because "Whenever one of the Brangwens... lifted his head from his work, he saw the church-tower at Ilkeston in the empty sky" (p.7). This 'beyond' is then left to the future generations.

Although I have said that the Brangwen men are 'inward-facing' men, there is at least one Brangwen who is slightly different from his predecessors. This man is Tom Brangwen. Despite his inability to face school and learning, he wants to know something different from the ordinary Brangwens. "He dreamed of foreign parts" (p.87) and this is perhaps what makes him different from the others. It is this desire to go into the unknown ("foreign" here may be a synonym for "unknown") that makes him different. Tom does not really know what he wants but, for him, this wish is enough.

The atmosphere of Tom Brangwen's upbringing reflects rural society changing into a more urbanized one. The Marsh farm of his parents is no longer a place where the only external agent is the church. In Tom's time progress starts its invasion. The urbanization of the town replaces the life of nature:

The Brangwens received a fair sum of money from this trespasser. Then, a short time afterwards, a colliery was sunk on the other side of the canal, and in a while the Midland Railway came down the valley at the foot of Ilkeston hill, and the invasion was complete. The town grew rapidly... (p.12)

The Brangwens also begin to change their way of life. They turn away from the intercourse with the land and become tradesmen. Tom is brought up, then, in a changing society. However, nature is not yet completely spoilt. The Marsh farm looks at progress from over the garden gate. Hence, Tom still has a close

connection with the land. This is perhaps what makes his personality something not yet hardened by the burden of the competitive society which his grand-daughter Ursula is forced to get along with.

Tom is a hearty fellow, a man dominated by feelings. His mental intelligence is not really developed. In fact, when he has to use his mind he is always at a disadvantage: "He was a fool" (p.16). Feelings for him are much more important than reason. Learning for him is like punishment: "He was glad to leave school" (p.17).

One of the main troubles Tom has in his adolescence refers to sex: "For him there was until that time only one kind of woman — his mother and sister" (p.19). His conflict is due to his initiation in sex with a prostitute. This fact leads Tom to feel guilty, ashamed and afraid. Perhaps the reason for this is that he has always been his mother's favorite and his attachment to her leads him to fear the contact with women. They are like his mother and, thus, any carnal contact is a sin.

Tom somehow overcomes this sense of fear when he meets a strange, forward woman to whom he makes love, but who, in fact, has little importance to him. This woman has a foreign middleaged lover and Tom comes to know the man: "Of the two experiences, perhaps the meeting with the foreigner was the more significant. But the girl — he had not settled about the girl" (p.25). The strange connection of Tom and the man may be accounted for by the fact that the foreign man is bringing to him something external, that does not belong to the limits of the Marsh farm. It is foreign; it is unknown (and also somehow decadent). The encounter leads Tom to dream

day and night, absorbedly, of a voluptuous woman and of the meeting with a small, withered foreigner of ancient breeding. No sooner was his mind free, no sooner had he left his own companions, than he began to imagine an intimacy with a fine-textured, subtle-mannered people such as the foreigner at Matlock, and amidst this subtle intimacy was always the satisfaction of a voluptuous woman (ibid).

The foreigner and his companion bring to Tom the desire to search for the unknown. The unknown meaning a new life different from the one of his ancestors. The life of the land is already part of his consciousness. He needs, therefore, to search for what is hidden in the unconscious. The unknown presumes newness, a new world which is far away from the ordinary life of the Brangwens. It is in this mood that Tom starts craving for marriage. Not the ordinary marriages of his family, but one with a 'voluptuous' woman coming from the outside. As he cannot go and search for her, she comes to him.

This woman is Lydia Lensky, a Polish widow who arrives at Cossethay with her three-year-old daughter. When Tom first sees her he says involuntarily "'That's her'" (p.29). This 'that's her' is all he has been dreaming. He knows unconsciously that the woman is his link with the unknown. She is his fate. He did not have to search outside anymore. She has come directly from the outside world to meet him and to make the decisive union between Tom's two realities: nature and the unknown beyond. That is why he "felt that here was the unreality established at last. He felt also a curious certainty about her, as if she were destined to him. It was to him a profound satisfaction that she was a foreigner" (p.32). Thus, without exercising his mind much he decides he must marry her. There is no escape for him. The old Tom must die to be reborn through the womb of the foreign woman. This is the strong feeling Lawrence shows us the night

Tom proposes marriage to Lydia: Tom is being reborn. She represents to him a half-way towards fulfilment: "He must, in the starry multiplicity of the night humble himself, and admit and know that without her he was nothing" (p.41). With Lydia in his arms, he finds his way towards a new life. He keeps her close to him and

Then, for a few seconds, he went utterly to sleep, asleep and sealed in the darkest sleep, utter, extreme oblivion.

From which he came to gradually, always holding her warm and close upon him, and she as utterly silent as he, involved in the same oblivion, the fecund darkness.

He returned gradually, but newly created, as after a gestation, a new birth, in the womb of darkness" (p.46).

The passage is very rich in overtones of fecundity, warmth and security. Darkness here implies the connection between the woman and the unknown. The unconscious is present in the sense that both appear as if hypnotized by the situation of complete unawareness of each other. Lydia is the mother, both in the sense that she is older than Tom and in that she makes Tom not feel fear or guilt. Tom, closely connected with his mother, is now turned to her substitute. The fear of the prostitute does not revisit him because Lydia is not an ordinary woman. Their relation seems blessed by God because of this symbolic rebirth. They are both complete in their total ignorance of each other's past. In fact, it seems that there is a sense of mutual respect in their strangeness. This implies a strong hint that their relation is going to be a balanced one. What seems important to them is what they can build from their acquaintance on. Their past is ignored. There is only their present and the coming future.

However, the sense of completeness between them does not

always imply a fierce confidence in the future. Sometimes Tom feels a certain anguish because of Lydia's strangeness:

They were such strangers, they must for ever be such strangers, that his passion was a changing torment to him. Such intimacy of embrace, and such utter foreignness of contact! It was unbearable. He could not bear to be near her, and know the utter foreignness between them, know how entirely they were strangers to each other (p.49).

This attraction and repulsion exchange places in both of them and, till they get married, Tom is in a mood of uneasiness and anguish. They marry and "At the wedding [Tom's] face was stiff and expressionless. He wanted to drink, to get rid of his forethought and afterthought, to set the moment free" (p.57).

Lydia, on the other hand, seems to feel much more at ease because for her there is "No future, no past, only this, her hour" (ibid). This fact is important because it marks different feelings of two people who are to share their lives together. One feeling counterbalances the other. Tom and Lydia will keep their differences, even though they are not fully aware of each other's feelings. Contradictory as it may seem, this is what seems to me to be responsible for this couple's balanced relationship.

The marriage is marked basically by Tom's insecurity about possessing Lydia. He seems never sure of having her. He knows that

he lived by her. Did he own her? Was she here forever? Or might she go away? She was not really his, it was not a real marriage, this marriage between them. She might go away. He did not feel like a master, husband, father of her children. She belonged elsewhere. Any moment, she might be gone (p.60).

The only thing he feels he must do to keep her is to be home, to see her and to unite his insecurity to her foreignness. Sometimes he cannot even understand her. Lydia seems too superior to him. When this crisis passes they meet again and

They looked at each other, a deep laugh at the bottom of their eyes, and he went to take her again, wholesale, mad to revel in the inexhaustible wealth of her, to bury himself in the depths of her in an inexhaustible exploration, she all the while revelling in that he revelled in her, tossed all her secrets aside and plunged to that which was secret to her as well, whilst she quivered with fear and the last anguish of delight (pp.62-3).

In their union there is always present the sense of unawareness and separateness. And although it seems contradictory, they remain themselves, forget their differences for the sake of maintaining their love. After all "What did it matter who they were, whether they knew each other or not?" (p.63).

Tom and Lydia's story changes at the moment that the woman gets pregnant. Again they are separate. Lydia contains within her one part of Tom, i.e., the child. She, therefore, casts him out. They start to fight. Here we can say that the marriage resembles the Morels' marriage. Tom, like Walter, "had to learn to contain himself..." (ibid). "And sometimes he got drunk... He had to go out, to find company, to give himself away there" (p.64). His existence, during Lydia's pregnancy, means nothing to her. She treats him almost like a servant. Here Lydia differs from Mrs Morel who did what she could to exclude Walter from her life. Walter could not turn to his children because the mother set them against the father. With Tom there is a difference: Anna, Lydia's daughter, becomes Tom's motive for life: "he turned to the little girl for her sympathy and her love, he appealed with all his power to the small Anna. So soon they were like lovers, father and child" (ibid).

When the first child is born, there is a split between the couple, more on Tom's part than on the mother's. The baby is a boy. Tom feels satisfied because it has confirmed his fatherhood,

but he "never loved his own son as he loved his step child Anna" (p.82). A reasonable idea to explain this may be that Anna, the step-daughter, belongs exclusively to the foreign Lydia. Anna is the embodiment of the external unknown world Tom wants to meet. His own son, on the other hand, belongs both to him and his wife. The child has both components of foreignness of the mother and Englishness of the father. The child, therefore, is much more important to the mother because it was born of Tom's seed and has his English blood, Lydia becomes "now really English, really Mrs Brangwen" (ibid).

Lydia, after giving birth, returns to Tom again. But for him her return is brief. He is sure that she is all he wants from life but somehow there is still something missing. Tom thinks that the reason may be that "She could only want him in her own way, and to her own measure" (p.83). And he rebels, although he knows that "he must control himself, measure himself to her" (ibid). While they do not meet, Tom clings to Anna, doing everything she wants him to do. Besides, he tries to search for another source of living. In his search, he unconsciously takes an apparently wrong path: he meets another woman on the excuse that he can transform his Anna into a lady, but, in fact, it seems that he wants to have an extra-marital affair like his brother Alfred did:

His brother Alfred, in Nottingham, had caused a great scandal by becoming the lover of an educated woman, a lady, widow of a doctor.

Tom Brangwen was so curious about the woman that the next time he was in Wirksworth he asked for her house (pp.89-90).

As in the beginning, Tom is attracted to sophisticated, outer-directed women: at first it was Lydia, then the mistress of Alfred. Tom goes to the lady's house but he gives up the idea



of taking a mistress because "the other form of life was beyond him..." (p.91). Thus, he returns to the Marsh farm, back to Lydia. Now Lawrence makes it clear that although Tom's wife seems so apart from him, she is actually very much aware of her husband's needs:

'Why do you go away so often?' she said.  
 'But you don't want me,' he replied.  
 She was silent for a while.  
 'You do not want to be with me any more,' she said.  
 It startled him. How did she know this truth?  
 He thought it was his secret (p.92).

For the first time they seem to agree in their utter strangeness and separateness. Tom tells Lydia about his meeting with the lady in Wirksworth. This makes him feel Lydia is "again the active unknown facing him" (p.93). And the foreign woman knows his inner desire to search for another woman:

'Why should you want to find a woman who is more to you than me?' she said.  
 The turbulence raged in his breast.  
 'I don't,' he said.  
 'Why do you?' she repeated. 'Why do you want to deny me?' (ibid).

Tom cannot bear the questioning. He tells his wife: "'You make me feel as if I was nothing'" (p.94). This is definitely the key to the couple's decisive meeting and final union. Lydia takes him in her arms and Tom senses that

She was now transfigured, she was wonderful, beyond him. He wanted to go. But he could not not as yet kiss her. He was himself apart... She waited for him to meet her, not to bow before her and serve her. She wanted his active participation, not his submission (p.95).

Hence they meet half-way. Neither Tom nor Lydia needs to submit. They must be together to search the fulfilment both want. This happens two years after their marriage. They become complete. They recognize their differences and in so doing they are united:

At last they had thrown open the doors, each to

the other, and he had stood in the doorways facing each other, whilst the light flooded out from behind on to each of their faces, it was the transfiguration, the glorification, the admission (p.96).

Thus Tom and Lydia forget to question themselves for the sake of their own happiness. For them the importance of life is in the present. Past or future is distant from them.

As for the child Anna, she is left to her own life. She is to answer for the question "Whither?". Now

Anna's soul was put at peace between them. She looked from one to the other, and she saw them established to her safety, and she was free. She played between the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud in confidence, having the assurance on her right hand and the assurance on her left. She was no longer called upon to uphold with her childish might the broken end of the arch. Her father and her mother now met to the span of the heavens, and she, the child, was free to play in the space beneath, between (p.97).

This is what I call the most perfect image of balance in the whole opus of D.H. Lawrence. It is in Lydia and Tom that this author achieves his goal of a balanced relationship between man and woman. The other books by Lawrence never show a balance assured and final as the one this couple has achieved.

In its next phase, the novel shifts its attention to the developing second generation. At this point the woman (Anna and, later on, Ursula) tends to become the main protagonist. Anna Lensky, although not a Brangwen by birth, sums up a great deal of the Brangwen women's aspiration. Anna herself embodies the unknown since she is Polish by birth. Since her early girlhood she has shown traits of a rebellious character. She is a different girl and she realizes this difference by having a certain contempt for other children. Anna has a domineering temperament and because of this she masters the other children

and thinks of them "as if they were extremely young and incapable, to her they were little people, they were not her equals" (p.85). As a child she can be compared to a little elf, savage and arrogant. She has soon learned to distinguish whom she is to like and whom she is to hate. Earlier in life Lawrence presents Anna as a very mischievous child with a certain coldness in her treatment of other people. She always feels superior to them. As for her mother and father her feelings are mixed with a resentful worship for the former. The latter "she loved and patronized, but upon whom she depended" (p.98). Her two brothers, Tom and Fred, are creatures with whom she has a strange connection: "Tom, dark-haired, small, volatile whom she was intimately related to but whom she never mingled with, and Fred, fair and responsive, whom she adored but did not consider as real, separate being" (ibid). The difference between her connection with her brothers may be explained by the bringing up of Tom and Fred. Tom in the future becomes a corrupt person and Anna is "intimately related to" him. This is not to say that Anna also becomes corrupt but her later marriage to Will Brangwen proves to have a certain taste for darkness. Her adoration of Fred and her feeling that he is not a "real, separate being" may be explained, again by the future, in the idea that the fair boy becomes much like his ancestors, an 'inward-facing' man attached to the land. And this seems to exemplify the unconscious repulsion Anna feels towards ordinary people such as she thinks her brother is. Anna is also an egocentric character. She hardly respects other people. The only exception in her general coolness towards people can be seen in the figure of the Polish Baron Skrebensky, her mother's friend, "whom she regarded as having definite existence" (p.99). Later on the son of the Baron

becomes the first love of Ursula, Anna's daughter.

At seventeen Anna starts rebelling against her parents. A way to escape from them is to go to the church. Not that she is a religious girl. The church and its language mean nothing for her. The church is only her escape from Tom and Lydia. The culminating point of her distaste for religion happens when she laughs hysterically in the church. This event is posterior to her meeting with Will Brangwen, her future husband and nephew to her step-father.

The Sunday she meets Will they go together to the church. Anna is somehow unaware of her step-cousin's presence till he rises to sing a hymn. She is unable to control herself and then she starts giggling till she breaks up with wild laughter. Although she tries to regain control over herself she cannot. Her outburst of laughter is stronger than her will. In fact, one plausible explanation of her hysteria may be the idea that Anna is rejecting what Will represents to her. He may mean to her a symbol of obedience, of the false religiosity she does not like. Her outburst of mocking laughter may be seen as Anna's first real denial of Will's beliefs. Or it may be her sensual awakening. Eros is a form of rebellion or defiance of traditional forms for her.

Will becomes an assiduous visitor to the Marsh farm. Through him Lawrence presents to us his (the author's) most terrible conflict: the circle of love and hate. Lawrence says that

Sometimes [Will] talked of his father, whom he hated with a hatred that was burningly close to love, of his mother, whom he loved, with a love that was keenly close to hatred, or to revolt (p.114).

This passage implies Will's inability to really discern who he

actually loves or hates. The mixture of feelings for his parents anticipates the kind of relation he is going to have with Anna. The idea of extreme feelings in polarized flux is somehow disconcerting, but in fact they mean that the author could not well define which of them is more meaningful to him. Love and hate are too close to make a clear distinction. These confused feelings also occur in Sons and Lovers and The Trespasser: Paul Morel, for instance, is always going from love to hate in his relation with Miriam and Clara. Cecyl Burne also loves Helena but his love reverses to hate when he unconsciously associates the woman's affair with Siegmund with something destructive. Thus, the idea of polarized flux is very frequent in Lawrence's characters.

Will starts courting Anna. In order to do this he tries to please both his uncle and aunt: Will "worked in the garden to propitiate his uncle. He talked churches to propitiate his aunt" (p.115). This may imply two things: a lack of self-will and self-confidence or it implies Will's cleverness: he is like a shrewd fox who gets what he wants by stratagem. His way of courting Anna leads one to sense his implicit dependence on the woman: "He followed Anna like a shadow: like a long, persistent, unswerving black shadow he went after the girl" (ibid). This fact shows Will's early dependence on the strong, modern woman Anna represents. Besides this, there is also a feeling that Will is like a predatory creature.

Anna soon shows her control over the young man. She realizes she is passionately in love with Will and she finds a way of telling him of her love. Once Will is talking to her parents and Anna, unable to be distant from him, provides an excuse to go to the barn with him. Even though her father tells

her not to go, she takes no notice of him. Her will is stronger. Will feels as if pulled by two hands. Tom's is the hand of respect and Anna's is the hand of perdition, if I may say so. Anna does not let him choose, for "the girl stood near the door, her head held slightly back, like an indication that the youth must come" (p.118). And he goes. As soon as they are alone, she catches him in her arms and declares her love for him. This seems to be a clear indication that she already masters the young man. He says nothing, he only "held her as though they were one" (p.119). This is the moment in which Tom Brangwen loses his child Anna. She has become a woman. He sees the couple embraced "And a black gloom of anger, and a tenderness of self-effacement, fought in his heart... She was a child, a mere child" (ibid). And here Tom Brangwen recalls the night of Lydia's labouring in her first childbirth when the little Anna cried almost hysterically because her mother was not with her. That rainy night Tom took Anna to the barn and soothed her. Now, again it is a rainy night but Anna is not crying. Instead, she is with a man whom she loves. She is no longer a child and Tom cannot bear the idea of his Anna replacing him by another man. He feels jealous as a father, perhaps moved by the same idea of his adolescence that women are sacred creatures. They are like mothers and sisters. They cannot have sex. Tom may be feeling the same emotion he felt with the prostitute of his first sexual experience. Looking at Anna and Will, Tom is seeing them as male and female and this idea is not welcome in his pure mind chiefly because the female he sees is his own child. The last emotion generated by his inner conflict is the horror of being old. One may say that the rain symbolizes the tears that Tom cannot cry.

Will is an artist and his concern is with wood carving. In his art he feels like a master because he can manipulate the chisel as he likes. However, his woodcarving contains a special feature very peculiar to Will: it is immature and unfinished. One of his carvings, the creation of Adam and Eve, shows Will's vision of religion. His Adam seems to depend entirely on God "and Eve, a small vivid, naked female shape, was issuing like a flame towards the hand of God, from the torn side of Adam" (p.120). The point here is the woman's dependence on the man for proximity to God. Eve is also unripe which implies Will's idea that women are always to be frail creatures. Anna later on questions this in Will because she does not accept this dependence shown by Eve towards Adam and Eve's lack of power in relation to God. This happens after her marriage to the young man. When Anna cannot tolerate his shadowy presence near her all the time:

'Why don't you go on with your wood-carving?' she said. 'Why don't you finish your Adam and Eve?' But she did not care for the Adam and Eve and he never put another stroke to it. She jeered at the Eve saying 'She is like a little marionette. Why is she so small? You've made Adam as big as God, and Eve like a doll.

'It's impudence to say that Woman was made out of Man's body,' she continued, 'when every man is born of woman. What impudence, what arrogance!' (p.174).

Anna's questioning reveals her self-sufficiency. Her distaste for the notion that man is an intermediary between women and God is shown when she dances naked and pregnant in front of Will. Later this scene will be closely analysed.

Another important detail in Will's carving of Adam and Eve is the angels with covered faces. The fact that angels normally represent purity and in the carving they have their faces covered may imply Will's latent fear of women. This may be the reason

why, when he goes to meet Anna in the twilight, he cannot face her. She represents temptation and the way to perdition. This fact also reminds us of Paul Morel and Miriam when they make love. Paul cannot look into Miriam's eyes. In this case Paul feels guilty because he is only using Miriam's body to fulfil his sensual desires. Here is an important moment in Paul and Miriam's affair in which he cannot face her:

Then she raised her head and looked into his eyes with her full gaze of love. The blaze struggled, seemed to get away from her, and then was quenched. He turned his head quickly aside. It was a moment of anguish (p.345).

As for Will, he cannot face Anna because he, like Paul, feels guilty. His guilt is associated with his religious mind and, as he wants Anna as a female, he is committing a sin. The way he has found to hide his desire is by not looking into Anna's eyes. Paul's guilt seems perhaps worse than Will's due to the fact that Paul has already had sex with Miriam and Will has not yet gone so far with Anna.

This moment occurs previous to their first real love scene under the moonlight when they are gathering sheaves in the fields. The whole scene of the sheaves appears to be a preparation for the love scene. The description of Will and Anna coming and going, picking up the sheaves is like the rhythm of sexual intercourse. However, the couple does not meet, they are separate:

And always, she was gone before he came. As he came, she drew away, as he drew away, she came. Were they never to meet? Gradually a low, deep-sounding will in him vibrated in her, tried to set her in accord, tried to bring her gradually to him, to a meeting, till they should be together, till they should meet as the sheaves that swished together (p.123).

They finally meet. The sensation is that despite the bright



light of the moon covering Anna's face, she represents to Will a certain darkness which he cannot yet grasp. Will feels a certain triumph for he kisses Anna, but in fact the one who dominates the whole scene is the woman. She does not let him say anything. She surrounds him with her sensual whispers of "my love" till

they kissed on the mouth, in rapture and surprise, long, real kisses. The kiss lasted, there among the moonlight. He kissed her again, and she kissed him. And again they were kissing together. Till something happened to him, he was strange. He wanted her... he wanted to tell her so. But the shock was too great to him... he did not know what to do... But he knew he wanted her. Something fixed in him for ever. He was hers... (pp.124-5).

The only possible solution for Will's conflict is to ask her to marry him.

It seems quite clear that the two generations view marriage as the central solution to all problems. The conflicts they have seem to be solved the moment that the magic word 'marriage' comes to their minds. Will is not different from his predecessors. As he could explain neither to Anna (nor himself) the reason for his inner conflict, he solved it by proposing marriage to her. After Will proposes marriage to Anna, Lawrence himself clearly says that Will could not understand her passionate kiss and that "he left it all now, to marriage. That was the solution now, fixed ahead" (p.125). This fixed solution proves to be worthless in Ursula's generation as we shall see later on.

Will and Anna marry. At the wedding what seems most important is Tom's speech about the sanctity of marriage. His speech represent his own life with Lydia: the meeting of two angels, as he calls it. It is the communion of two souls forming one, in unity. This is his achievement with Lydia, but it cannot be taken as valid for Will and Anna. They are never like Tom's

angels. They are most likely to be two demons. Tom's speech may also be taken ironically because what Tom says becomes a motive for the mockery of his relatives and also for misunderstanding. What can be inferred from this is that Tom is the only one who really believes in the 'balance' of a union between man and woman. His relatives mock the notion because their marriages are false. Tom's is the exception. What then about Will and Anna? If Tom is the exception among several false marriages, his daughter and son-in-law might not attain the 'balance of the angels'. The question is to be answered in the day-to-day relation of the couple.

It is important to observe that Will and Anna go away from the Marsh farm to live in a cottage in Cossethay. They grow apart from the life in Marsh farm. The rural life is replaced by a more detached urban life. It is the decadence of Tom's balanced rural society.

The chapter that describes the honeymoon and early life of Anna and Will Brangwen summarizes in its title the course of the marriage: "Anna Victrix" leaves no doubt to the reader of who is the winner or the dominant figure in the couple's relation.

The couple's honeymoon marks a new stage in the development of the second generation of Brangwens. Now the story shifts its focus to the woman and the man separately. In the Tom and Lydia section the tendency is not to discuss the couple's individualities: there, the emphasis is on the couple's differences so as to get to their achieved balance. Anna and Will's section presents their 'togetherness' in the honeymoon and their complete separateness when they become used to each other. The honeymoon is the discovery of sex as a means to mutual

pleasure, but as soon as the novelty ends, their relation starts to fall apart, only to be united again when the couple rediscovers themselves in the flesh. Mind is not involved in their relation as it was not for Tom and Lydia. The big difference between the two couples is that Tom and Lydia accept their individual differences. They forget the particular "I" to become the "we" of their section. Will and Anna start as "we" and finish as "I". Anna and Will realize their differences as a way to be separate. Their only meeting is in the darkness, in the flesh when no one is really him/herself; they are just flesh united by the instinct of sex, not by the instinct of love.

From the first night Will and Anna spend together, Anna proves to be the one who is more detached from the outside world. On the honeymoon the couple forgets what is outside the door of the cottage. Night and darkness surround the two in a sphere of joy so that what happens outside that sphere does not matter:

It was very well at night, when the doors were locked and the darkness drawn round the two of them. Then they were the only inhabitants of the visible earth, the rest were under the flood. And being alone in the world, they were a law unto themselves, they could enjoy and squander and waste like conscienceless gods (p.144).

Anna, as I said, really feels at ease as she is, provided that no one disturbs her. Will, however, can only feel secure when his conscience is not working. In darkness he is fulfilled. But when the day comes and his conscience is awakened he feels guilty. The presence of the outside world comes in the morning and "he could not help feeling guilty, as if he were committing a breach of the law - ashamed that he was not up and doing" (ibid). Anna mocks at his preoccupation. For her it is enough to be locked at home enjoying the pleasure of her honeymoon. The idea is that Will is a conventional being whereas Anna is not. This

may be well seen when the couple receives Tom in their cottage some days after the wedding. Will feels that

One ought to get up in the morning and wash oneself and be a decent social being... [Anna] never washed her face but sat there talking to her father as bright and shameless as a daisy opened out of the dew (p.149).

Anna does not (yet) distinguish between day and night. At this moment of her life, everything is the same, no matter whether it is light or dark. Will cannot do anything because from this point he is already in her hands and "He let her do as she liked with him, and shone with strange pleasure. She was to dispose of him as she would" (ibid).

So it goes. Anna becomes tired of her seclusion and decides to give a tea-party. It is her return to the 'dead world'. Here starts the love-hate cycle of the couple. Will cannot understand why Anna wants the 'dead world'. He thinks that both he and she are 'perfect' together. He starts to feel Anna going away from him:

He wanted her back. Dread and desire for her to stay with him; and shame at his own dependence on her drove him to anger... All the love, the magnificent new order was going to be lost, she would forfeit it all for the outside things. She would admit the outside world again, she would throw away the living fruit for the ostensible rind. He began to hate this in her. Driven by fear of her departure into a state of helplessness, almost of imbecility, he wandered about the house (p.151).

The problem of Will's conflict is that he keeps it within himself. He says nothing to Anna. She, on the other hand, can only see his uneasiness as a sign of dissatisfaction, and then she begins to demand that he do something to busy himself and not hang around as if he were lost. Will hates her because of this. The two, instead of coming to an agreement, start to be separate, as

in the night they were gathering sheaves. Will revolts against Anna. Now he frightens her and she wants him back. But he is angry and unaware of her. Love and hate exchange places in both of them: "How she hated to hear him! How he hated her! How this hatred was like blows upon her! The tears were coming again" (p.154). Anna finds out that she is defenceless against the new Will. His anger does not last any longer: soon he is back to her but now it is her turn to reject him. She is distant from him as if immunized against his blows. After a whole set of disagreements between them, they meet again:

When they came to themselves, the night was very dark. Two hours had gone by. They lay still and warm and weak, like the new-born together. And there was a silence almost of the unborn. Only his heart was weeping happily, after the pain. He did not understand, he had yielded, given way. There *was* no understanding. There could be only acquiescence and submission, and tremulous wonder of consummation (p.156).

Even in their new meeting it seems quite clear that there is no possibility for them to be equals: "There was no understanding. There could be only acquiescence and submission". They simply meet in the flesh. In the darkness they are not thinking, nor disagreeing, nor hating. They are only feeling themselves. One must submit to the other. And since the passage is described from Will's point of view, and not from Anna's, Will is the one supposed to be submissive to the woman.

Their marriage, as the months go by, confirms the intense polarized flux of the couple's love and hate feelings:

One day it seemed as if everything was shattered, all life spoiled, ruined, desolated and laid waste. The next day it was all marvellous again, just marvellous. One day she thought she would go mad from his very presence, the sound of his drinking was detestable to her. The next day she loved and rejoiced in the way he crossed the floor, he was sun, moon and stars in one (p.167).

On the one hand there is Will's desire to destroy the woman in Anna and be the master of the home. Anna, on the other, dreads this in her man and "wanted to desert him, to leave him a prey to the open, with the unclean dogs of the darkness setting on to devour him" (p.170). She cannot bear to depend on Will and, as she is stronger, she gradually destroys his beliefs. She cannot give in to him. I believe that the main point in their conflict refers to a deep lack of respect in both husband and wife. They do not respect each other. Furthermore, Will lets Anna disrespect him because his personality is unripe and the woman he has married has been self-sufficient since she was a little child. For her it is enough that she loves him. Hence, Anna starts to tease him. Will lets Anna destroy the man as subject, transforming him into a mere object.

Will's destruction seems to start when Anna tells him that his Eve is a mere doll in the hands of his Adam and that she, Anna, will not be like the Eve. The result of this is that Will feels deceived and destroys his unfinished carving: but this only proves that Will himself is an unfinished creature.

The second and crucial moment of Will's defeat happens when Anna, pregnant, dances naked in front of him as a way to assert her right to independence. She as a woman does not need to be guided by any man to reach God. She can touch God by herself. And she decides to dance before the unknown to prove to herself and to her weak husband her right to freedom:

Suddenly she had realized that this was what she wanted to do. Big with child as she was, she danced there in the bedroom by herself, lifting her hands and her body to the Unseen, to the unseen Creator who had chosen her, to whom she belonged (p.183).

Will, at this moment, is no master, no giant. He, in her eyes,

is like a dwarf without power. Therefore, "she had to dance in exultation beyond him" (ibid). To be more provocative she takes her clothes off and aware of her superiority (because of her pregnancy) she dances Will's nullification. It is as if he were not the father but rather the stars were the father, or Anna were both mother and father. Will sees with amazement the apex of Anna's dance and he feels that "The strangeness, the power of her in her dancing consumed him, he was burned, he could not grasp, he could not understand" (p.184). As he can do nothing to stop the destructive power of his wife, Will is forced to leave the room. From now on Anna will be the master in the relation. Husband and wife are separated. They now sleep in different rooms. Will is only to be with Anna when she orders him to. Apart from this he has no function at home. He becomes an object of decoration which Anna manipulates at her wish.

Her victory over the man is complemented when Anna gives birth. The living child makes Anna's victory more real and concrete. As the pains of the birth start Anna feels she is getting closer and closer to victory. The only disappointment in Anna's success is that she wanted a boy and the baby is a girl. However, the mother soon forgets the sex of the child when it starts sucking her milk. She has become 'Anna Victrix'. As for Will, his wife "was indeed Anna Victrix. He could not combat her any more" (p.193).

The enchantment of the baby soon passes and Anna feels unfulfilled. She wants more than a simple child. One may think that motherhood is not sufficient for Anna and that her wish is to go beyond this. However, it is not true. What Anna really wants is to bear more and more children. The 'beyond' she will leave to her children to find. She is satisfied where she is:

"Why must she start the journey? She stood safely on the Pisgah mountain" (p.195). Soon she is with child again. Each of the nine pregnancies takes the woman to fulfilment. The older child is left behind. The new one takes all the mother's love. She feels the power of the future in her hands:

All the future rang to her out of the sound of the baby's crying and cooing, she balanced the coming years of life in her hands, as she nursed the child. The passionate sense of fulfilment, of the future germinated in her, in the hands of the woman. And before this baby was ten month's old, she was again with child. She seemed to be in the storm of fecund life, every moment was full and busy with productiveness to her. She felt like the earth, the mother of everything (pp.207-8).

In fact Anna has gone through a personality change. From being sceptical, mental and indifferent she has become the Magna Mater - unconscious, unconcerned with ideas.

Will at this stage of his life is completely annulled. Anna has played with his feelings, his inner beliefs; she has destroyed his faith in the absolute beauty of the church. She has reduced him to a breeder and a 'housewife'. All his creativeness is dead. He no longer thinks or walks by himself. He has asserted himself as a parasite, a predatory creature who has nothing to offer to the world, except to give his semen to Anna.

One of the most depressing views of the destruction of Will's faith is reported in the chapter "Cathedral" in which Anna mocks at everything he says. When Will enters the cathedral his ecstasy strikes Anna as absurd. Will refers to the church as 'she'. This irritates Anna because she sees the church as a thing, not as a human being. Her husband's ecstasy is almost like being born out of the womb of the great mother, the absolute owner of creation: the church. For him 'she' contains



everything: life and death. He is consummated in his intercourse with the church. Anna, on the other hand, is no dreamer like her husband. The church is not absolute. It is only part of the universe. There exists the outside world which she considers as being much more important: "the open sky was no blue vault, no dark dome hung with many twinkling lamps, but a space where stars were wheeling in freedom, with freedom above them always higher" (p.203). It can be said that the couple's reaction to the church in fact defines their styles of love-making. He gives up himself to merge with some mystical absolute; she, on the other hand, keeps control over herself and uses sex for her own ends. She remains within the ego. Later on, he will learn to pursue this cold sensuality too, after his disillusionment. Anna (and her 'style') is of course more 'modern' than Will, who was medieval and agrarian. For the moment, Anna's anger towards her husband's ecstasy makes her fight him off. The way she finds to express her discord against Will is to turn to the scattered things, objects, paintings and gargoyles in the place so as not to feel imprisoned by the church. Because of Anna's different behavior Will feels her as if she were a 'serpent in Eden'. Both leave the cathedral and the feeling is that Anna has destroyed Will's illusions and faith. In a way we can say that Anna has shown her husband that it is useless to believe in what things represent. They are what they are, not what they seem to be. Yet "He wanted his cathedral; he wanted to satisfy his blind passion" (p.205). It is too late. Anna has made him lose his 'absolute' and he comes to think that the cathedral is no more than a symbol which he loves but which is not the most important thing in life.

As Will cannot find fulfilment with Anna because of her

crescent disrespect for him, he turns to the first child Ursula. They form "a strange alliance". It almost looks like the alliance formed by Tom and Anna when Lydia had her first child. The difference seems to be that Lydia did not destroy Tom as Anna does Will. The little Ursula is a support to the man. It may be said that as Will cannot master Anna, he has turned to the child to master her, to exert a certain power over her. However, Ursula rejects Will, as we shall see later, and he, unable to stand her rejection as well as that of his own wife, turns to seek pleasure in Nottingham. He wants to experience new things apart from the world of his wife's "trance of motherhood". Will realizes that "Save for his wife, he was a virgin... He wanted the other life. His own life was barren, not enough. He wanted the other" (p.227). Thus, he looks for other women. It seems that the Brangwen men always repeat the past: first Alfred had an intellectual mistress; then Tom tries to imitate his brother and have a mistress but he gives up; and finally Will reproduces the same attitude of his relatives. The girl he finds is an adolescent. He tries to master her, again as a projection of his incompetence at home, but he fails. The girl flees from him and he returns home frustrated but, in a certain way, renewed. He has awakened in himself the thirsty male who only craves for sex. Anna perceives the new man in her husband and likes it. She was tired of the old, conventional and mystic lover. For her, this Will coming from Nottingham is a stranger and "She liked this strange man come home to her. He was very welcome, indeed! She was very glad to welcome a stranger. She had been bored by the old husband" (p.235). The new Will is no husband. He is the lover, the obsessed male prostitute: "He was the sensual male seeking his pleasure, she was the female ready to

take hers: but in her own way" (ibid). Even here Anna does not forget she is the master and if the man is to come to her, it will be the way she likes. Thus Will and Anna restart their marriage through the recognition of their obsession with sex. They cease to exist as human beings. The flame of love and mutual respect has died. In their new meeting "There was no tenderness, no love between them any more, only the maddening, sensuous lust for discovery and the insatiable, exorbitant gratification in the sensual beauties of [Anna's] body" (p.236). They have no feelings, only lust. The children are left aside for the couple "lived in the darkness and death of their own sensual activities" (p.237). The lovers have also lost their reserves:

All the shameful things of the body revealed themselves to him now with a sort of sinister, tropical beauty. All the shameful natural and unnatural acts of sensual voluptuousness which he and the woman partook together, created together, they had their heavy beauty and their delight. Shame, what was it? It was part of the extreme delight. It was that part of delight of which man is usually afraid. Why afraid? The secret, shameful things are most terribly beautiful (pp.237-8).

The passage seems to refer to anal intercourse. Sex is seen as a natural act. But if they (Will and Anna) have discovered 'delight' in 'unnatural and shameful' acts, one may easily infer that it is the use of the anus as a source for pleasure or pain. The element of sado-masochism or domination would be particularly strong in this kind of sex. The same kind of language used in this quoted passage is used (more explicitly) in Women in Love and Lady Chatterley to refer to anal intercourse:

[Ursula] traced with her hands the line of [Birkin's] loins and thighs, at the back, and a living fire ran through her, from him, darkly... It was a dark fire of electricity that rushed from him to her, and flooded them both with rich

peace, satisfaction... She had thought there was no source deeper than the phallic source. And now, behold, from the smitten rock of the man's body, from the strange marvellous flanks and thighs, deeper, further in mystery than the phallic source, came the floods of ineffable darkness and ineffable riches (p.306).

and

In the short summer night [Connie] learnt so much. She would have thought a woman have died of shame. Instead of which, the shame died. Shame, which is fear: the deep organic shame, the old physical fear which crouches in the bodily roots of us, and can only be chased away by the sensual fire, at last it was roused up and routed by the phallic hunt of the man, and she came to the very heart of the jungle of her self. She felt, now,... essentially shameless. She was her sensual self, naked and unashamed... There was nothing left to disguise or be ashamed of. She shared her ultimate nakedness with a man, another being (p.268).

The theme of anal intercourse seems to be recurrent in Lawrence. Pritchard (1971) says that the anus can be seen as "almost a new womb" and that in Will and Anna's case this intercourse occurs "in a perverse spirit, relishing their degradation and self-reduction" (p.73).

Will and Anna's marriage thus arrives at its dubious 'balance'. It is, though, a different balance from the one achieved by Tom and Lydia. In Anna and Will's case the 'balance' only occurs when the lights are off and they are able to fulfil each other in their lust. When the daylight comes they return to their old selves in which Anna is the powerful matriach and Will is her servant, the submissive husband of whom she barely takes any notice.

The story again shifts its focus to the generation of Ursula Brangwen. Before she is ready to throw herself into the world of man, the Marsh farm loses its main and last figure: Tom Brangwen, the last patriarch of the first generation dies in a flood. When his body is found we can see in the mourning of the

family the inarticulate sorrow of three generations facing the corpse of Tom, the husband, the father and the grandfather.

Tom, the husband, is viewed by Lydia still as the stranger she has met and married. In her feelings there is the recognition of their separate selves: "'I shared life with you, I belong in my own way to eternity,' said Lydia Brangwen, her heart cold, knowing her own singleness" (p.251).

As for the two sons and the daughter, each one is different. Fred seems to feel in the death of his father the hand of fate. His feelings seem more real than those of his brother Tom, who expresses nothing, as if he were made of wax. His face almost resembles that of a vampire, as seen through Ursula's eyes:

Ursula... saw her Uncle Tom standing in his black clothes, erect and fashionable, but his fists lifted, and his face distorted, his lips curled back from his teeth in a horrible grin... his face never changing from its almost bestial look of torture, the teeth all showing, the nose wrinkled up, the eyes unseeing, fixed (p.252).

Anna does not care very much. Her feelings since her new meeting with Will are almost strictly related to lust. Soon after the funeral she goes back to her world of sex. Will and Anna seem not to care about the death for their maddening passion overcomes any other kind of feeling.

Ursula Brangwen carries with her features of the two previous generations. From the first she has inherited the strong qualities of the Brangwen women; from the second she has acquired the deficiencies of the frustrated 'daylight' marriage of her parents. She neither belongs to the Marsh farm nor to the limits of her parents' cottage in Cossethay. She carries within her what her relatives have lost throughout the years that separate her from the first generations — the wish to discover

the 'beyond'. She is to answer Tom and Lydia's question 'Whither?' and she will continue the pilgrimage from the 'Pisgah mount' on which her mother has sat down and decided not to go a step further.

Since she was a little child Ursula has revolted against her mother because of the 'storm of fecundity' in the house where she was born. Her fierce desire is to search" for some spirituality and stateliness" (p.265). In her home the father is her best companion till she revolts against him too. One can even say that Will's attachment to his daughter has some traits of sadism and a fierce need to exert his power over her. His love for her may be seen in his desire for violence against the child. Somehow her emotional life takes a dangerous turn because of her father. He teaches her to swim. However, in the method of his teaching one perceives his morbid desire to hurt her so as to provoke a strong reaction. When he gets it through the frightened eyes of the child he laughs as if pleased. His dissatisfaction leads him to try a more dangerous joke with Ursula. He jumps with her from a bridge. Both nearly die, but the girl is not afraid of these experiences and, instead of departing from her dear wild father, she clings more to him. The third ordeal is in a swingboat in which Will sweeps through the air till Ursula gets pale and sick. People observing the scene call upon him, but he is blind with his savage pleasure. After this crazy experience Ursula separates from her father:

And as the child watched him, for the first time in her life a disillusion came over her, something cold and isolating. She went over to her mother. Her soul was dead towards him. It made her sick (p.226).

One may say that emotionally Will has destroyed something in Ursula or he has introduced her to the world of emotions with too

much violence. Thus, her love for her father or for any other man may have the same fierce desire for destruction, unless she finds somebody with the same strength as hers to counterbalance her power. This idea of will-to-destruction may be better explained when Ursula meets her first love Skrebensky. This scene of the swingboat may also be compared to the scene of the swing in Sons and Lovers in which Paul and Miriam play. In Paul's turn in the swing, he loses himself, enjoying to the maximum the play. Miriam, on the other hand, cannot enjoy herself because she is frightened. The scene implies a metaphor for their sexual experience which is a failure. When they become lovers, Paul, as in the swing, physically loses himself whereas Miriam cannot because she is sexually frigid. Hence, their sexual life fails because it is unilateral. In the case of Ursula, the swingboat also implies a metaphor for her sexual life in which violence and destruction are involved.

Before going to the love section of Ursula's life it is important to take a look at her feelings towards religion. Religion for her, up to a certain point is shaded by her mother's scepticism and cynical views. Anna did not care for the church's teaching but it is in Ursula that Lawrence specifies what this teaching is. Ursula does not believe in the saying that "Jesus died for me, He suffered for me". In fact, she has a distaste for all kinds of teaching that force her to believe that she is a humble mortal in view of Christ's sufferings. For her he is a simple man, as human as she is. The only 'teaching' that she seems to consider is the one which says that "The Sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair: and they took them wives of all which they chose" (p.276). This teaching attracts her, but soon she becomes disillusioned because she realizes by

the end of the novel that not every man is a 'son of God'. The idea of the 'son of God' is mixed with her adolescent dreams based on popular love stories she enjoys reading. She dreams of 'a coming prince' but she is never able to continue dreaming for her brothers and sisters come to disturb her.

She also tries to follow the religious teaching according to which people must turn the other cheek. Ursula does it and instead of a kiss of repentance, she gets another slap. Thus, she revolts against the teaching and strikes her sister who hit her in the face, with much more violence: "And she went away, unchristian but clean" (p.285). This fact implies that Ursula cannot cope with the things she does not understand and as religion is a difficult task she prefers to deny it and feel good about herself. Also it implies that there is something sick or masochistic about the ethic of humility preached by religion.

Another important aspect of Ursula's world is seen through the disconnection between the Sunday gospel which talks about Jerusalem and her weekday world:

Vaguely she knew that Christ meant something else: that in the vision-world He spoke of Jerusalem, something that did not exist in the everyday world. It was not houses and factories He would hold in His bosom: nor householders nor factory-workers nor poor people: but something that had no part in the weekday world, nor seen nor touched with weekday hands and eyes (p.286).

Christ's world is in the ideal and Ursula's world includes all sorts of secular invasions — progress, mechanization, exploitation — which are not present in the ideal world. Thus, Ursula denies religion because "she must have it in weekday terms — she must" (ibid). Jesus Christ then instead of being a spiritual man becomes in Ursula's adolescent cravings a sort of sexual figure whom she wants to kiss, touch and feel: "All the



time she walked in a confused heat of religious yearning. She wanted Jesus to love her deliciously, to take her sensuous offering, to give her sensuous response" (p.287).

Jesus cannot come to fulfil her needs. Thus Anton Skrebensky appears in her life, introduced by the hands of Ursula's corrupt uncle Tom.

I believe that here there is a sense of irony in Ursula and Skrebensky's meeting. Lawrence may not have had the intention to be ironical, however, if we make some connections with Ursula's deep desire to be a 'daughter of men' who is chosen by a 'son of God', this idea becomes quite clear. The 'son of God' she wants is to come out of 'Eternity' and the man she meets comes from the 'army' which, I think, is far from 'heaven'. The man she wants is a spiritual being and the one she meets is an Engineer, supposed to have 'brains' who actually has more flesh than 'brains'. Skrebensky only 'seems' to be what Ursula wants but Lawrence himself diminishes his 'being' by saying:

[Skrebensky] seemed simply acquiescent in the fact of his own being as if he were beyond any change or question. He was himself. There was a sense of fatality about him that fascinated [Ursula]. He made no effort to prove himself to other people. Let it be accepted for what he was, his own being. In its isolation it made no excuse or explanation for itself (p.291 - My underlining).

It seems to me that Lawrence in fact does not define clearly what Skrebensky is. The author leaves his final meaning suspended for our discovery. He rather says what the man is not. Ursula is the one who creates a sense of fatality in observing him. She has decided — quite early — that Skrebensky is the 'son of God' she was expecting:

She laid hold of him at once in her dreams. Here was one such as those Sons of God who saw the daughters of men, that they were fair. He was no son of Adam. Adam was servile. Had not Adam been driven cringing out of his native place, had not the human race been a beggar ever since, seeking its own being? But Anton Skrebensky could not beg. He was in possession of himself, of that, and no more. Other people could not really give him anything nor take anything from him. His soul stood alone (p.292).

This 'son of God' soon starts to show his potential for corruption and Ursula notices this when they are talking about being poor. Skrebensky tells her that he does not care about money but, he says, "'People — the officers are good to me. Colonel Hepburn has a sort of fancy for me — he is a rich man, I suppose'" (p.294). His saying makes Ursula wonder whether he is going to sell himself in some way. Her speculation is confirmed later on when Skrebensky and Ursula break off their affair and he soon after marries his rich Colonel's daughter.

When Ursula and Skrebensky start their affair the first impression one has is that they are only exercising their strength each over the other or that they are defying conventions. They seem to be playing in a game of forces in which "each [was] playing with fire, not with love" (p.302). It is the discovery of a sensuous game in which Skrebensky wants to assert his will over Ursula and "she would kiss him just because she wanted to" (ibid). Lawrence summarizes their game:

It was a magnificent self-assertion on the part of both of them, he asserted himself infinitely male and infinitely irresistible, she asserted herself before him, she knew herself infinitely desirable, and hence infinitely strong. And after all, what could either of them get from such a passion but a sense of his or her maximum self, in contradistinction to all rest of life? (p.303).

The interesting point in this passage is that Lawrence expresses the lovers' separateness with a critical eye: when this same

'separateness' is seen in Women in Love through the author's spokesman Birkin, there Lawrence does not overtly criticize Birkin. Birkin's doctrine (which Ursula criticizes so pertinently) about 'singling into purity' or 'star polarity' almost seems like a mask for perversity, or at least an excuse for withholding himself from women, from involvement, even as he appears to be "giving" himself. Here is one of Birkin's attempt to describe his theory to Ursula:

'There is,' he said, in a voice of pure abstraction, 'a final me which is stark and impersonal and beyond responsibility. So there is a final you. And it is there I would want to meet you — not in the emotional, loving plane — but there beyond, where there is no speech and no terms of agreement. There we are two stark, unknown beings, two utterly strange creatures, I would want to approach you, and you me. And there could be no obligation, because there is no standard for action there, because no understanding has been reaped from that plane. It is quite inhuman — so there can be no calling to book, in any form whatsoever — because one is outside the pale of all that is accepted, and nothing known applies. One can only follow the impulse, taking that which lies in front, and responsible for nothing, asked for nothing, giving nothing, only each taking according to the primal desire' (pp.137-8 - My underlining).

The underlined sentences are quite similar to what Lawrence says about Skrebensky and Ursula. It seems quite clear that what Ursula and Skrebensky want is to assert him/herself over the other. It is as if the man were looking for an image of himself in the woman, of his maleness. The same is true for Ursula too. It is almost as if they were in love with themselves. They have no feeling for each other. Each one feels him/herself "according to [their] primal desire". They are separate, single. Lawrence's evaluation of the lovers may be an anticipation of the moon scene in which Ursula exerts her 'maximum' self over Skrebensky and transforms him into his 'minimum' self, 'destroying' him symbolically.

There is always a strong suggestion of industrialism and corruption in the relation of the lovers. Corruption is seen in the influence of uncle Tom and industrialism in the invasion of the collieries and railway which mix themselves with the beautiful landscape of Tom Brangwen's time. When Ursula and Skrebensky walk together the sound of their steps mingles with the ugly noises of progress:

Ursula and Anton Skrebensky walked along the ridge of the canal between. The berries on the edges were crimson and bright red, above the leaves. The glow of the evening and the wheeling of the solitary pewit and the faint cry of birds came to meet the shuffling noise of the pits, the dark, fuming stress of the town opposite, and they two walked the blue strip of water-way, the ribbon of the sky between (p.309).

The intrusion of industrial progress in the whole landscape provokes in the characters a set of internal changes which destroy what might be 'pure' in their temperament. In Tom Brangwen's generation, the characters' way of thinking was directed to simple things. For instance, they would never question each others' differences. They would, instead, accept them. In Ursula's time, on the other hand, industrial change may be seen as a factor of transformation in the characters' themselves. This "growth" could either be viewed positively in the sense that the characters become more demanding, more critical persons, as in Ursula's case, or negatively, in terms of their sickness of soul, their "selling out" like Skrebensky and uncle Tom. A good example of this difference between Ursula and Skrebensky can be seen when they, walking through the spoilt landscape, talk about Skrebensky's career. Ursula's questions are those of a person who has a certain distaste for the conventional values of the man's world. The main point of their discussion lies perhaps in Lawrence's criticism of the nation as an instrument for

destroying in people the creative knowledge of life. Skrebensky is seen as a mere robot following the instructions of the great machine of power. If the great machine tells him that fighting and killing is "the most serious business there is" in life, he would never question it because he does not think, nor feel, he just obeys commands blindly. He cannot take up any original attitude. Hence, Skrebensky belongs to the great structure of power but who, without the structure, is nothing. This is what Ursula realizes:

'But when [the nation] didn't need your services in particular — when there *is* no fighting? What would you do then?'

He was irritated.

'I would do what everybody else does.'

'What?'

'Nothing. I would be in readiness for when I was needed.'

The answer came in exasperation.

'It seems to me,' she answered, 'as if you weren't anybody — as if there weren't anybody there, where you are. Are you anybody really? You seem like nothing to me' (p.311).

Ursula's words contain her dawning realization that the man is no 'son of God' and, although she only comes to reject him later, she has already started to deny his being.

The lovers in fact have different ideas about the world. Ursula is an individual with a confused goal; the man does not have any aim in life except that he lives to 'serve' the collective. Skrebensky's personal feelings exist only in terms of physical fulfilment, and that is what he wants from Ursula. She, however, demands more from life. She wants to raise her being to 'touch the stars' and be beyond carnal love. Skrebensky "was just a brick in the whole great social fabric, the nation, the modern humanity" (p.328). As a person, he "had no importance, except as he represented the whole... To his own intrinsic life, he was dead" (ibid). As a man, all he wants from a woman is

carnal love to fulfil his physical needs. But even so, he has no strength in his being to exert his own body to attain what he wants. Perhaps this is true in relation to Ursula because she is stronger than him and her strength makes him null so that he can do nothing to stand up and be erect on his own feet. To exemplify this idea let us look at the last wedding at the Marsh farm when the couple is dancing and the moon rises, leading Ursula and Skrebensky to fight for power.

At Fred Brangwen's wedding, while couples dance in the open field, Ursula takes Skrebensky's hand and starts dancing with him. The suggestion of the dance implies a sort of meeting of opposite wills: "It was his will and her will locked in a trance of motion, two wills in one motion, yet never fusing, never yielding one to the other. It was a glaucous, intertwining, delicious flux and contest in flux" (p.318). When the moon rises Ursula senses something different observing her, wanting her. It may be important to mention that she only senses the moon and she comes to know its presence when Skrebensky points it out. Then she unconsciously proceeds to forget the man with her to offer herself to the bright moon. The moment implies the virginal or narcissistic female offering herself to the powerful enchantment of the moon. This scene can be compared with two other moon scenes which occur in The Trespasser and in Sons and Lovers. In the first novel, Helena has a kind of intercourse with the moon and falls unconscious leaving Siegmund, who is under her, completely apart from her conscious self. It is as if she had been slowly destroying her lover's life in her intercourse with the moon. In the second novel, the moon scene refers to a night in which Morel has had a fight with Mrs Morel and he pushes her roughly to the outer door. Mrs Morel, who is pregnant with

Paul at this time, encounters the moon and she, like Helena and Ursula, falls unconscious. It seems that the moon has such a strong influence over her that in her unconsciousness it appears that she denies the participation of her husband in the conceiving of the child she is bearing. Her intercourse with the moon is seen through her intimate touch probing inside the white lillies: her hands become covered with pollen. After this it is as if she had melted her own consciousness with that of the child. Thus in the three moon scenes men have no importance. The unconscious heroines reject them. In Ursula's case, the moon scene represents the fusing of two females. Ursula lets the moon enter into herself filling her. She allows the moon to give her power. Skrebensky, not aware of this strange communion, puts his arms around her so as to protect her. Ursula, however, is not there. The moon has possessed her and the man does not exist anymore. The fight starts: the man puts a dark cloak over her to avoid the bright rays of the moon taking place in Ursula and she allows him to do it but in fact what she does is to fight against him. He is the embodiment of darkness and she becomes possessed by the bright symbol of destruction. Ursula becomes a 'pillar of salt', a 'steel blade' ready to annihilate the opposite strength of darkness. But Skrebensky has not yet given in: "Yet, obstinately, all his flesh burning and corroding, as if he were invaded by some consuming, scathing poison, still he persisted, thinking he might overcome her" (p.321). But he does not. Instead, Ursula, demonically possessed by a 'sudden lust' of destruction, takes him in a fierce kiss and 'destroys' him: "And her soul crystallized in triumph, and his soul was dissolved with agony and annihilation. So she held him there, the victim, consumed, annihilated. She had triumphed: he was not any more" (p.322).

It may be fair here to draw a parallel between Ursula and her mother. Anna has annihilated Will when she danced naked and pregnant (with Ursula!) as a way to assert herself over her husband. All her dance was a conscious process. She wanted to destroy Will. Ursula, in her communion with the moon and her subsequent 'kiss of destruction' in her lover, is not at all conscious. Everything happens in the sphere of unconsciousness. It is the unconscious power of self-assertion that makes her destroy her man. Hence, she feels guilty for what she has been during the destruction: "Where was she?... Had she been mad: what horrible thing possessed her? She was filled with overpowering fear of herself..." (ibid). Anna, on the other hand, feels no guilt. Thus, in this scene Ursula seals her destiny: Skrebensky is no man for her. A man like him can never walk side by side with her. For some time they are separate: he goes to the Boer War in South Africa and Ursula proceeds to close one of the several doors of her quest. Her next door is the affair with Winifred Inger.

By the time Ursula is to meet Winifred Inger, her schoolteacher, she is already dissatisfied with her inner life. Her main conflict is over the difficulty in becoming something in life. This 'something' does not refer to personal fulfilment in terms of marriage as it has always been in her family. Her inner self demands a bigger quest. It is the quest of a highest form of being. The old self of her previous generations no longer matches with her own. She wants more than mere satisfaction of her female being. She craves for independence and in order to achieve this she must adventure into the world of studies so that later on she can attempt to find a space in the man's world. What she seems not aware of is that for her to get 'there', to



be a complete human being in the man's world, she has to go through several disillusionments. The man's world includes ordeals that Ursula was not used to facing before. Winifred Inger is one of these disillusionments.

Her meeting with this woman may be seen as, first of all, Ursula's search for a model to follow in life. Winifred is described, in Ursula's viewpoint, as a woman who has won her independence. Thus, Ursula seems to take her as her model. Second, on the surface of the attraction Ursula feels for her schoolteacher, there is a crisis of identity which implies Ursula's latent tendency for homosexuality. One may say that this tendency has been present in Ursula's character since she started her affair with Skrebensky. Two important scenes recall this feature of her character. The first one, already mentioned, refers to the first love scene between Ursula and Skrebensky in which each one exerts his/her 'maximum' self against the other to prove his/her male/female power. The other scene occurs in the moonlight night in which Ursula 'destroys' her lover and in which she seems to be making love to herself through the moon. When she meets Winifred her homosexuality is awakened at once, and the women have an affair. It is the projection of Ursula's self-love onto the female image she finds in the older and independent woman.

Another important aspect of the women's affair lies in the fact that Winifred, older than the adolescent Ursula, brings her a view of the outside world. This view is no longer the craving for the 'unknown' Ursula wants to meet. Winifred opens a view of the dirty side of society, the putrified side of human beings which is implied in the schoolteacher's past experiences: the friend who died in childbirth, the prostitute and her own

experiences with men. Winifred's experiences with men are described in terms of men's lack of respect for women, of their imposition of power and subjugation over women. It seems a hard lesson; however, the main conclusion one may derive from Winifred's 'teaching' is that although she tries to pull Ursula to her own side — to hate men — the schoolteacher really introduces her pupil to a new world: not just beautiful Sundays but the weekday world of corruption and terrible aspirations for the future. The lesson seems to enter into Ursula's mind the moment she starts to reject Winifred's world. This happens when she visits her uncle Tom's town, Wiggiston. The town seems to represent everything Winifred has tried to show Ursula and to which she (the schoolteacher) belongs.

Wiggiston belongs to the industrial world of which uncle Tom and Winifred are the main representatives. Graham Holderness (1982) has a very accurate view of the influence of the town in the characters' lives:

Wiggiston is the negation of community. It is dominated by the 'proud, demon-like colliery'; the miners are subdued to that dominion — they have to 'alter themselves to fit the pits'; each man is 'reified' to a function of the machine, one of Ruskin's unhumanised' labourers. Personal and social life are subordinated to the machine; the values have disappeared. 'The pit was the great mistress' (p.178).

Holderness also says that Ursula's departure from Wiggiston "involves a comprehensive rejection of society as a whole" (p. 179). This is true. Her decision to reject this society in terms of her putting her uncle and her mistress together and leaving them to be swallowed by the system they both represent. They are corrupt and they deserve each other because the 'real mistress' of Winifred and uncle Tom is the machine. As Ursula does not want the mechanization of her feelings she refuses her

mistress and her uncle because "Their marshy, bitter-sweet corruption came sick and unwholesome in her nostrils..." (p.351). Thus she frees herself from their pernicious influence and closes one more door of disillusionment. Now she shifts her path to enter another door which will lead her to more disappointments. She enters into the man's world.

When Ursula decides that she wants to teach, the first obstacle comes from her father. He does not let her teach at Kingston-on-Thames school where her application has been approved. Will denies her the right to choose. However, in the face of her continued insistence on becoming a teacher, Will 'punishes' his daughter by finding a place for her in the horrible Brinsley Street school.

Soon after she finds herself in the school, her dreams of being a teacher with a heart are destroyed:

The [school] seemed to have a threatening expression, imitating the church's architecture, for the purpose of domineering, like a gesture of vulgar authority... The place was silent, deserted, like an empty prison waiting the return of tramping feet (p.369).

Instead of finding freedom Ursula is struck by the sense of being in a prison.

Ursula, however, is not on the whole frightened. The idea of becoming a good teacher of good children still persists in her dreaming mind. Gradually she loses her individuality. She stops being Ursula Brangwen and becomes 'Standard Five teacher'. Her dreams of teaching with love are reduced to a bitter sense of failure. Yet Ursula persists in remaining a human being. The structure of the school, a microcosm of the civilized society, presses upon Ursula through the schoolmaster and 'torturer' Mr Harby. He criticizes her way of teaching, her lack of authority

and incompetence. He forces her to understand that in the world there is no place for individuals. There are only 'Standard teachers' dominating a crowd of rebellious children so as to transform them into automatons. Ursula tries to refuse this politic of authority. However, she is forced to admit that without it she cannot belong to the system. Alone she is only a lost screw out of the machine. When she finally succeeds with her children, her success is mixed with a certain bitterness because she had to pay a high price:

She saw no children, only the task that was to be done. And keeping her eyes there, on the task, and not on the child, she was impersonal enough to punish where she could otherwise only have sympathized, understood, and condoned, to approve where she would have been uninterested before. But her interest had no place any more... She could only feel her will, and what she could have of this class which she must grasp into subjection... (pp.393-5).

The price she has paid to be a successful teacher has been too high. Actually the system requires that Ursula become cruel, a sadist almost. It is a sado-masochistic system that culminates in her beating a boy. This sado-masochistic element is also like her love life: a struggle for domination. In Ursula's soul the learning has crystallized as something hard: she must never let feelings predominate if she wants to succeed. Society does not allow feelings, for they imply individuality and in society there is no place for individuals. Having acquired the lesson, Ursula leaves the school with the idea that the world is not so bad after all. Her idea is that despite the high price she had to pay, she has acknowledged a certain control over her emotions in relation to the world. However, she has a long road to follow in order to really learn how the world is. Her next step is the university.

When she leaves the school her family has moved away from Cossethay and, by extension, away from the Marsh farm. The Brangwen family has moved to Beldover, a town surrounded by the dirty collieries. It is a farewell to the world of Tom Brangwen and an entry into urban middle class life.

The university at first strikes Ursula as if it were a sanctuary: the professors are priests of knowledge. They are beyond any criticism. It seems that Ursula is entering again into a world of religion where no one is allowed to criticize the gods:

At first, she preserved herself from criticism. She would not consider the professors as men, ordinary men who ate bacon, and pulled on their boots before coming to college. They were the black-gowned priests of knowledge, serving for ever in a remote, hushed temple. They were the initiated, and the beginning and the end of the mystery was in their keeping (p.431).

The problem is that Ursula is too much of a dreamer. She has just come through a hard experience that has begun in the same way as that of the university. She thought she could teach with love and the school extinguished love with authority. Now she seems to be again putting too high expectations on her new experience. And again her expectations fail because as soon as the excitement passes, she realizes how wrong she was: "The professors were not priests initiated into the deep mysteries of life and knowledge. After all, they were only middle-men handling wares they had become so accustomed that they were oblivious of them" (p.434). Once more she has failed. The new disappointment makes her lose her belief in life as something which would help her to become an independent woman. She starts to have a very pessimistic view of her experiences:

The last year of her college was wheeling slowly round. She could see ahead her examination and her

departure. She had the ash of disillusion gritting under her teeth. Would the next move turn out the same? Always the shining doorway ahead; and then, upon approach, always the shining doorway was a gate into another ugly yard, dirty and active and dead. Always the crest of the hill gleaming ahead under heaven: and then from the top of the hill only another sordid valley full of amorphous, squalid quality (p.436 - My underlining).

The good side of Ursula's realization is that she seems to be more mature because it is as if now she were able to discern that there is light and darkness and that the world of darkness is more vivid because people (as the professors for example) disguise themselves as 'light' but in fact they represent 'darkness' (corruption). This disguise is what attracts people like Ursula and makes them see doors instead of gates. It seems to me that what weakens Ursula's awareness of the 'real' world is that she is an escapist. Instead of using her realization as a way of fighting against this world and winning for her own sake, she flees from it. It seems that she loses her strength and thus she turns her mind to other things.

This is what happens after she discovers the falsity of the university's values. Ursula brings Skrebensky back to her mind as a way to compensate for her disillusionment. She seems to forget that the man has nothing to add to her quest. He would rather lead her to another 'ugly yard'. So it happens. Ursula and Skrebensky restart their affair. Her commitment to the university is left aside because of the man. Hence she fails her examination. She does not care because she has Skrebensky with her.

Despite the fact that they have been separate for a long time Skrebensky is still the same man with his brick-like quality. He has not changed. He seems, instead, to have become more and more a random assortment parts: his mind seems to be

dead. The only part of him which is still alive is his body. He is still "nothing" and as soon as the lovers meet again, the persistent idea is that Ursula is still the strongest, the domineering female:

In [Skrebensky's] dark, subterranean, male soul, he was kneeling before her, darkly exposing himself. She quivered, the dark flame ran over her. He was waiting at her feet. He was helpless, at her mercy... (p.443).

And this is also the pattern of The Trespasser and the early fiction in general. Lawrence does not seem to blame the woman's strength, but the man's weakness at this point.

Ursula and Skrebensky's re-encounter is again the encounter of their sensual beings. The difference now is seen in terms of Ursula's "consummation with darkness". She seems not to want to destroy her lover. She would rather be 'destroyed' by him. It is the consummation of the flesh. One may say that Ursula looks like her mother in her thirst for sensual fulfilment with Will:

[Skrebensky] seemed like the living darkness upon her, she was in the embrace of the strong darkness... He kissed her, and she quivered as if she were being destroyed, shattered. The lighted vessel vibrated, and broke in her soul, the light fell, struggled, and went dark. She was all dark, will-less, having only the receptive will (p.446).

This can be seen as the opposite of her moon-hard mood: the second affair begins with the sense that there might be a balance after all (at least in the sense that the couples always have polarized feelings, they are never the same).

Apart from the "consummation with darkness" there is nothing to keep Skrebensky with Ursula. Their minds are completely separate. Ursula still criticizes him and his moral emptiness and snobbery because he wants to go to India and live among the

ruling classes. The Indians for him are mere dogs. This may be why she initially refuses his proposal of marriage.

At the same time that Ursula rejects him spiritually, it seems that her body needs him in a perverse way. She madly craves for him to fulfil her sexually. It is perverse perhaps because as she could not attain completeness of being in her experience at the university she needs to somehow attain fulfilment in the flesh. But again the man fails her. This is seen when they are spending some time in a friend's cottage near the sea. The moon appears again, a fierce symbol of destruction that hangs over them, the man specifically. Together, Ursula and Skrebensky are two opposite and destructive forces reducing each other into nothingness. They do not satisfy each other. However, the sense of failure is stronger on Skrebensky's side because again Ursula assimilates the moon's strength to destroy the man. In their love-making Skrebensky is reduced to an empty spectre, a slave of Ursula's power. Once more Ursula offers herself to the moon and denies the presence of the man with her. He becomes a shadow, a dissolving object:

Then there in the great flare of light, she clinched hold of him, hard, as if suddenly she had the strength of destruction, she fastened her arms round him and tightened him in her grip, whilst her mouth sought his in a hard, rending, ever-increasing kiss, till his body was powerless in her grip, his heart melted in fear from the fierce, beaked, harpy-kiss... He felt as if the ordeal of proof was upon him, for life or death... he succumbed, till he gave way as if dead... (p.480).

In spite of his destruction in this love-war, it is not only Skrebensky who is destroyed. Ursula also seems dead. They have exhausted their own power of consumation till neither can see life anymore. It is the chaotic end of the affair. On the following day they break off. Hence, Skrebensky who, when



Ursula first refused him cried like a little child, turns to his Colonel's daughter, marries her and goes to India. Ursula is not notified of the wedding. She is not at all sad over their breaking off till she suddenly finds out that she is pregnant.

It is in Ursula's discovery of her pregnancy that Lawrence almost destroys the whole book. Ursula starts to deny all her previous hard-won independence and begins to praise her mother in her 'trance of motherhood'. The apex of this strange Ursula happens when she writes a letter to Skrebensky. It reads as follows:

Since you left me I have suffered a great deal, and so have come to myself. I cannot tell you the remorse I feel for my wicked, perverse behaviour. It was given to me to love you, and to know your love for me. But instead of thankfully, on my knees, taking what God had given, I must have the moon in my keeping, I must insist on having the moon for my own. Because I could not have it, everything else must go.

I do not know if you can ever forgive me. I could die with shame to think of my behaviour with you during our last times, and I don't know if I could ever bear to look you in the face again. Truly the best thing would be for me to die, and cover my fantasies for ever. But I find I am with child, so that cannot be.

It is your child, and for that reason I must revere it and submit my body entirely to its welfare, entertaining no thought of death, which once more is largely conceit. Therefore, because you once loved me, and because of this child, I ask you to have me back. If you will cable me one word, I will come to you as soon as I can. I swear to you to be a dutiful wife, and to serve you in all things. For now I only hate myself and my own conceited foolishness. I love you — I love the thought of you — you are natural and decent all through, whilst I was so false. Once I am with you again, I shall ask no more than to rest in your shelter all my life (p.485 - My underlining).

Through Ursula it might seem that the author wants to punish all the other Brangwen women who looked for something beyond the 'blood-intimacy'. Ursula's search for independence is

transformed into an over-simplified negation of all her previous values. Lawrence imposes on her all the burden of an unwanted child which makes her reject everything she wanted before. She is transformed into a weak and passive female who is not allowed to think by herself and who will always depend on man to walk. Ursula, thus, starts a process of negation of her 'maximum' self to become a 'minimum' one subjugated to the man's authority. The above letter is her punishment. Because of the child she must kneel in front of the man to ask for forgiveness and to promise to be a faithful subservient slave of the almighty husband. However, the force that leads Lawrence to punish Ursula is the same one which makes him repent of his chauvinistic attitude towards her and change it. Before Ursula receives the answer from her letter to Skrebensky she has a nightmare involving a crowd of horses who haunt her as she walks in the rain. It is a nightmare because in fact nothing in the narrative proves that the horses are really chasing Ursula. It may be true that Ursula sees the horses, but the idea of them driving her into a dead end is perhaps her own tormented mind creating a situation of fear and danger. This situation reflects the whole set of conflicts she has been going through in her experiences in the man's world. The horses can be seen as the symbolic projection of her inner conflicts into reality. They represent for her the unsatisfactory result of her search. The dead end she seems to be going to may be the war between her passive self versus her active self. The former wants her to marry and submit; the latter forces her to get out of this situation and continue her search. When she jumps over the fence it means that her active self has won. The old and passive self is defeated and along with it Skrebensky's world. (When I say 'old and passive self' I mean

the self which has made Ursula write that letter to Skrebensky because in their relationship she can hardly be said to have been passive with her lover.) It is the definitive end of her conflict. And as the conflict has manifested itself in the child Ursula is expecting, the consequent result is the miscarriage. It is the death of the old Ursula who is now almost ready to be reborn out of the ashes. However, the new Ursula still has a long road to discover and improve her new self. The beginning of the discovery is the denial of the 'son of God' in Skrebensky and the assertion that she does not have to create her man "but to recognize a man created by God" (p.494). This new fact does not imply that she will submit to him because this man she will recognize, is not to choose her as she thought before: she, as well as him, belongs to 'Eternity'.

The final point to be analysed is the meaning of the rainbow which Ursula sees at the end of the novel. Despite the fact that the rainbow represents Ursula's rebirth, the facts of her experience do not bear out its implications. Ursula seems indeed a new woman but one who still has some strong elements of her old self. These remnants are seen in terms of her high expectations for the future. Ursula sees in the rainbow the recreation of life, the renewal of "the stiffened bodies of the colliers" (p.495) who are like dead people. But Ursula seems to be blinded to her own past. Again she is escaping from her past experiences and taking an overdose of hope through the promise of the rainbow. Nobody, not even the author, can guarantee that the dead colliers will join her in her expectations. Lawrence simply presents the rainbow as a false door. He himself does not assure the reader that the door is not another gate to the next 'ugly yard' Ursula is going to enter.

The end is not convincing enough. Another idea is that the rainbow itself is like a faint gleam of light at the end of a tunnel. When Ursula gets to the end of the tunnel, the light may be a false light or it may vanish. The rainbow may extinguish itself when she crosses the hill looking for the treasure at the bottom of it. It is therefore a false and individualistic hope, a rhetorical gesture by the author which the details of plot and character cannot justify.

To sum up the main points of this chapter: The Rainbow closes Lawrence's first phase in which the author has a strong preference for women who are much connected with the mind. These women have, because of their strong minds, defeated their male partners. The most significant representatives of this phase are Helena, who can be seen as the ancestress to Mrs Morel, Anna and Ursula. The last two women, although very strong, are not as idealistic as Helena and are not as soulful as Mrs Morel. Anna, in her victory over Will, may be seen as a strong woman in the sense that her self-sufficiency and independence have made her fight for what she believed. Her husband, on the other hand, is a weak male in the sense that he simply could not defend his own beliefs: he has let Anna superimpose her will over him. We can say that Anna and Mrs Morel have replaced their husbands in their homes exactly because their men could not fight for their rights. Ursula is different from these three heroines because her desire is not to defeat the male, at least as the other female characters did, but to find her own place in a society which is completely masculine. The fact that she has defeated her first lover may be seen in terms of Skrebensky's weak character. He "loses" not because he could not fight Ursula, but because she has a self while he does not. Thus he could not

compete with her. In fact Skrebensky can hardly be defined as an individual, he is part of a structure — part of a machine — and without it he is nothing. A person who is 'nothing' cannot compete with a person who has a self and is, consequently, an individual.

The male characters cannot be taken as a repetition of Walter Morel. Neither Siegmund, nor Will nor Skrebensky can be viewed as representing the dark lover. The only characteristic that they share with Walter is their weak personality which causes them to be defeated by their women.

The most important characteristic of this first phase is therefore the active presence of the 'femme fatale', the spiritual woman, destroyer of her love partners. Helena, Mrs Morel, Anna and Ursula are indeed fatal females since all of them defeat their males. Helena is perhaps the strongest of these women since she is the only one who leads her lover to suicide. The other two (except for Ursula) replace their husbands. Their houses become thus matriarchal societies. Ursula may be seen as a female who fights for a place in society, that is her main quest. The negative aspect of this phase lies in the fact that Lawrence basically shows sympathy for the independent woman: he does not overtly criticize her even when she strays (like Helena who dreamed too much but refused to accept reality in her sexual life with Siegmund. Or Ursula when she exerted her 'maximum' self over Skrebensky in the moon scene which has led to his destruction). This "feminist" sympathy it should be noted, will be withdrawn later in the leadership phase, in a novel like The Plumed Serpent.

My last point refers to 'balance' in the relations. This

first phase does not present any balanced relationship, except for Tom and Lydia's marriage. This, as I have already pointed out, is not a total success since the balance between the couple ends with Tom's death and Lydia then returns to her previous, separate and unknown self. The search must therefore continue in the other novels and stories. Whatever success Tom and Lydia achieved lies in the past and cannot serve as a model for the Ursulas of tomorrow.

## CHAPTER IV

### I

#### *WOMEN IN LOVE: THE PROCESS OF DESTRUCTION AND CREATION*

Lawrence used to say that Women in Love is a 'sequel' to The Rainbow although it is quite unlike it.<sup>1</sup> One may say that The Rainbow 'distills' life into a process of pure creation whereas Women in Love, a definitive product of the first world war, encompasses a process of 'de-creation' and of the decadence of modern society. However, the novel is not only representative of destruction and decadence. It is more than that. It shows that it is possible to fight against destruction and build through it a new life. The novel implies too that it is useless to create a new life by simply rejecting the values of the old life. These values cannot be forgotten because inevitably they will influence the new values. After all, the new life will be created out of the old. And the characters, despite their intentions, carry within their inner selves both the seeds of creation plus the seeds of destruction. They cannot simply say 'I represent the new world because I have destroyed the old one.' They must add that in fact they represent something

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<sup>1</sup>see Daleski, 1965, p.126.

new but they still have to fight against the seeds of destruction till they achieve complete fulfilment. Furthermore, there are only two characters who fight against decadence and destruction: Ursula and Birkin. Lawrence does not 'kill off' the representatives of decadence: Halliday's group, Hermione, Gudrun and Loerke. Perhaps it is in their permanence in the book that makes the novel more real. It would be simply immoral if Lawrence eliminated the decadent group just for the sake of implying that the new life is stronger than the old one. It is in their continued existence that the contradiction of the two worlds remains cohesive and real.

The main point of this analysis is to see how the two main couples in the novel interact both in terms of creation and destruction, and how they represent old and/or new values. These relationships will be seen in terms of the characters' past experiences, and in relation to their new ones.

## 1. Cycle of Destruction

### 1.1. Inter-destructive decadence of modern life

#### a. Birkin and Hermione

One of the main aspects that Lawrence seems to be criticizing in 'modern' society is the fact that people have become excessively mental on the one hand, and sexually sterile or perverse, on the other. They are either mental masturbators or agents in sado-masochistic relations. The main representatives of this double standard are Hermione Roddice, Halliday's group, Gerald Crich and Gudrun Brangwen. These people represent decadence, corruption and perversity. Their



world is a world of dust which they try to spread over their partners so as to fix them in a status quo.

On the other hand, through Birkin and Ursula, Lawrence presents an alternative possibility of escape from the rotten world. Both characters, despite their strong differences, attempt to build a new world in which the main idea is respect for each other's individualities.

But before the cycle of creation starts, the novel shows the characters as involved in a dark and dirty veil of dissolution, parasitism and destruction. The first character who struggles to free his own life of this veil is Rupert Birkin, Lawrence's spokesman and inspector of Ursula's school. His main sickness is named Hermione: he seeks (sometimes half heartedly) to get clear of the woman who has been his lover for some time.

From the beginning of the story we see Hermione as a predatory animal with a powerful, hungry mind. Birkin has been feeding her for some time, but now he wants to get rid of her because he is tired of what she represents. Her world is empty of feelings. The only thing that this woman craves is her sick dependence upon knowledge. Not knowledge of the world as a whole, but the predatory knowledge of Birkin's brains. Hermione's appearance is that of a heavy and dark creature "full of intellectuality, and heavy, nerve-worn with consciousness" (p.10). Her face "seemed almost drugged, as if a strange mass of thoughts coiled in the darkness within her, and she was never allowed to escape" (ibid). The only way for her to keep her blood circulating is by clinging to Birkin who makes her feel complete, sufficient and whole. She must touch him, feel him, otherwise

she cannot be satisfied. Birkin tries to fight her off but she is, up to now, stronger and she wins. After the wedding of Gerald's sister, Hermione's attempt to hold Birkin with her succeeds and

She had a rapt, triumphant look, like the fallen angels restored, yet still subtly demoniacal, now she held Birkin by the arm. And he was expressionless, neutralised, possessed by her as if it were his fate, without question (pp.16-7).

We may say that Hermione is another version of the 'dreaming woman' from The Trespasser. Both Helena and Hermione are soulful women who want to destroy their men because of their excessive mental love. Thus, Hermione is also another 'femme fatale'. The difference is perhaps that Helena is not criticized, nor defeated as Hermione is.

If one can make such a comparison, Hermione is like a vampire or a dirty shadow sticking to Birkin wherever he goes. She seems to smell his way, licking his brain like flies in a sauce of sweets. She does not have a life of her own if she is not stuck to him trying to pluck from him everything he knows: "It was a dreadful tyranny, an obsession in her, to know all he knew" (p.81). When she is not exerting her consciousness over him, she cannot be happy. However, the more she tries, the less she holds Birkin. There are two important scenes in which Lawrence ironically makes 'knowledge' punish Hermione. The interesting point is that one happens in Ursula's school. Birkin is talking with Ursula about Botany when Hermione comes in and interrupts them. Birkin is explaining to Ursula how she could make her pupils understand the male and female parts of catkins if she used crayons with different colors. When Hermione comes in she wants to know what they are doing. The three start talking till Birkin, unable to bear Hermione's thirst for

knowledge, breaks out with harsh comments about her. The curious thing is the irony of the fact that Birkin himself has just been very intellectual about Botany with Ursula. So it is himself, his own self-consciousness and intellectuality, that Birkin is criticizing in Hermione. He throws at her the fact that all she wants is a kind of 'commerce' of the mind in which nothing more matters but the fierce wish to cling to knowledge as if it were everything in life. He tells her that

'... knowledge means everything to you. Even your animalism, you want it in your head. You don't want to *be* an animal, you want to observe your own animal functions, to get a mental thrill out of them... you want the lie that will match the rest of your furniture' (p.35).

The point of the discussion is the implication that the whole relation between Birkin and Hermione has involved nothing more than the sick mental abstraction of both persons. In a way it can be said that, although Birkin criticizes his lover, he is like her too. He does not want sensuality. She is a mirror of Birkin. At the same time that he blames her for her mental life, he is also admitting his own fault for permitting her to feed her thirst with his life. The difference between them lies perhaps in the idea that Hermione uses her power as a way to keep people whom she 'loves' under her wings. Birkin is conscious of this:

'... your passion is a lie,' he went on violently. 'It isn't passion at all, it is your *will*. It's your bullying will. You want to clutch things and have them in your power. And why? Because you haven't got any real body, any dark sensual body of life. You have no sensuality. You have only your will and your conceit of consciousness, and your lust for power, to *know*' (ibid).

Even here in this horrible view of his lover, Birkin seems to be unsure of his desire to get rid of her: "He had an impulse to kneel and plead for forgiveness" (p.36). Instead, he goes on

criticizing her. He is not a 'man' criticizing a woman. Birkin becomes a voice - which proves perhaps that the man with a body does not exist. What is present is the theorist, the voice of his inner self. He is not trying to convince Hermione of her vices but trying to convince himself that he must escape from her. Hermione, on the other hand, seems to take no notice of his criticism for she mocks at him and looks at Ursula trying to find an ally:

'He is such a *dreadful* satanist, isn't he?' she drawled to Ursula, in a queer resonant voice, that ended in a shrill little laugh of pure ridicule. The two women were jeering at him into nothingness. The laugh of the shrill, triumphant female sounded from Hermione, jeering at him as if he were a neuter (pp.36-7).

It seems therefore that Birkin's deep effort to annihilate his lover in front of Ursula is in vain. He is not yet ready to escape from her. Furthermore, Hermione knows she is the strongest and that the man depends on her. Though she recognizes in Ursula a rival, her triumph is stronger because, although Birkin has criticized her, she is leaving the classroom with him: "It always gave her a sense of strength, advantage, to be departing and leaving the other behind. Moreover she was taking the man with her, if only in hate" (p. 37). Birkin's criticism thus has only been an angry but useless wind-storm of ventilation. The whole scene has happened in a classroom where knowledge is supposed to be taught, not to be used as a weapon to destroy enemies, as Birkin has tried to do with Hermione.

The second scene which places Birkin's relation to Hermione in an ironic light occurs in Breadalby, in Hermione's boudoir when she tries to kill Birkin with a ball of lapis lazuli. Some important events which occurred previously lead

up to this. One of them refers to Hermione's inviting her guests to go for a walk. Birkin declines the invitation. The others, Lawrence says, agree "feeling somehow like prisoners marshalled for exercise" (p.79). It seems clear that Hermione exerts her domineering temperament over her friends who feel unable to refuse her. As Birkin dared to refuse Hermione's invitation, she tries to force him to go because "She intended them all to walk with her in the park" (p.80). Birkin is harsh with her, calling her friends (and Hermione) 'a gang'. Hermione feels as if offended and her attitude looks like that of an angry mother punishing her little son. She says: "'Then we'll leave a little boy behind, if he is sulky'" (ibid). The 'little boy' then feels much more offended than 'the mother' and, between his teeth, he insults her: "'Good bye, impudent hag'" (ibid). This stifled insult really does seem to be coming from a little boy angry with his mother's punishment.

Another of Birkin's refusals of Hermione's world occurs within himself as he observes Hermione's friends and their connection with the woman. He thinks of them as pieces in a game waiting for the manipulative owner of the game to start playing. Hermione is the 'Queen' who can dispose of these little figures the way she wants:

- how known it all was, like a game with the figures set out, the same figures, the Queen of chess, the knights, the pawns, the same now as they were hundreds of years ago, the same figures moving round in one of the innumerable permutations that make up the game. But the game is known, its going on is like a madness, it is so exhausted (p.92).

All the participants of the game belong to a vicious circle. They seem to be unable to move away from the table because they are stuck to it with the glue of self-annihilation. Birkin's

view of them is very accurate and disgusting:

There was Gerald, an amused look on his face; the game pleased him. There was Gudrun, watching with steady, large, hostile eyes; the game fascinated her, and she loathed it. There was Ursula, with a slightly startled look on her face, as if she was hurt, and the pain were just outside her consciousness (ibid).

What seems important here is the fact that Gerald and Gudrun like the 'game' because they are intrinsically part of it. Ursula, who looks like an outsider, is involuntarily playing in the game but she does not want to belong to it. She is the one who with Birkin will refuse the game of the old world to build a new one. Here Birkin decides he must get away from Hermione's rotten world: "'That's enough,' he said to himself involuntarily"(ibid).

Another refusal of Hermione's world occurs during a conversation among the guests. Hermione says that people are only equal in spirit. People are "'... all brothers there - The rest wouldn't matter, there would be no more of this carping and envy and this struggle for power, which destroys, only destroys'" (p.96). This speech leads all the guests, except for Birkin, to leave the table, perhaps in a silent agreement with Hermione. Birkin, on the other hand, argues with her:

'We are all different and unequal in spirit - it is only the *social* differences that are based on accidental material conditions... We're all the same in point of number. But spiritually there is pure difference and neither equality nor inequality counts. It is upon these two bits of knowledge that you must found a state. Your democracy is an absolute lie - your brotherhood of man is pure falsity...' (ibid).

I believe that Birkin's disagreement with Hermione is due to the fact that she wants people to be equal in spirit because in this way they would never disagree with her. As the idea of equality comes from her she would be the 'strength' to make people's mind equal. Birkin wants thus to deny this strength

because he is no 'clone', no slave of hers. He has a mind of his own and he has the right to think by himself. Birkin tells her that

'... I want every man to have his share in this world's goods, so that I am rid of his importunity, so that I can tell him: 'Now you've got what you want—you've got your fair share of the world's gear. Now, you one mouthed fool, mind yourself and don't obstruct me' (p.97).

Furthermore, the way Hermione receives the 'blow' proves that Birkin has touched the right point in her mind: "He could feel violent waves of hatred and loathing of all he said, coming out of her" (ibid). The way she defends herself against Birkin is in terms of her apparent deafness. However, everything he says strikes into her sick mind like a ferocious bullet.

Birkin's criticisms, however rash they seem, are soon regretted: when he comes to himself he feels sorry and wants to come to good terms with Hermione. And it now that the lapis lazuli episode takes place. Birkin goes to Hermione's boudoir to apologize, but seeing that she is busy writing letters he sits down pretending to read a thick volume of Thucydides. Hermione who feels as if terrified by Birkin's previous attacks on her ideas, seems to be entering into a mood of electric hate, contempt and distaste for the man. She must destroy him somehow because she feels he no longer wants to be swallowed by her. It is as if his presence were a kind of drug hallucinating her up to the point of complete destruction. If she does not destroy him he will destroy her. As she cannot cope with his dissent, with his separate mind, she must punish him. Thus, with a morbid feeling of pleasure she takes the ball of lapis lazuli and, with her left hand, tries to smash Birkin's head. Birkin's agility prevents his death:

Hurriedly, with a burrowing motion, he covered his head under the thick volume of Thucydides, and the blow came down; almost breaking his neck, and shattering his heart (p.99).

What seems ironic here is the fact that Birkin is saved by a solid instrument of knowledge. Hermione who has always wanted to suck from him his innermost knowledge, is now defeated by 'knowledge' itself. The question, however, is whether she is really defeated or not. I think that she has relieved her thirst for destruction otherwise how could she feel so at ease after the attempt? She sleeps like an innocent child and it is Birkin who feels annihilated or in "fragments, smashed to bits". Moreover, it seems that Birkin feels Hermione was right. That is what he tells her in a note:

'I will go on to town - I don't want to come back to Breadalby for the present. But it is quite all right - I don't want you to mind having biffed me, in the least. Tell the others it is just one of my moods. You were quite right, to biff me - because I know you wanted to. So there's the end of it' (p.102)

It is the end of the affair. It is not, however, the end of Birkin's dependence on Hermione. It is his farewell to her world, but his new world will inevitably be built and based upon Hermione's. This is seen in her gift to his new house: she gives him a carpet which definitely implies that wherever he wants to go and whatever he wants to do will rest on Hermione's foundations.

#### b. Gerald and Minette

What has been just analysed is only part of the cycle of destruction in Women in Love. Besides Birkin's rejection of Hermione's world which takes place mostly in Breadalby, a microcosm of a bigger structure, there is the decadence of



London bohemianism which Birkin also belongs to but wants to get rid of. The events which happen in the decadent London world involve the one who wants to reject this world-Birkin; the one who is being introduced to it - Gerald; and the ones who are stuck to it and who do not want to go away from it - Minette and Halliday's group. Consider the idea that in this part of the book Birkin is a mere spectator of the dramatic comedy of diseased actors whose main performance is the presentation of their corrupt lives. Birkin is there on the stage as an outside element who does not really fit the place. Notice also that it is the industrial colliery manager, Gerald Crich, who falls deep into the trap of corrupt London, since it is he who has an affair with the prostitute-girl Minette. It seems that just as Birkin's development is related to his previous, old self (defined by the relation to Hermione), so Gerald's later development is set off by his early involvements. There would be, first, a cold dedication to business and industry (power) which makes sex a secondary concern, or simply a matter of passing affairs with 'loose' women. More recently, however, he is getting bored with business and is rather fascinated by the bohemian world of art and casual sex which he has largely ignored up until now. Power through the sexual relationship will become his big obsession, and stage one is the domination of Minette. Birkin, on the other hand, hardly participates in the attitudes taken by the group, except when he comments on the African carvings in Halliday's flat. Physically he is there but spiritually speaking he is not. This is analogous to his being attached to decadent Hermione but wanting to get free of the old relationship. Also it must be said that Birkin used to be more involved with this group and that he was in fact

Halliday's room-mate.

In order to clarify this point, it is important to take a look at the chronological order of events from the time Birkin meets Gerald at the station till the outcome in Halliday's flat. Birkin invites Gerald to meet him in the Pompadour where he will be with Halliday's group. The Café Pompadour is a place

where the faces and head of the drinkers showed dimly through the haze of smoke, reflected more dimly, and repeated ad infinitum in the great mirrors on the walls, so that one seemed to enter a vague, dim world of shadowy drinkers humming within an atmosphere of blue tobacco smoke (p.54).

The Pompadour is a place where people can be seen as replicas of one simple model. They do not differ. The mirrors on the walls imply the extension of their vulgarity. They are always exchanging masks with their partners. It is as if they looked for their own other side in the being of the others. A good example of this mirror-like quality is seen through Minette and Halliday with the help of Gerald Crich. The triangle formed by these people implies the idea that modern society generates sado-masochistic relations. For instance, as soon as Gerald sees Minette, the powerful mine owner craves to have the woman submissive to him:

[Minette] appealed to Gerald strongly. He felt an awful, enjoyable power over her, an instinctive cherishing very near to cruelty. For she was a victim. He felt that she was in his power, and he was generous. The electricity was turgid and voluptuously rich, in his limbs. He would be able to destroy her utterly in the strength of his discharge. But she was waiting in her separation, given (p.57).

It seems clear that there is a certain propensity in both characters to play with cruelty. Gerald is the sadist and Minette is the masochist. However, Minette plays the sadist with her lover Halliday by whom she is pregnant. She is the

dominant figure in the affair. The man is submissive to her. This can be seen when Halliday tells her that she cannot drink brandy with oysters. The fact that oysters are a supposed aphrodisiac may imply that Halliday is jealous, worried Minette will betray him. The girl in a burst of temper throws the brandy at his face and the impression Gerald has is "that [Halliday] was terrified of her and that he loved his terror" (p.61). These characters have no respect for each other. It is the burden of a highly corrupt society in which people's roles are seen in the way they treat each other.

As I said, Birkin is a mere spectator of this society. His attitude towards his London friends is one of distaste and anger:

Birkin was mad with irritation, Halliday was turning in an insane hatred against Gerald. Minette was becoming hard and cold, like a flint knife, and Halliday was laying himself out of her. And her intention, ultimately, was to capture Halliday, to have complete power over him (p.73).

As Birkin cannot cope with this mood of antagonism he escapes from it by going to town.

The reason why Birkin is always fleeing from a more close contact with these friends may be that in fact he repudiates their tendency towards destruction. Birkin already knows that they are nihilists; that they do not want to build anything. Life, the way it is - bound to destruction -, is what they need to support their own self-destructive personalities. Through their negation of creative life they have become predatory creatures, like Hermione. The difference is that they do not stick to one single creature but actually to various persons who form the group. It is a circle of decadent artists whose main objective in life, contradictory as it may seem, is not

to 'create' anything but to deny creativity as a whole. This is perhaps why they do not use their minds, only their bodies as a way to obstruct real creation. Thinking is too much. They would rather stick to their partners in mutual sexual perversities, as in Halliday and Minette's case. What seems worth noticing is that in spite of their destructive characteristics, they keep on having sex and, through Minette, proliferating their nasty vices to the future generations. That seems why Lawrence has made Minette pregnant in the story. Thus, she resembles one of Halliday's African carvings: "[a] carved figure of the savage woman in labour. Her nude, protuberant body crouched in a strange, clutching posture, her hands gripping the ends of the band, above her breast" (p.71). Gerald sees an analogy to Minette in the carving: it has struck him this way due to its physical appeal, its "terrible face, void, peaked, abstracted almost into meaninglessness by the weight of sensation in it" (ibid). The carving although showing the woman in childbirth posture, seems not to be a creative thing but a "meaningless" thing. Gerald apparently finds it 'obscene': he is a puritan who condemns what attracts him, and refuses to know it further. Birkin, on the other hand, finds it 'art'. These opposite reactions may imply that Gerald unconsciously identifies his 'bubble'-like personality with that of Minette and the carving. Birkin, however, thinks of the carving as art because it represents in his mind the idea of 'blood-consciousness'. That is why he thinks of it as conveying a complete truth. It is the culture of the senses: "'Pure culture in sensation, culture in the physical consciousness, really ultimate *physical* consciousness, mindless, utterly sensual. It is as to be final, supreme'" (p.72). Such an affirmation of

course startles Gerald who cannot see art with as much intimacy as Birkin. The carving for Gerald is like Minette: a thing which is to be bought, used and dismissed. That is why it is obscene. It is Minette. Thus, the girl is obscene too, and to be disposed of. The way to do this is by giving money to her so as to feel not so guilty for having used her as an 'obscene' object: "It was true, he did not know whether [Minette] wanted money or not. But she might have been glad for ten pounds, and he would have been *very* glad to give them to her" (p.74).

Gerald, a conventional chauvinist with women, could not, however, 'buy' Minette with his money. This fact haunts him for a long time. Pleasure for him seems to be something one can buy. Anyway, Minette is really the kind of woman whose 'modernity' allows her to accept payment for a 'bit of play', mainly if "she were in difficulty".

Halliday's group remain a part of the story till the end of the novel. This implies that the old world will survive as a seed of destruction in the whole environment of the universe, no matter how many new worlds are built. Within them certainly there will be some dust of the old corrupt values of decadence.

### c. The Brangwen Sisters

Ursula and Gudrun Brangwen belong to both worlds. They represent creation and destruction, tradition and negation of tradition. Lawrence himself provides a clear difference between the sisters: "both had the remote, virgin look of modern girls, sisters of Artemis rather than of Hebe... [Gudrun's] look of confidence and diffidence contrasted with Ursula's sensitive expectancy" (p.2). The main difference between them is perhaps that Ursula is the one who seems to know herself better than

Gudrun. Ursula is more sure of her own 'expectancy' than is Gudrun of her 'confidence'. We have had a more detailed view of Ursula's background in The Rainbow and because of this we can take her as the most experienced of the two. Gudrun's background is slightly darker because in The Rainbow she was not a prominent character. In Women in Love we know that she is an artist who has spent several years in London, "working at an art-school, as a student, and living a studio life" (ibid). We also know that she has had some previous connections with the 'Pompadour' world of decadent artists. From this we conclude that she is an independent woman with modern thoughts about life. However, despite this idea of 'modernity' Gudrun seems somehow lost in her beliefs. Ursula, on the other hand, is more on the way to discover herself because she apparently knows what she wants.

When the reader first meets the sisters they are talking about marriage. Their ideas can be paired in terms of opposition: Gudrun considers a marriage for convenience whereas Ursula is more firm in believing that marriage may be 'the end of experience' rather than an experience. These opposed ideas set the mood for the sisters' search for a relationship.

Another of the sisters' differences relates to their home. Both feel like outsiders. But Gudrun protests more than Ursula: if home feels to her like "a country in an underworld" (p.5). why then has she come back? A possible answer is provided two pages earlier in the book in which Gudrun says that she "...was hoping for a man to come along ... a highly attractive individual of sufficient means-" (p.2). This ... contains taste for mercenary feelings in

in the expectancy to find a 'formal love' to marry in order to run away from it. However, at the same time, this idea may contradict her belief that marriage is "the end of experience" because in marriage she may meet the same commonplace atmosphere of her home.

Viewed by other characters, the sisters display different 'modern virtues': Gudrun is "always on the defensive", Birkin says of her to Gerald. Hermione evaluates the sisters: "Gudrun was the more beautiful and attractive... Ursula was more physical, more womanly" (p.75). In fact Gudrun seems a disconnected spirit who has trouble adjusting herself to a world which is too mean for her taste. Ursula is more ordinary but with a more integrated being than Gudrun. If one can make a parallel, Gudrun is somehow like Hermione. The difference is that Gudrun's motive for 'worship' is not the mind but the body. She exchanges with Gerald the power to submit and to dominate. Her sister, on the other hand, fights with Birkin to find an equilibrium in love, a communion between mind and body. It seems, therefore, that both sisters represent creation and destruction. Both belong to the old and new world.

Another idea that Lawrence seems to be introducing in his novel is that it may be possible to find alternatives apart from marriage. The author tries to introduce options for both male and female relations. The first one, Blutbrüderschaft, is the alternative proposed by Birkin to Gerald. The other one relates to a possible relationship between women, a kind of 'female bonding' as an alternative to marriage. Both alternatives, which will be discussed later on, are implied in Gerald's wrestling with Birkin and in the dance performance by Gudrun, Ursula and the Contessa in Hermione's home. The idea is that either men or

women have bisexual potentialities.

## 1.2. Life Roots Itself in the Past

### Gerald and his family

People's lives always have connections with their past. Thus the main characters of Women in Love have indeed characteristics of their past which they intend either to erase from their present lives or to reform in order to have a better future. Most of the characters attempt to change something in themselves because in the past they have acted wrongly or have been the inheritors of an interior anarchy belonging to their parents or to whoever brought them up.

There is, however, one character whose past seems to be deliberately obscure. This character is Rupert Birkin. The reason for this obscurity is not clear. We are told nothing of Birkin's family or upbringing. The only definite thing we have from his past is his relationship with Hermione Roddice and his friendship with the London bohemian group. We also know that although Birkin wants to break definitely with his decadent and sick past, he cannot. The reason may be that his strong relation of dependence on Hermione is more than the simple fact of their being lovers. Hermione can be seen as Birkin's past, a sort of mother-lover whom he will have in his mind as a kind of severe punishment throughout his life and in whom he will base all his future relationships (see chapter "Carpetting"). Even in his attempt to build a new life with Ursula, denying Hermione's world, one may sense that Hermione's influence will always be in Birkin. Apart from this woman Birkin has no past.



On the other hand, Lawrence gives too much evidence of Gerald Crich's past. It seems rather incongruous that Lawrence has put so much effort in presenting Gerald's background so as to explain his attitudes in the present while he says almost nothing about his spokesman Birkin.

Gerald's home seems to be governed by an atmosphere of pure anarchy. There is no understanding between the parents. The father seems to have no strength to educate the children. If he punished one child the mother would shout at him, calling him 'coward' in front of the child destroying the father's authority. This is the atmosphere in which Gerald was brought up.

Gerald's father has always been challenged by his wife in his beliefs. Being a rich man and very Christian, Thomas Crich used to play charity among his workers. Christiana, the 'unchristian' wife, would reject his charity and despise the poor. The more money Thomas got from exploiting the work of the miners, the more guilty he would feel in relation to the workers. Thus he gave them money so as "To move nearer to God". Christiana, on the other hand, denied his Christianity and sent the 'rats' away from her house. Lawrence says that the relationship of husband and wife in fact did not exist. What was alive between them "was deep, awful, a relation of utter interdestruction" (p. 209).

Gerald's personal bond with the family is defined in terms of his deep attachment to his mother and contempt for his father. Gerald is always presented in opposition to his father mainly because of the latter's charity. Such an ideal of life is not in Gerald's personality. He would rather destroy the miners in order to feel more and more in contact with power. He is often

associated with a bloody warrior searching for power to feed some deficiency within himself. His main objective in life is to subjugate people, to look at them from a high place whence he can impose his superiority. Thomas Crich thinks of the poor as his 'equals' although he does not give away all his properties to be as poor as his workers. Gerald, on the other hand,

did not care about equality. The whole Christian attitude of love and self-sacrifice was old hat. He knew that position and authority were the right thing in the world, it was useless to cant about it (p.219).

In order to exert his power and authority Gerald starts changing the old-fashioned world of work of his father. The mines are transformed into a huge modern system of production in which the machine replaces men. In transforming the old system Gerald replaces the Christian God of his father with a machine God in which "he could establish the very expression of his will, the incarnation of his power, a great perfect machine, a system, an activity of pure order, pure mechanical repetition, repetition ad infinitum, hence eternal and infinite" (p.220). The man in Gerald ceases to exist and in his place there is Gerald, 'the God of the Machine'. When he starts this process of nullification of the human in man to transform him, Gerald becomes a demon, dumb and blind-folded to feelings. Old Crich's idealist concepts of the 'industry of love' are killed and in their place Gerald introduces the modern concepts of capitalism. Ignorant workers are replaced by efficient engineers. The most modern equipment is brought from America in order to improve the mines and provide more benefits. The widows of the miners who used to receive free loads of coal, are forced to pay for them because for Gerald "'The firm is not a charity institution, as everybody seems to think'" (p.222). Thus the mines start to produce as

they never did in Thomas Crich's administration. The miners at first disliked Gerald, but the strength of the machine makes them all submit:

The men were satisfied to belong to the great and wonderful machine, even whilst it destroyed them. It was what they wanted... Their hearts died within them, but their souls were satisfied. It was what they wanted (p.223).

And now that Gerald has done everything to occupy his time and to satisfy his thirst for power, he is dismissed too. The machine does not need him anymore. When he feels that his system is so perfect that it does not even need him, he becomes hollow. There is nothing more he can do: thus, he feels desperate because what is he apart from the machine? His whole being is shaken by this sudden realization:

when he was alone in the evening and had nothing to do, he had suddenly stood up in terror, not knowing what he was. And he went to the mirror and looked long and closely at his own face, at his own eyes, seeking for something. He was afraid, in mortal dry fear, but he knew not what of (p.224).

Gerald's conflict is due to his own hollowness. He is a man who has not built anything in life except for the modernization of his mines. His feelings are abstractions. He is a non-human being. That is why he looks at his own eyes and

Yet he was not sure that they were not blue false bubbles that would burst in a moment and leave clear annihilation. He could see the darkness in them, as if they were only bubbles of darkness. He was afraid that one day he would break down and be a purely meaningless bubble lapping round a darkness (pp.224-5).

His fear of becoming a 'bubble of darkness' may be explained by his own fear of suicide. In his family death is a very common word. As a child Gerald has played 'Cain' and accidentally killed his brother with a gun. But as the word 'accidental', according

to Birkin, does not exist, we can say that Gerald may have wanted to really kill his brother. Birkin says that

'No man... cuts another man's throat unless he wants to cut it, and unless the other man wants it cutting... It takes two people to make a murder: a murderer and a murderee. And a murderee is a man who is murderable. And a man who is murderable is a man who is in profound if hidden lust desires to be murdered' (p.27).

We can also say that if Gerald wanted unconsciously to kill his brother (in Birkin's view) he wants to be killed too. This idea seems to be true if Gerald's suicide at the end of the novel is taken into account.

Besides the death of his brother, Gerald is also indirectly involved in the death of his sister Diana who died in the lake of Willey Water. This episode will be discussed later in relation to Gerald and Gudrun's affair. Another death haunts the Crich's home: Thomas Crich's. Despite his being severely ill, suffering from terrible pains, his wife Christiana seems to have contributed to hasten his death because of her contempt for the man's beliefs. Here it would be useful to draw some parallels between the Criches and the Morels. Thomas Crich is about to die but he holds life as if in a fierce opposition against death. Here he resembles Mrs Morel's last months of life. She, too, grasped life unable to cope with death. Observe the similarity of these two characters:

[Thomas Crich] lay unutterably weak and spent, kept alive by morphia and by drinks, which he sipped slowly. He was only half-conscious - a thin strand of consciousness linking the darkness of death with the light of the day. Yet his will was unbroken, he was integral, complete. Only he must have perfect stillness about him (p.313).

and

'And [Mrs Morel] won't die. She can't. Mr Renshaw, the parson, was in the other day.

"Think!" he said to her', "you will have your mother and father, and your sisters, and your son, in the other Land." And she said: "I have done without them for a long time, and I can do without them now. It is the living I want, not the dead." She wants to live even now' (p.471).

Both want life for different reasons. Thomas Crich because he wants to continue practising his charity to feel less guilty over his wealth and to enjoy his loving daughter Winifred. Mrs Morel, on the other hand, wants life in order to go on dominating her family.

Another parallel can be seen in terms of Gerald's wish for his father's death and Paul Morel's desire to see his mother dead. Both Gerald and Paul go regularly to the beds of their parents hoping to find them dead and feel released. The difference between their similar wishes lies in the fact that with Thomas Crich's death Gerald would become free to do whatever he wants in the family and in the mines: he would get life out of his father's death:

[Gerald] somehow *wanted* this death, even forced it. It was as if he himself were dealing the death even when he most recoiled in horror. Still, he would deal it, he would triumph through death (p. 314).

Paul Morel wanted his mother to die because he loved her too much to see her terrible suffering. His benefit would not be material power, but a release in his own life which had been till then wholly based upon his mother. The only point which seems common between Gerald and Paul is the ritual of their parents' death: they both have, directly or indirectly, contributed to hasten the death. On the one hand, Gerald 'kills' his father with an overdose of hatred which could be seen in his eyes each day he visited his father in bed. On the other, Paul 'kills' his mother with an overdose of love smashed in a cup of milk with

morphia.

A third parallel can be traced between Thomas Crich and Gertrude Morel when they die. Both are described as if they had rejuvenated in their death:

The dead man lay in repose, as if gently asleep, so gently, so peacefully, like a young man sleeping in purity. He was still warm (p.327).

and

She lay raised on the bed, the sweep of the sheet from the raised feet was like a clean curve of snow, so silent. She lay like a maiden asleep... She lay like a girl asleep and dreaming of her love... She was young again (p.485).

It is as if Lawrence were somehow relieving both man and woman, father and mother, of the strong suffering they have had in their lives. Now they are neither the charitable man nor the domineering woman. They have become young again as if ready to restart life.

The final parallel relates to Walter Morel and Christiana Crich facing their dead wife and husband. Christiana has despised her husband because of his intense love for the poor. Now that he is dead, she restarts loving him because he looks young and because she may be feeling guilty about his death. That is what she tells her children in a very Shakespearean way:

'Blame me, blame me if you like, that he lies there like a lad in his teens, with his first beard on his face. Blame me if you like. But none of you know... If I thought that the children I bore would lie looking like that in death, I'd strangle them when they were infants, yes -' (p.327).

Walter Morel, however, refuses to face his dead wife in fear of a possible reproach she would give him in her cold bed as she used to do with him throughout her life. He feels guilty because she is dead but he tries to hide from the others his tortured

life and he even apologizes to Gertrude for all the horrible things she did to him in life. That is what he tells her relatives:

He had striven all his life to do what he could for her, and he'd nothing to reproach himself with. She was gone, but he'd done his best for her... All his life he'd done his best for her (p.488).

The Crich family, except for Winifred, mourns falsely the death of the father. Gerald now turns to Gudrun as a way to escape from the dark void he is in after his father died. Before analysing this part which is the outcome of their relation, it is necessary however to look back at the start of their mutually exploitative affair.

### 1.3. Reversal of polarity: Gerald and Gudrun

Gudrun once told Ursula in a sarcastic way that she has come back home perhaps to look for a 'highly attractive individual with sufficient means'. However sarcastic she may have been, the fact is that at the moment she sees Gerald at his sister's wedding, she is immediately drawn to him: "There was something northern about him that magnetised her" (p.9). And so she feels a fierce necessity, almost like pain, to know more about him. The attraction she feels towards the man does not come in 'hot waves' but in 'cold waves' of light as if the man had in himself "a glisten like sunshine refracted through crystals of ice" (ibid) which impelled Gudrun to him: "'Am I *really* singled out for him in some way, is there really some pale gold arctic light that envelopes only us two?'" (ibid). This cold attraction Gerald exerts over Gudrun implies he is a man who contains death within himself, pulling to him a woman who is also like him.

Gudrun and Gerald's next meeting anticipates certain features of their future affair. While watching Gerald swimming, Gudrun envies him because he as a man has advantages that she as a woman does not. One may even say that this envy she feels may be interpreted in Freudian terms as 'penis envy'. Gudrun has her masculine side tied up within herself and when she meets Gerald, who is chiefly seen in terms of his maleness, she projects onto him her desire to be like him:

Gudrun envied him almost painfully. Even this momentary possession of pure isolation and fluidity seemed to her so terribly desirable that she felt herself as if damned, out there on the high road.

'God, what it is to be a man!' she cried.

'What?' exclaimed Ursula in surprise.

'The freedom, the liberty, the mobility!' cried Gudrun strangely flushed and brilliant... (p.40).

Their first *tête-à-tête* meeting in Hermione's house implies the idea of recognition between the two. Gerald wants to fulfil Gudrun in her expectations perhaps because he sees in her a different woman who is independent, ironic, and distant from the commonplace people he used to know:

He wanted to come up to her standards, fulfil her expectations. He knew that her criterion was the only one that mattered. The others were all outsiders, whatever they might be socially. And Gerald could not help it, he was bound to strive to come up to her criterion, fulfill her idea of a man and a human being (p.95).

Three other meetings define their relation: the scene of Gerald and the Arab mare, Gudrun's dance in front of Gerald's bullocks in the water party and the chasing of the rabbit Bismarck in Gerald's home. All three scenes reflect their sado-masochist exchange of roles.

The first one occurs when Ursula and Gudrun are returning home from school: when they are going to cross the railway they



see the gate shut; then Gerald trotting on a red Arab mare. The animal seems to be pleased with her master till she hears the approaching noise of the locomotive. The mare then becomes frightened and uneasy and soon "she was rocking with horror" (p.103). Gudrun and Ursula observe the scene and see how Gerald manages to control the animal. Gerald, as he notices the uneasiness of the mare, shows in his face a light of satisfaction because now he must control her using his power and also because he could perhaps feel the presence of the women's eyes directly on his masterful figure. He treats the mare like a sadist would treat his woman. Gudrun, seeing this, "was looking at him with black-dilated, spellbound eyes" (ibid). She is fascinated by Gerald's violence with the animal. It is the way she would like a man to treat her. Her feelings are masochistic and together with Gerald's sadism, they form a pair of "perfect" lovers. Gudrun feels as if she were the mare, submitting to the powerful male over her. It is as if she were in the ecstasy of sexual intercourse and her sensations are described like a painful but pleasurable orgasm:

Gudrun looked and saw the trickles of blood on the sides of the mare, and she turned white. And then on the very wound the bright spurs came down, pressing relentlessly. The world reeled and passed into nothingness for Gudrun, she could not know any more.

When she was recovered, her soul was calm and cold, without feeling (p.104).

When the locomotive passes and Gerald goes away almost riding over Gudrun, the emotions of the man are of one who feels proud for having had the opportunity to show off his thirst for violence. Ursula is angry at him but Gudrun seems hollow or blind to everything, morally uncritical:

Gudrun was as if numbed in her mind by the sense of indomitable soft weight of the man, bearing

down into the living body of the horse: the strong, indomitable thighs of the blond man clenching the palpitating body of the mare into pure control; a sort of soft white magnetic domination from the loins and thighs and calves, enclosing and encompassing the mare heavily into unutterable, soft-blood-subordination, terrible (p.106).

The language is full of overtones of sexual subjugation of the pleased female by the strong domineering male; and this is the initial tone of Gerald and Gudrun's affair. However, Gerald is not the only one who will dominate: both will exchange roles, as the scenes of the bullocks and the rabbit show.

Gudrun shows her ability to play the 'male' when she and Ursula escape from the crowd in the water party in Willey Water. Gudrun rows the boat with the strength of a man. Gerald asks her if she will be safe in it and she answers him:

'Quite sure,' said Gudrun. 'I wouldn't be so mean as to take it, if there was the slightest doubt. But I've had a canoe at Arundel, and I assure you I'm perfectly safe.'

So saying, having given her word like a man, she and Ursula entered the frail craft, and pushed gently off. The two men stood watching them. Gudrun was paddling (p.155).

In a way one can say that here Gudrun in her paddling shows that, as a modern woman, she does not need a man to protect her and to row her. She has enough strength to take care of herself and of her sister Ursula.

When the sisters find a safe place on the shore of the lake they bathe naked and sing and dance happily till some bullocks belonging to Gerald appear in the scenery and frighten them. Ursula recoils in fear but Gudrun, instead of fear, feels attracted by the male animals because of their apparent aggression. She demands that Ursula go on singing and with a strident self-confidence starts behaving also like a mad animal. She feels an increasing temptation to be aggressive to the bullocks perhaps

in a fierce desire to deny the female in herself who would usually recoil in fear, and tries to frighten the cattle using her unconscious maleness. She also feels pleasure in the strange dance she performs in front of the cattle. Gudrun is as if hypnotized by the blind wish to reduce the animals into weak and dependent creatures. If we consider the fact that the animals belong to Gerald, we may say that Gudrun is also showing off her power to the man as if to say that she is as strong as he. The strange dance is stopped by Gerald's coming and shouting at the retreating cattle. When Gudrun realizes Gerald has interrupted her frenzy, she becomes angry with him: "'Why have you come?' came back Gudrun's strident cry of anger" (p. 160). The assimilation of Gudrun between two male powers is seen when she goes after the bulls, then returns and looks at both Gerald and the cattle. The cattle may represent the power of the animal in Gerald, and he represents for Gudrun a rational animal whom she wants to defy. That is what she ironically implies to him:

'You think I'm afraid of you and your cattle, don't you?' she asked.

His eyes narrowed dangerously. There was a faint domineering smile on his face.

'Why would I think that?' he said (p.162).

To prove her strength over the man, Gudrun slaps him in his face to show that she is stronger than him and that she, too, can play the domineering woman. The slap also marks the deep thirst for violence between Gerald and Gudrun. In hitting Gerald in the face, Gudrun

felt in her soul an unconquerable desire for deep violence against him. She shut off the fear and dismay that filled her conscious mind. She wanted to do as she did, she was not going to be afraid (ibid).

More implications arise from this blow: it shows that there will

be a winner in this battle of wills. Gerald tells Gudrun: "'You have struck the first blow'; and her answer is: "'And I shall strike the last'". This game of words has already signalled that Gudrun will be victorious in the affair because her confident assurance makes Gerald be "silent, he did not contradict her". And in this show of violence there is no space for anger. Gudrun asks Gerald if he is angry with her, to which he replies: "'I'm not angry with you. I'm in love with you'" (p.163). This implies that Gerald has accepted the sado-masochistic game although he has already realized that violence is the main card of their affair.

After this episode they start mutual violent caresses with one another, exchanging electrical cold currents. When they return to the boats to row back to Willey Water, it is Gudrun who paddles the boat because Gerald seems to have a hurt hand. He becomes entirely dependent on her: "she was subtly gratified that she should have power over them both. He gave himself, in a strange electric submission" (p.168). The fact that Gerald feels impotent to direct the boat may lead one to think of a dependence also in terms of sex. He is only able to use Gudrun when he feels that she can fulfil his deficiencies. But suddenly the mood changes and Gerald and Gudrun exchange roles again when they hear a shout at a distance that somebody is drowning. Gerald becomes domineering again and directs Gudrun's paddling. Gudrun becomes then the passive female obeying the man and observing his maleness when he jumps into the water. Gerald swims like a water-rat and this makes Gudrun feel a morbid pleasure. She feels that "she would never go beyond him, he has the final approximation of life to her" (p.173). In the water Gerald looks for his sister Diana who has fallen into the water

and for a young doctor who was trying to rescue her. Gerald struggles the whole night to find the couple and when he finally stops looking for the bodies he talks to his father and expresses his guilt:

'Well, father, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm afraid it's my fault. But it can't be helped; I've done what I could for the moment. I could go on diving, of course - not much, though - and not much use (p.175).

Although Gerald could not do anything to save his sister and the doctor, his guilt appears in his mind because of his lack of responsibility in relation to those people in the boat. One can also say that the two deaths at the lake set a kind of doom in Gerald's life. His feelings after diving the whole night in the dark water give the impression that people are bound to die, especially if they are of the same sort of Gerald: "'If you once die,' he said, 'then when it's over, it's finished. Why come to life again? There is room under that water there for thousands' (p.176). And Gerald adds:

'There's one thing about our family, you know,' he continued. 'Once anything goes wrong, it can never be put right again - not with us. I've noticed it all my life - you can't put a thing right, once it has gone wrong' (ibid).

The 'going wrong' with his family may be a reference to the killing of Gerald's brother. He unconsciously feels the burden of that death and now he has got two others to carry on his shoulders. When the two bodies are found, people notice that "Diana had her arms tight round the neck of the young man, choking him" (p.181). As Gerald has killed his brother, she has killed her rescuer. This reinforces the doom over the Crich family and, more directly, over Gerald, who kills himself after (like Diana) having tried to strangle Gudrun in the Alps.

For the time being, there is a break in the affair because of the death of Diana. Here one may say that their relation is bound to fail. Firstly, because of the blow: it shows Gudrun's tendency to be violent with those who menace her. Secondly, because of Diana's death which implies a bad omen for both Gerald's and Gudrun's future.

The third scene which shows Gerald and Gudrun in a close connection with pain and pleasure occurs in Gerald's home. Gudrun is teaching Winifred to draw and they decide to take the rabbit Bismarck as a model. When they try to catch the animal he becomes angry and uneasy. Both Gudrun and Winnie are unable to pick him up. Gerald then comes to help them. When he looks into Gudrun's eyes, he "saw with subtle recognition, her sullen passion for cruelty" (p.232). In this recognition Gerald shows that both have common traits of personality. Gerald then tries to catch the rabbit, but the animal is too quick and violent. He hurts Gerald. While the 'hunt' continues, Gudrun becomes somehow hypnotised by Gerald's strength and violent struggle with the animal till he had Bismarck under his arm. Gerald smiles, unconsciously revealing his pleasure in having dominated the animal. Gudrun is pale, also revealing her perverse pleasure. Gerald, then, "looked at her, and the whitish, electric gleam in his face intensified" (p.233). The pale Gudrun smiles and "She knew she was revealed" (ibid). Both man and woman cannot hide from themselves anymore their thirst for violence. Gudrun thus realizes that this man has her now at his mercy:

Gudrun looked at Gerald with strange, darkened eyes, strained with underworld knowledge, almost supplicating, like those of a creature which is at his mercy, yet which is his ultimate victor. He did not know what to say to her. He felt the

mutual hellish recognition (p.234).

Even so, Gerald must disguise his feelings because it is not good for his integrity to show the most dangerous trait of his personality. It may also be said that the 'hellish recognition' implies their mutual necessity to live in violence: "And [Gerald] felt he ought to say something to cover it. He had the power of lightning in his nerves, she seemed like a soft recipient of his magical, hideous white fire. He was unconfident, he had qualms of fear" (ibid). His fear is due to the power Gudrun's strident voice exerts over his senses. Her voice makes him go mad in desire to have her and dominate her. The rabbit has been a side-show, an allegory to demonstrate how far violence is implied between them. The symbol of the 'hellish recognition', or their Devil's pact, is strengthened by the red gashes Bismarck leaves in the flesh of both Gerald and Gudrun. It is a kind of 'dark marriage' in which the animal is the 'priest'. This 'dark marriage' may also be a substitute for Birkin's idea of Blutbrüderschaft between him and Gerald and which the latter refused. With Gudrun it is different because neither of them proposed any sort of connection. The connection has happened, up to a point, casually without any commitment between the two. Gerald and Gudrun, after they 'marry', "knew that he was initiate as she was initiate" (p.235). When the scene closes, Gerald feels somehow uneasy because "He felt again as if she had hit him across the face - or rather as if she had torn him across the breast, dully, finally" (p.236). And again, the idea seems to be that Gudrun is stronger and that Gerald is doomed by her to have a disastrous life after they become intimate.

There is an insistent connection between Gerald and

Gudrun and the miners. On the one hand, there is the idea that Gerald, as the miners' master, uses them as he likes; on the other, Gudrun often associates miners with maleness. One may conclude that Gerald always deals with people as he deals with the miners: it is a relation of power and domination which can be transferred to Gudrun. There is also the idea that Gudrun sees in Gerald a sort of bridge between her world and the world of the senses as represented by the miners: he is the miners' master and therefore he may also be male enough to fulfil her. This is the feeling we have after analysing two different but similar scenes in which Gerald and Gudrun are together. One scene happens before and the other after the death of Gerald's father.

The first scene occurs when Gerald walks with Gudrun towards her home. They stop under the bridge where the miners pass everyday on their way to work. The scene is described from Gudrun's point of view. She starts thinking that it is under the bridge that "the young colliers stood in darkness with their sweethearts, in rainy weather" (p.232) and that she also wants to be with her sweetheart there. The only difference is that her 'sweetheart' is no miner, he is the master of the miners and his kisses, Gudrun thinks, are fine and powerful. But if Gerald's kisses are so powerful why does he submit to Gudrun and "[seem] to pour her into himself, like wine in a cup" (p.323)? He becomes, like Siegmund in The Trespasser, a container and Gudrun, like Helena, the 'male' active partner. Gudrun here is a twin-soul of the heroine of this early novel. Gudrun makes Gerald a mere object of her pleasure. One may wonder whether she is under the bridge with the master of the miners or whether she imagines Gerald being the warm-hearted miner she would like



him to be. The interesting aspect of this love scene under the bridge is that Gerald is compared to "the firm, strong cup that receives the wine of her life" (ibid - My underlining). Gudrun fills him with life whereas in their next love scene, in Gudrun's bedroom, he fills her with "his bitter potion of death" (p.337). This combination of life and death issues accounts for the dark use Gerald makes of Gudrun. While her 'love' in the first scene is positive - perhaps because she is thinking of the miners and not of Gerald - his 'love' in the second scene is entirely negative. Another contrastive point between these two scenes before and after Thomas Crich's death is the fact that Gerald is always renewed after using Gudrun. She, on the other hand, after the love scene in her bedroom is hollow and her behaviour is almost like a machine working its 'tic-tac' brain. While Gerald sleeps heavily, she is thoroughly awake, ceaselessly thinking that the day must come soon. She also associates Gerald with the miners and she herself with a miner's wife waiting for her husband to wake up to go to work. Another point of contrast is that in the first scene Gerald was glad not to be seen in the streets with her. In the second one, he barely cares whether he meets somebody he knew or not.

However, the most important point of the second love scene is that it happens after Gerald has been to his father's grave: he wanders till he finds Gudrun's home, enters it like a thief and dirties her bedroom with the mud of the grave. "He had come for vindication" (p.337) and he has brought death with him. Gudrun accepts his death as if (now) she were the container and Gerald were the active 'wine of death'. They exchange roles again. The point is that Gudrun feels he needs her and in a way she sacrifices herself and receives Gerald's "pent-up darkness

and corrosive death". When they finish love-making Gerald is renewed as if he had become a child in the arms of a powerful and loving mother. She again gave him life and he gave her death. There is also a sense of separateness between them. While Gerald is sleeping, Gudrun thinks that "They would never be together. Ah, this awful inhuman distance which would always be interposed between her and the other being!" (p.339).

Gerald and Gudrun's affair takes up to a certain point another course when both decide to travel abroad with Ursula and Birkin. In the Alps their relation reaches its nadir. They start a process of rejection of each other which culminates with Gerald's death and Gudrun's attachment to a corrupt artist named Loerke. This part will be analysed later on in terms of Gerald and Gudrun's separateness and Ursula and Birkin's togetherness.

## 2. Cycle of Creation

### 2.1. Building a New World: Birkin and Ursula vs Birkin and Gerald

Birkin is essentially a theorist in what refers to love. When he leaves Hermione, the nature of their separation can be seen in terms of Birkin's rejection of Hermione's possessiveness in love: due to this he has developed a theory in which man and woman must search for an equilibrium. He rejects theoretically the idea of one mate dominating the other (as Hermione had dominated him). The problem is, however, that his theories hardly match with his practice.

When Hermione has hit him with the lapis lazuli he escapes from her and decides to have a sort of 'purification' in nature

because he thinks that people, humanity as a whole, have become rotten. The only way to free himself from this rottenness is to be in a close contact with nature. He takes off his clothes and sits down trying to purify himself. The interesting thing in this communion is that nature also hurts Birkin and he, instead of feeling hurt, thinks that the sharp-needles of the bough touching him are better than the touch of any woman. Of course, in his mind, Hermione is the model for any other woman he may meet in his life. His experience with her has been too harsh to be forgotten so soon.

After his 'purification' he becomes sick. It is as if Hermione has passed to his body a kind of low energy which diminishes his strength. When he recovers he sticks to his hatred for humanity and it is Ursula who becomes his impertinent critic. She sees in Birkin someone whom one cannot trust, but she feels impelled towards him perhaps because he represents for her everything her previous experiences in love, mainly Skrebensky, have failed to represent.

Birkin's theory of a new social and emotional order does not comprise love in the ordinary sense. In fact he denies the old way of praising love. What he wants is something different, something 'beyond' the commonplace old-fashioned way of love. And he sees two alternatives: either to find an equilibrium with a woman, which he calls a relation of 'star-polarity', or a relation of friendship with a man, which he defines as Blutbrüderschaft and which is in fact a disguise for homosexuality. These two kinds of relation are proposed to Ursula and Gerald respectively. And as they occur at the same time, it is useful here to define them gradually, one and another, chiefly because one is seen as an alternative to the other (or as additional).

The interesting point is that when Birkin seems disillusioned with one, he goes straight to the other and when he finds the other dissatisfactory, he comes back to the one he left behind. It is like going back and forth in a swing where one is neither satisfied with the left side of the swing nor with the right one.

In fact there are at least four scenes which define Birkin's search for the ideal partner. Each scene, which is intermingled with some sub-scenes, prepares the path to the other and they alternate Birkin's attempts to succeed with Ursula or with Gerald. In the four scenes Birkin is defeated only to recover in the chapter "Excuse" which apparently expresses the victory of the love between man and woman.

The first of these scenes occurs in the chapter "Mino" in which Birkin explains to Ursula what he means by the equilibrium he wants in a relation. He tells Ursula that instead of the love she wants, "... there is a beyond, in you, in me, which is further than love, beyond the scope, as the stars are beyond the scope of vision..." (p.137). This 'beyond' is where he wants to meet Ursula. The trouble with Birkin's idea of 'love beyond love' is that he seems to want to find in Ursula neither the female, nor the woman to complete him. His idea seems to be much more related to the homosexual in Ursula because, as he tells her, "I want to find you, where you don't know your own existence, the you that your common self denies utterly..." (p. 139). He also implies that her opinions, thoughts, good looks mean nothing to him. This self Birkin wants to find may be that which is entirely submissive to his power. He is the owner of the words, of the thoughts. Ursula does not need to think, she should leave thinking to him, the man. This idea is contradictory because Birkin defines his search for balance in terms of 'star

polarity', or in his words:

'What I want is a strange conjunction with you -' he said quietly; '- not meeting and mingling; - you are quite right: - but an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings: as the stars balance each other' (ibid).

However contradictory it may seem, Birkin's idea of 'balance' between two single beings is soon put in practice by his male cat Mino and it proves to be not exactly a 'balance', but the pure subjugation of the female in relation to the male. Mino is a pet cat and his features are described in terms of his 'lordly' trot, his 'gentleman-like' posture, etc. A she-cat appears and she is described as a wild creature, but she has a 'soft-obliterating manner', and moves like a 'shadow'. The 'wild' she-cat falls down at the feet of the 'pet' Mino, in a 'submissive, wild patience'. The two cats then come to intimate terms and Mino hits the she-cat. Ursula observing the whole scene calls Mino 'a bully like all males' to which Birkin disagrees, defending his 'pet' representative in the world of animals: "'... I am with him entirely. He wants superfine stability'" (p.141). Ursula then understands what Birkin means by 'star polarity'. Birkin says: "'... with Mino, it is the desire to bring this female cat into a pure equilibrium, a transcendent and abiding *rapport* with a single male..." (p.142). Ursula's reply to this is that what Birkin really wants is a satellite, not a balance:

'There you are - a star in its orbit! A satellite - a satellite of Mars - that's what she is to be! There - there - you've given yourself away! You want a satellite, Mars and his satellite!...' (ibid).

Birkin's theory, therefore, is a pure disguise for his chauvinism, his desire to dominate the female. Ursula's statement has as its proof Birkin's behaviour after Ursula's

critical realization: "He stood smiling in frustration and amusement and irritation and love" (ibid). And he also gives in for he is 'forced' to declare his love (the 'ordinary' love) for Ursula at the end of the chapter.

The second scene I will analyse is preceded by the party at Willey Green. This party also precedes a break between Ursula and Birkin which leads Birkin to Gerald. Some aspects of this party have already been discussed in relation to Gudrun and Gerald. The aspects which refer to Birkin and Ursula are important to mention since most of them describe Birkin's theory of the world and its "two rivers". While Gudrun is with Gerald, Birkin dances strangely for the second time before Ursula (the first one was his "chameleon"-like dance in Breadalby). It seems that in his strange dance he throws away some of the seriousness that surrounds him. Ursula criticizes him. The other couple joins them and Birkin starts preaching his philosophy. Birkin describes the existence of two rivers in life: one is the "black river of dissolution" and the other is the "silver river of life". Birkin's idea is that one river grows inside the other. The "river of dissolution" is corrupt and destroys. This, he says, is what Gerald and Gudrun represent: they are "'...born in the process of 'destructive creation'" (p.164). There must be another kind of people to represent the "silver river of life". These may be Birkin and Ursula, but he does not assure us of this. He only says that the "black river" leads to "universal nothing" and that the other river "means a new cycle of creation after - but not for us" (p.165). He and Ursula, Gudrun and Gerald are "*fleurs du mal*", not "roses of happiness" as Ursula thinks she is. In fact what Birkin seems to imply is that everyone has within him/herself both rivers and that perhaps

everyone develops the "river of dissolution" with much more strength than the "river of life". That is why dissolution leads to "universal nothing". But Birkin sticks to the point that after the end there is nothing to be created for them and Ursula rejects this idea saying that "'The beginning comes out of the end'" (ibid). This statement describes exactly what is happening between Ursula and Birkin. He is not considering that he is coming out of one "river of dissolution" - Hermione. It seems that he still thinks that every single woman is like his former lover. Again Ursula criticizes him: "'You are a devil, you know really,' she said. 'You want to destroy our hope. You want us to be deathly'" (ibid). Ursula may be right in her criticism but there are two important moments in the novel which seem to prove Birkin's idea that people have within themselves the two rivers. One moment refers to the exchange of lanterns between the sisters in the water party, and the other relates to Gudrun's giving to Ursula in the Alps a pair of her striking stockings.

Birkin brings four lanterns to Ursula and Gudrun. The first lantern Ursula receives is blue and has a flight of storks. The meaning of this lantern may have something to do with creation and joy of life. It relates to the air because of the blue color and the flight of the storks which also implies a link with the spirit. Gudrun's first lantern is yellow with flowers and butterflies. The butterflies implies metamorphosis and the growth of the psyche. Both lanterns have therefore a positive implication. They belong to the "silver river of life". The other two lanterns have a different connotation. Ursula's is black and red with crabs in it. She accepts it. Gudrun's is red and white with a cuttlefish. She rejects it

with horror. Ursula's acceptance of the crabs in her lantern implies the acceptance of her unconscious tendency to dissolution. Crabs usually live in contact with mud and the fact that Ursula accepts this lantern may lead to the idea that she has within herself elements of decadence. Gudrun's cuttlefish is a creature which is always seen as nasty and gluey because of its dark substance ("ink") which is liberated from its body in any situation of danger. Also cuttlefish is beaked, i.e., it implies perhaps clitoridal self-assertion, an exchange of sex roles in Gudrun. She rejects this lantern because she in fact denies her own cuttlefish-like quality. The second pair of lanterns belong to the "black river of dissolution". The two sisters exchange them. It may be inferred from this exchange that Ursula, in accepting her own lantern and also accepting Gudrun's, shows that she has the same aggressive characteristics of her sister. The difference is that Gudrun denies her aggression exchanging her lantern with Ursula. Gudrun throws her unconscious away whereas Ursula accepts hers. Anyway, both sisters represent the two rivers. The other scene which supports Birkin's theory is seen in the Alps when the sisters exchange stockings. Gudrun gives Ursula a pair of her stockings before Ursula leaves with Birkin for Italy. The fact that Ursula accepts her corrupt sister's gift before leaving her and Gerald, implies that once more Ursula has shown her capacity for coping with her inner tendency for corruption. Once more Gudrun denies her corruption and gives it away. Ursula will carry with her to the new world some elements of the old. The stockings are a kind of passport to the new world and they also imply that elements of the old world belong to the new one. It is impossible to deny this connection. Gudrun tells this to



Ursula:

'... I think that a new world is a development from this world, and to isolate oneself with one other person, isn't to find a new world at all, but only to secure oneself in one's illusions' (p.428).

After the accident with Gerald's sister, Ursula is passionately in love with Birkin, but as time goes by, the passion seems to enter into a kind of disillusionment and she starts to deny Birkin. She feels depressed and Lawrence almost suggests suicide as a way to escape from this state of mind. But Ursula does not want suicide: the problem with her is that she is lost in her own ideas. She does not know where to go and how to go. As her mind is sick, her body becomes the instrument of her sickness. When Birkin comes to see her on a Sunday evening, Ursula rejects him. She feels a horrible repulsion and hatred against the man. Unable to cope with this low energy Ursula passes to him, Birkin gets sick too. And here he turns to Gerald. It is now that his mind seems perverse in relation to the idea of sex. Birkin becomes the prophet of celibacy because in sex he could not find satisfaction. This is what Lawrence tells us:

On the whole, [Birkin] hated sex, it was such a limitation. It was sex that turned a man into a broken half of a couple, the woman into the other broken half. And he wanted to be single in himself, the woman single in herself. He wanted sex to revert the level of the other appetites, to be regarded as a functional process, not as a fulfilment. He believed in sex marriage. But beyond this, he wanted a further conjunction, where man had being and woman had being, two pure beings, each constituting the freedom of the other, balancing each other like two poles of one force, like two angels, or two demons (p.191).

Although the idea of 'balance' recurs to Birkin's (or to Lawrence's) mind, this is not what he really wants. This above

passage is nothing more than an extension of the "Mino" chapter. Again we see that Birkin does not practice what he preaches. Birkin needs to repeat and repeat his philosophy to himself as a perverse way to force acceptance of something he actually does not believe. In denying sex, Birkin is denying his fierce desire to dominate. Birkin hammers at this notion of 'pure' beings in a relation as if to say: 'believe this, believe this'. But it does not reassure the reader.

All these feelings of hatred for sex, the 'merging and mingling of love', is a direct consequence of Birkin's sick relation with Hermione. She destroyed (with his permission) his freedom in love because she clutched him like glue sticks to paper, preventing him from living apart from her. Birkin, because of this, is always associating women in general with Hermione:

it seemed to him, woman was always so horrible and clutching, she had such a lust for possession, a greed of self-importance in love. She wanted to have, to own, to control, to be dominant. Everything must be referred back to her, to Woman, the Great Mother of everything, out of whom proceeded everything and to whom everything must finally be rendered up (p.192).

Thus, Ursula is the same to Birkin as Hermione. Ursula, too, is the 'Great Mother', the *Magna Mater*, the *Mater Dolorosa*. She is everything that is connected with possessiveness and self-sufficiency. Ursula is also "the queen bee on whom all the rest depended" (ibid). Therefore Birkin proceeds to reject Ursula and turn to Gerald.

In order to clarify Birkin's proposal of Blutbrüderschaft to Gerald (which first occurs in the chapter "Man to Man") some events relating to the two men must be recalled. Every time Gerald and Birkin are seen together there is always an

atmosphere of something hidden between them. Now that Birkin is sick, Gerald comes to see him, and Lawrence tells us that "The two men had a deep, uneasy feeling for each other" (p.193). It is interesting to notice that it is almost always either Lawrence who tells us this or Birkin who observes the unadmitted love between himself and the blond Gerald. Since the opening of Women in Love this hidden attraction is gradually revealed to the reader. It is first mentioned at the wedding of Gerald's sister. After Birkin talks about his theory that it takes two to make a murder, Lawrence tells us:

There was a pause of strange enmity between the two men, that was very near to love. It was always the same between them; always their talk brought them into a deadly nearness of contact, perilous intimacy which was either hate or love, or both... the heart of each burned from the other. They burned with each other, inwardly. This they would never admit... they were not going to be so unmanly and unnatural as to allow any heart-burning between them (p.28).

And Lawrence goes further saying that the men could not believe "in deep relationship between men and men, and their disbelief prevented any development of their powerful but suppressed friendliness" (ibid). The trouble is that the hidden attraction is a latent tendency towards homosexuality which both men deny. This tendency is best explained in "The Prologue to Women in Love", published in Phoenix II (1970). This prologue in fact was never published. It is a discarded section of the early conception of the novel. Its importance lies in the fact that it reveals some of Lawrence's ideas at the time he was writing the novel. In the prologue Lawrence explains how Birkin comes to know Gerald: from then on Birkin develops within himself a deep desire for sensual communion with the blond Gerald. And although they are never described in intimate terms, it is clear that Birkin is often more attracted by Gerald's body (or men's

bodies in general) than he is by women's bodies. Lawrence also repeats the idea (quoted on the page before this one) that the men recognize in each other the knowledge of their mutual attraction, but that "all this knowledge was kept submerged in the soul of the two men. Outwardly they would have none of it" (p.93). Furthermore, Lawrence explains in the prologue Birkin's preference for men, although outwardly he would prefer a woman to rouse himself to passion:

All the time, [Birkin] recognized that, although he was always drawn to women, feeling more at home with a woman than with a man, yet it was for men that he felt the hot, flushing, roused attraction which a man is supposed to feel for the other sex. Although nearly all his living interchange went on with one woman or another, although he was terribly intimate with at least one woman, and practically never with a man, yet the male physique had a fascination for him and for the female physique he felt only a fondness, a sort of sacred love, as for a sister (pp.103-4).

This perhaps explains why Birkin often felt a terrible fear of making love to Ursula and also denied her good looks. The prologue also explains why the two men are always hiding something when they look into each other's eyes. In the novel they are often seen disguising warm looks while Birkin is caught admiring Gerald's beautiful face and body. This is seen when both travel to London:

Birkin could not help seeing how beautiful and soldierly [Gerald's] face was, with a certain courage to be indifferent...

And [Gerald] looked again at Birkin almost sardonically, with his blue, manly sharp-lighted eyes. Birkin's eyes were at the moment full of anger. But swiftly they became troubled, doubtful, then full of a warm, rich affectionateness and laughter (p.51).

Also in the train Birkin tells Gerald that people are liars to themselves and, although at the moment he was referring to the world as a whole, the implication may be that both men have

disguised inner selves beneath their manly appearances: in other words, they are liars to themselves because they do not accept their latent homosexuality. But their eyes tell the truth of their inner desires. On Gerald's visit to Birkin at the Mill their eyes meet and they cannot hide their latent love for each other: "The eyes of the two men met, and an unspoken understanding was exchanged" (p.196). Both talk about death, and Birkin tells Gerald that:

'There are many stages of pure degradation to go through [before death]: age long. We live on long after our death, and progressively, in progressive devolution.'

Gerald listened with a faint, fine smile on his face, all the time, as if, somewhere, he knew so much better than Birkin, all about this: as if his own knowledge were direct and personal, whereas Birkin's was a matter of observation and inference, not quite hitting the nail on the head... If Birkin could get at the secrets, let him. Gerald would never help him (ibid).

Although the idea of knowledge of death is implicit here as Gerald may be thinking, it may be fair to say that it is as if Gerald knew more of his potentialities for homosexuality than Birkin. But Gerald will deny them as long as he lives.

Birkin then proposes his Blutbrüderschaft to Gerald, or "the problem of love or eternal conjunction between two men". The result is that

[Birkin] looked at Gerald with clear, happy eyes of discovery. Gerald looked down at him, attracted, so deeply bonded in fascinated attraction, that he was mistrustful, resenting the bondage, hating the attraction (p.199).

What attracts both men is the idea of being close together bound by the mystic ritual of Blutbrüderschaft, but Gerald is repelled outwardly because he, as a man, cannot accept such a close connection with another man. Hence he tells Birkin: "'We'll leave it till I understand it better'" (ibid). The point is that

he is excusing himself in front of Birkin, expressing the feeling that he cannot go far in the attraction he feels for Birkin. This rejection makes Birkin feel a certain contempt for Gerald: "[He] could never fly away from himself, in real indifferent gaiety. He had a clog, a sort of monomania" (ibid). At the end of the chapter there is a final meeting of the men's eyes:

Gerald's, that were keen as a hawk's, were suffused now with warm light and unadmitted love, Birkin looked back as out of a darkness, unsounded and unknown, that seemed to flow over Gerald's brain like a fertile sleep (p.202).

The result of this second refusal is that Birkin is broken by his anger towards people in general, and particularly towards women. He was rejected by Gerald and now he tries to reject women. This is what the third scene, in the chapter "Moony", reflects.

After his illness Birkin lost contact with Ursula. He has been to France for some time. One evening Ursula is walking towards the Mill to meet him. Before they meet, the moon meets Ursula "with its white and deathly smile" (p.237). This sudden encounter with the moon makes Ursula suffer from being exposed to it. She proceeds on her way towards Birkin's home till she notices his presence moving by the water. She decides not to get close to him, afraid he might repel her. She then observes the man by the water murmuring some disconnected words. Birkin throws a dead flower-husk into the water and his words seem to be directed to someone he fiercely hates. Then he starts throwing stones at the pond and Ursula notices the image of the moon in the pond. The stone thrown at it has distorted the moon's bright image. Again and again Birkin throws stones at the moon trying to destroy it. A useless task though: the moon

regathers itself in the water as if making fun of Birkin. This insistent stoning at the moon implies his deep desire to destroy women as a whole. The more Birkin tries, the more dissatisfied he is because the broken light of the moon rearranges itself in the water in "triumphant reassumption". This abstract attempt to destroy women through stoning the moon is only Birkin's obsessive fear of being dominated by women like Hermione, and in extension he feels fear of Ursula as a possible heir of Hermione's domineering temperament. As Birkin cannot overcome his fear, he projects his aggression to the outside. And it seems that Ursula, who is observing him, feels really as if the man were stoning her: she "was dazed, her mind was all gone. She felt she had fallen to the ground and was spilled out, like water on the earth" (p.240). Before Birkin starts stoning the moon again, Ursula appears and pleads with him to stop. They talk with a certain tone of pain. They begin again arguing their opposite points of view and Ursula criticizes him because of his desire to dominate her: "'You don't want to serve *me* and yet you want me to serve you. It is so one-sided!'" (p.242). Here she reinforces the point that it is she who wants a balanced relation, not him. Birkin wants a sort of slave to serve his will. Here there seems to be a connection with "The Fox": Henry wants the same as Birkin: an odalisk to serve him blindly. (Hermione tells this to Ursula later on implying that she would be glad to be this odalisk.) Ursula and March are the ones who want an equilibrium in their relations. Their men only want to be worshipped and never criticized. Ursula perceives this and calls Birkin a preacher of unpracticed theory. Birkin accepts her criticism, but with anger. Soon after this atmosphere of battle ends, there is a moment of peace in which both forget

their differences and are seen in a very close and tender contact, although Birkin seems still afraid to make love to Ursula who is kissing him in a clear invitation to sex. He tells her that they can be together but they must be still.

Birkin, who is now at peace with himself and Ursula, starts to reject Gerald. Gerald is seen in a close connection with Halliday's African carving. Birkin thinks of it as having all the sensual knowledge he did not have. The sensual knowledge is then associated with destruction and corruption. The association with Gerald comes with the idea that he is a representative of the white races which are as destructive as the black races. The former being

the vast abstraction of ice and snow, would fulfil a mystery of ice-destructive knowledge, snow abstract. Whereas [the latter], controlled by the burning death-abstraction of the Sahara, had been fulfilled in the sun-destruction, the putrescent mystery of sunrays (p.246).

Thus, Birkin starts to reject both the African 'sun-knowledge' and Gerald's 'ice-knowledge': "There was another way, the way of freedom... And he must run to follow it" (p.247). This way is Ursula, of course. Hurriedly, before the enchantment vanishes, he goes to Ursula's home to propose to her.

The funny and interesting thing in Birkin's proposal to Ursula is that neither Birkin nor Ursula take it seriously as it should normally be taken. When he tells Ursula's father of his intentions, our attention is drawn to Birkin's use of past tense: "'I wanted to ask her to marry me'" (p.248 - My underlining). This shows that it is not an actual proposal otherwise he would have said 'I want' instead of 'I wanted'. When Ursula comes in, the game continues: "'Did you really come to propose to me?' she asked of Birkin, as if it were a joke"



(p.252 - My underlining). His answer is more stupid than hers: "'Yes,' he said. 'I suppose I came to propose.' He seemed to fight shy of the last word" (p.253 - My underlining). Birkin again uses the past tense to say that he 'wanted' to ask Ursula to marry him. His uncertainty is clear in Birkin's lack of care for Ursula's answer. In fact, he is not expecting an answer: "... whether she accepted it or not, he did not think about it" (p.251) and after the proposal "His eyes were flickering with mixed lights, wanting something of her, yet not wanting it" (p.253). Ursula's answer reflects her rejection: Birkin and her father are bullies. Birkin goes away after this fiasco. He is not, however, very much worried about Ursula's rejection. His remedy is once more to go to Gerald. He is Birkin's next 'victim'. What is strange in Birkin's practice is that before he goes to Ursula's home he has decided not to mix himself with the 'destructive ice-knowledge' of Gerald. Ursula is his only escape. She rejects him and he has simply forgotten his earlier conflict and goes straight to Gerald.

The fourth and last scene occurs in the chapter "Gladiatorial" in which Birkin goes to Gerald's home and finds the moment opportune to ask his friend to wrestle with him in the Japanese style he learned from an Eastern friend. Gerald and Birkin's preparation for the wrestling game has a mystic atmosphere mixed with a feeling of lovers preparing to have sexual intercourse. When the wrestling reaches its apex, Gerald seems to use his physical strength whereas Birkin is more mental in his way of using his body. It is a fight between two different forces which in some way meet and mingle. The point here seems to be that Birkin refuses the 'meeting and mingling' with a woman, but with a man he seems to lose control of his own

theory. He and Gerald are seen like two forces in one, as in sexual intercourse:

[Birkin] seemed to penetrate into Gerald's more solid, more diffuse bulk, to interfuse his body through the body of the other, as if to bring it subtly into subjection... It was as if Birkin's whole physical intelligence interpenetrated into Gerald's body, as if his fine, sublimated energy entered into the flesh of the fuller man, like some potency, casting a fine net, a prison, through the muscles into the very depths of Gerald's physical being (p.262).

Wrestling also involves dominating the partner, putting him into dependence and subjugation till "there was no head to be seen, only the swift tight limbs, the solid white backs, the physical junction of two bodies clinched into oneness" (p.263). Of course it is Birkin who masters Gerald, although the latter is physically stronger. Both fall unconscious when the match ends. Their bodies are relaxed, but Gerald's is under Birkin's which somehow implies Gerald's submissive position. When they come to consciousness again, they discuss their wrestling and Birkin, who is still leaning on Gerald's body, touches the latter's hand for some moments till Gerald withdraws it. The touch has struck Gerald perhaps as an electrical shock and being conscious, his attitude is to reject the contact. Lawrence tells us that "The wrestling had some deep meaning to them - an unfinished meaning" (p.265). It is unfinished perhaps due to the idea that consciously both men still refuse their own intimate connection. That is why Birkin is not yet satisfied with this Blutbrüderschaft as he answers Gerald's question: "'... Is this the Blutbrüderschaft you wanted?' 'Perhaps...'" (ibid). In fact Birkin is disappointed with Gerald. Ursula returns to his mind again and he tells Gerald of his frustrated visit to her house. The last point of Birkin's visit to Gerald is seen when they talk about love. Birkin is still seen as the most liberal of

the two because somehow he accepts that "'Life has all kinds of things... There isn't only one road'" (p.268). With this statement he implies his belief in another kind of love, other than that for a woman. But Gerald cannot understand this outwardly. His male ethic forbids him from accepting such an alternative. Thus, he, too, rejects Birkin.

At the same time that Lawrence presents Blutbrüderschaft as an alternative to the man-to-woman relation, he also seems to propose an alternative for the female. It is what can be called a 'female bonding', a relation between women. This proposition is presented in Breadalby in form of a dance on a Biblical theme, performed by Gudrun, Ursula and the Contessa. The idea of 'female bonding' may be seen quite clearly by the way Ruth/Gudrun comforts Naomi/Ursula who has lost her men:

Ursula was beautiful as Naomi. All her men were dead, it remained to her only to stand alone in indomitable assertion. Ruth, woman-loving, loved her. Orfah, a vivid, sensational, subtle widow, would go back to the former life, a repetition. The inter-play between the women was real and rather frightening. It was strange to see how Gudrun clung with heavy, desperate passion to Ursula, yet smiled with subtle malevolence against her, how Ursula accepted silently, unable to provide any more either for herself or for the other, but dangerous and indomitable, refuting her grief (p.84).

The dance may presuppose that Gudrun's unconscious tendency for homosexuality is focussed on her sister. Consciously it seems that she would deny it (as she has done with her second lantern), but the music perhaps blinds her and she clings passionately to Ursula. The audience perceives the deep implication of the dance because Hermione could see the flaw in both sisters. She could see "Gudrun's ultimate but treacherous cleaving to the woman in her sister" and she could also perceive "Ursula's

dangerous helplessness, as if she were helplessly weighted, and unreleased" (ibid). Gerald and Birkin apparently fail to see the ambiguity in the dancers' behaviour:

Gerald was excited by the desperate cleaving of Gudrun to Naomi. The essence of that female, subterranean recklessness and mockery penetrated his blood. He could not forget Gudrun's lifted, offered, cleaving reckless, yet withal mocking weight. And Birkin, watching like a hermit crab from its hole, had seen the brilliant frustration and helplessness of Ursula. She was rich, full of dangerous power. She was like a strange unconscious bud of powerful womanhood. He was unconsciously drawn to her. She was his future (pp.84-5).

This long passage plus Hermione's observation deserves careful comment. The first point relates to Hermione's perspicacity in seeing Gudrun not as Ruth but as a 'treacherous' personality. Thus, Gudrun unconsciously does not see Ursula as her sister but as a female. Hermione perceives both Gudrun's sensual appeal to her sister and Ursula's helplessness to prevent the passionate clinging of her sister. The second point refers to Gerald seeing with pleasure the mockery of Gudrun's cleaving to Naomi. He does not see Ursula. He only sees in Gudrun the woman who attracts his maleness. The final point relates to Birkin who not only fails to see both Naomi and Ruth: he only sees Ursula's defense of herself as woman. She is ready to flourish as the woman he needs and craves. Despite the fact that the men have failed to see the ambiguity of Gudrun's passion for Ursula, it seems to me that this dance symbolically presents the disguised woman-to-woman relation. Besides, I think that in presenting Gudrun as the 'scapegoat' of this alternative, Lawrence may be implying that she is more decadent than Ursula, but that both women have bisexual potentialities. Thus, this 'female bonding' plus the Blutbrüderschaft may be seen

as alternatives to the relation between man and woman. And although these two alternatives have apparently failed, Lawrence does not leave the subject. The 'female bonding' is perhaps less important than the friendship between men because it is the latter which recurs in another stories. The fact that Gerald has rejected Birkin makes it clear that it is not yet the moment for Lawrence to put his finger on the scale to favor a relation between men. However, Women in Love shows that the bloodbrotherhood theme is becoming central in Lawrence's fiction. And although it does not succeed in this novel, it comes to dominate in the leadership novels represented by Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo and The Plumed Serpent.

The four scenes analysed here reflect a series of consecutive defeats in Birkin's attempt to have either Ursula or Gerald. The last defeat leads Birkin to return to Ursula. The chapter "Excuse" may be called the exposition of Birkin's sins, his redemption and subsequent meeting with Ursula to assert their definitive rejection of the old world and their intention to build a new one.

Birkin, in a car, takes Ursula from her school and they drive for some time to a place where they can be alone. When they stop he gives her a gift. The importance of this gift lies in the fact that Birkin wants to start a new relation with Ursula but he gives her some second-hand rings. It is as if he did not care very much for his own intention to build a new world with Ursula. It seems that these rings are a bad omen for the couple: mainly because they are second-hand and because the first owner has given them away. In giving the rings to Ursula, Birkin is not offering a new alternative to her but offering her an old and already used alternative. The rings may also be seen

as a kind of symbolic handcuffs tying Ursula to Birkin and, in a way, giving him the right to dispose of her as an owner. Temporarily Ursula accepts the gift. The couple seems to be in a state of peace till Birkin tells Ursula that they cannot meet again for some time because he is to dine with Hermione. Ursula becomes very angry and starts arguing with him because of his reverence for this woman and his dependence on her. Birkin tries but cannot excuse nor explain himself. The apex of Ursula's hatred occurs when she throws the truth of his deathly preferences at Birkin:

'... Go to your spiritual brides... Your spiritual brides can't give you what you want, they aren't common as fleshy enough for you, aren't they? So you come to me, and keep them in the background... And I, I'm not spiritual enough, I'm not as spiritual as that Hermione-!'  
(p.298).

Ursula in her anger defines clearly the difference between women like Hermione and women like herself. For Birkin the former stands for the spirit and the latter for the body. Birkin, like Paul Morel, cannot unite soul and body. Hermione is the standard spirit and Ursula is the standard womb. It is now that Ursula vehemently rejects Birkin's perverse relation with Hermione:

'... Do you think I don't know the foulness of your sex life - and hers? I do. And it's that foulness you want, you liar... You truth-lover! You purity-monger! It *stinks*, your truth and your purity. It stinks the offal you feed on, you scavenger dog, you eater of corpses... You may well say, you don't want love. No, you want *yourself*, and dirt and death - that's what you want. You are so *perverse*, so death-eating...'  
(p.299).

The fact that she calls him an 'eater of corpses' implies a relation of complete separateness, where feelings cannot enter, only a rigid body passing no energy to the other, receiving no

energy. That is how Ursula seems to feel Birkin's relation with Hermione. Birkin is most of the time silent in a mute agreement with Ursula's statements: "He knew he was perverse, so spiritual on the one hand, and in some strange way, degraded on the other ..." (p.300). Ursula then throws the second-hand rings at

Birkin:

'And take your rings, ... and go and buy yourself a female elsewhere - there are plenty to be had, who will be quite glad to share your spiritual mess - or to have your spiritual mess, and leave your spiritual mess to Hermione' (p.301).

She leaves him. Birkin realizes she is right in her criticism: he is depraved, perverse, egocentric and self-destructive. But at the same time that he accepts the criticism, he questions both Hermione and Ursula's kinds of love: "And was it not Ursula's way of emotional intimacy, emotional and physical, was it not just as dangerous as Hermione's abstract spiritual intimacy?" (ibid). It seems that Birkin still fears women. He fears their domineering temperament because he knows his own inability to fight this off. He knows that he is weak and sooner or later he will submit to them. Thus, his self-defense tells him to stick to the idea of 'balance' - an idea that perhaps inwardly he knows cannot be entirely true in relation to him. And he wants to be single because, in being single, he may preserve the right distance so as not to submit to the woman. That is why he does not want 'fusion' of two beings. He theoretically wants 'unison in separateness'. Ursula is somehow different in his mind, otherwise he would take her criticism as a definitive reason to break with her, but he does not. He wants her back. And she returns to him and brings him a flower. There is peace again. It seems that now they are ready to really begin a new life.

In their 'peace' Birkin and Ursula discover strange and secret sources of pleasure in themselves. These sources give them the 'dark knowledge' of each other. It starts with Ursula, who seems to have finally found the 'son of God' she has searched for throughout her life in The Rainbow, discovering Birkin's body with her 'finger-tips':

Unconsciously, with her sensitive finger-tips, she was tracing the back of his thighs, following some mysterious life-flow there. She has discovered something, something more than wonderful, more wonderful than life itself. It was the strange mystery of his life motion, there at the back of the thighs, down the flanks... It was here that she discovered him one of the sons of God such as were in the beginning of the world, not a man, something other, something more (p.305).

Needless to say this is completely contradictory: first she denounces Birkin's "corruption", then a minute later she seems to embrace it. This strange and mysterious discovery is described by Pritchard (1971) as the culminating moment in the novel:

Ursula makes one last violent denunciation of [Birkin's] 'perversity', particularly as associated with Hermione, where sensuality was solely perverse. Having purged the sensual body of that unnaturalness, she is ready to accept him, to pluck the jewel of individual being from the muddy flux. Her embrace of Birkin is a culminating moment in the novel. Kneeling before him, like Lydia before Tom Brangwen, she puts her hands round his buttocks, sensing his anus, 'the dark river of corruption', 'the real reality' (pp.100-1).

One may add to Pritchard's interpretation that this 'dark knowledge' with Ursula kneeling before Birkin is a symptom of her apparent submission to the man. And that this knowledge is also mutual because Birkin also takes his 'dark knowledge' of Ursula. They both meet in the new discovery which is far better than the phallic touch as Ursula realizes. The phallus thus becomes, one may say, obsolete. It has been replaced by the



'finger-tips'. The couple decides to quit their jobs and run away from the old world. They sleep in Birkin's car in Sherwood Forest. They have finally found an 'equilibrium':

She had her desire fulfilled. He had his desire fulfilled. For she was to him what he was to her, the immemorial magnificence of mystic, palpable, real otherness (p.312).

The marriage subject returns again as an important subject. Gerald and Birkin have already discussed it previously and their ideas were quite different. Birkin has told Gerald: "'It seems to me there remains only this perfect union with a woman - a sort of ultimate marriage - and there isn't anything else'" (p. 51). Gerald does not seem to agree with Birkin, perhaps because he cannot take women as a serious subject, but as a mere object of pleasure. Now, after Birkin has had his bloodbrotherhood with Gerald, and has taken his 'dark knowledge' of Ursula, he changes his mind. Marriage is then seen as purely a convenience, it is not the last word: "'I believe in the *additional* perfect relationship between man and man, additional to marriage'" (p. 345). Gerald cannot accept this. For him it is better to "pledge himself with the woman: not merely in legal marriage, but in absolute, mystic marriage" (pp.345-6). This is only because his male-ethic forbids him from accepting Birkin's offer and, furthermore, this marriage he wants certainly is not with Gudrun because she is 'born-mistress' not fit for marriage. Gerald, thus, rejects Birkin once more.

## 2.2. Old vs New World

Before Ursula and Birkin marry they go to a market wishing to find some furniture for their new household. The interesting

thing seems to be the contradictoriness of this wish: the couple wants to destroy all their links with a decadent society and at the same time they wish to buy a used fragment of this society. They decide for an old and beautiful chair and buy it. But soon, moved by the instinct of not having any link with the past, they decide to give the chair away. Ursula and Birkin happen to find a couple, a pregnant woman, still unmarried, and her fiancée, and decide to give them the chair. Between the pregnant woman and her man there is an air of hostility because the man seems not very willing to marry the woman. One can say that the woman represents everything Birkin fears: she is domineering and, although her fiancée seems to rebel against her, he cannot do anything but accept her dominance over him. It can also be said that both represent exactly everything Birkin and Ursula want to escape: a conventional life, an established home; in other words, they reproduce the ordinary world. As the chair is also an element of the old world, Birkin and Ursula give it away and, after some hesitation, the couple accepts the gift.

Though Birkin and Ursula have given the chair and their jobs away, there are still other links which they do not, or cannot, give away. Perhaps this idea is more related to Birkin than to Ursula, but anyway they keep some attachment to the decadent world. They decide to travel to the Alps, but not alone. Gerald and Gudrun will join them. The other couple is, consequently, a strong tie linking Birkin and Ursula with the world of dissolution. Ursula resists the idea of having her sister and Gerald with them:

'You've got me,' she said. 'Why should you need others? Why must you force people to agree with you? Why can't you be single by yourself,

as you are always saying? You try to bully Gerald - as you tried to bully Hermione. You must learn to be alone' (p.355).

The answer can be no other than this: Birkin simply cannot practice what he preaches. If he really wanted a world without links with the past he should not have invited Gerald and Gudrun. In fact, the question is: is he really complete with the world of creation, expressed by his relation with Ursula? Outwardly, yes. However, his unconscious is stronger than his consciousness. He needs to have both worlds together perhaps to counterbalance one with the other. This Ursula cannot understand.

Ursula is forced to break with her family and this hastens her marriage to Birkin and subsequent trip to the Alps. They are to meet Gerald and Gudrun at Innsbruck. As Gerald and Gudrun are ready first, they travel to London. Both go to the Café Pompadour and meet there Halliday's group among other usual visitors. A strange episode happens in the café which makes Gudrun angry at Halliday's group. They all mock at Birkin's marriage and Halliday takes out of his pocket one of the letters Birkin wrote to him. This letter talks about Birkin's philosophy and expresses his megalomania in relation to the world. Halliday ridicules Birkin's theory of the 'flux of corruption' and his Christ complex. Gudrun, unable to bear the situation, goes to their table, takes the letter out of Halliday's hand and vanishes from the café. The idea is that Gudrun in a way has associated herself with what Birkin calls in the letter "the desire for destruction of the self". Gerald could not understand her attitude. One can say that this letter represents Birkin's rejection of the London world. Gudrun's theft of the letter may imply that this is the moment when Birkin in fact

cuts his links with the decadence of Halliday's group and ideas. The funny thing is that it is by Gudrun's hand that this happens: she is a representative of that world too.

Before analysing the meeting of the two couples in the Alps it should be useful to say that Lawrence, since his early stories, had a certain impulse to move his characters away from England. In The Trespasser, for example, the characters do not move far away. They go to an island which is within the frontiers of England. Sons and Lovers also does not travel far. Paul Morel wants to travel abroad after the death of his mother, but his desire is only in his mind. He does not realize it. The Rainbow brings new elements such as the characters' yearnings to know the 'beyond'. Lydia Brangwen does not belong to England. The 'abroad' thus travels to the English environment. It is in Women in Love that Lawrence's characters actually move away from England. "The Fox" also shows March and Henry trying to flee from England to live in Canada. And, finally, in The Plumed Serpent, the setting is entirely foreign. Even the main character is not British at all: Kate is Irish. Therefore Lawrence, by the end of Women in Love, renounces the English setting moving away from it, only to return to his native land in Lady Chatterley's Lover.

The first impression of the married couple when Gudrun and Gerald meet them is one of (apparently) complete fulfilment. Gudrun envies her sister's togetherness with Birkin. Their togetherness may be contrasted with the other couple's separateness. It is as if one couple were moving towards creation and the other one towards destruction. Ursula seems very happy with Birkin, but she also seems still insecure about having him entirely: "Ursula was excited and happy, but she kept

turning suddenly to catch hold of Birkin's arm, to make sure of him" (p.389). Gudrun and Gerald, on the other hand, are walking not towards each other but each getting away from the other: "He and she were separate, like opposite poles of one fierce energy" (ibid). One may also add that it is Gudrun who is walking away from Gerald and that he realizes this: "he watched her: she seemed to rushing towards her fate, and leaving him behind. He let her get some distance, then, loosening his limbs, he went after her" (p.388).

When they go to the Tyrolese Alps, to the "cradle of snow", they meet an apparently end-of-world scenery. This cold place seems to be like a blow in one's face, leading him/her to a dead end. This place seems to convey a great Lawrencian irony due to the fact that two couples go there looking for fun and amusement and find death instead. It is indeed a strange place for Ursula and Birkin to start a new life in. It is better fitted to the mutual destruction of Gerald and Gudrun. The two couples then go through an experience of knowledge in destruction. The difference may be that one couple - Birkin and Ursula - tries to escape from it whereas the other seems to be swallowed by the cold atmosphere of the place and this leads them to a fierce wish to destroy each other which culminates in Gerald's murder/suicide.

In the Tyrolese Alps both couples meet several foreigners. One of these has a particular importance. He is Loerke, a corrupt artist. Loerke seems to be the inside-out of Birkin. He represents some of Birkin's inner yearnings. Perhaps due to this Birkin rejects Loerke. This artist may also be seen as Gudrun's masculine side, since she has an unconscious tendency for homosexuality. The difference between these two projections

is that Birkin repels Loerke whereas Gudrun feels attracted to him as soon as she meets him. Gerald, too, has a connection with Loerke. As an artist Loerke is a utilitarian. His art serves industry, it has no connection with social or really artistic matters. His art serves capitalism. This is his link with Gerald Crich, the mine-owner. Ursula is perhaps the only one of the group who does not have any real connection with Loerke.

The artist represents a danger to both couples. In relation to Birkin and Ursula, he is the negation of everything both want to discover in their new world. He means corruption, degradation, exploitation and all sorts of vices Birkin and Ursula are trying to reject. It seems that Lawrence purposely created this shadow of corruption at the end of the novel as a way to remind the couple that they cannot escape easily from the decadent old world. Decadence is everywhere. And Loerke's presence in the couple's honeymoon seems to be like a ghost haunting (or warning) them so as to say that before one builds a new world, s/he cannot simply forget the old one. S/he must destroy it inside him/herself. Perhaps Ursula and Birkin are too naïve to think that only deciding to build a new world they will be free from the decadence and corruption of the old world. Birkin's rejection of Loerke may imply that in fact he is rejecting his inner desire to be like Loerke or perhaps because the artist represents a facet of his character he does not want to show outwardly. Both are seen as antagonists but in many ways they resemble each other. For instance, Loerke is a conscious, active bisexual. Birkin may be seen as a frustrated half-unconscious bisexual. At the hotel in the Alps Loerke is with a tall blond man named Leitner, who is his partner. He

exploits Loerke and vice versa. Birkin has a deep attachment to Gerald who, coincidentally or not, is tall and blond too. Birkin seeing such a distorted mirror of himself wants perhaps to deny Loerke's very presence. Birkin tells Gerald (who dislikes the artist too):

'[Loerke] lives like a rat in the river of corruption, just where it falls over the bottomless pit. He's farther on than we are. He hates the ideal more acutely. He *hates* the ideal utterly, yet it dominates him ... He is a gnawing little negation, gnawing at the roots of life ... he's the wizard rat that swims ahead' (pp.418-9).

There is a very important scene which puts Loerke, Gerald and Gudrun together against Ursula. It is the trinity of destruction against the one who fights for creation. Gudrun, Ursula and Loerke are discussing his art. He brings them a photo of a statuette of a naked adolescent sitting on a naked great stallion. Her face seems distorted by shame and grief. The prototype is of the dominant male (symbolized by the horse) subjugating and hurting the female. The work implies a sado-masochistic relation and, according to Ursula, is a picture of Loerke himself. Gudrun of course disagrees because she identifies herself with the young girl and the animal reminds her of Gerald's power over his Arab mare. These two scenes put together express exactly the same thing. Gerald is the stallion in Loerke's statuette, and the Arab mare is the adolescent girl (or Gudrun). Gudrun feels immediately excited by this feature of Loerke. It is one more reason for her attraction to him to grow. That is why her attitude is slave-like: "Gudrun went pale, and a darkness came over her eyes, like shame, she looked up with a certain supplication, almost slave-like..." (p.420). Ursula, on the other hand, has a completely different reaction. She criticizes Loerke: "'The horse is a picture of your own

stock, stupid brutality, and the girl was a girl you loved and tortured and then ignored'" (p.422). Loerke and Gudrun unite to ignore Ursula's 'stupid' criticism about art. Gerald then comes and joins the two artists: "He joined his forces with the other two. They all three wanted her to go away" (ibid).

Ursula, after this sad and revealing episode, tells Birkin she wants to go away from the Alps. The place is damaging her: "'I hate the snow, and the unnaturalness of it, the unnatural light it throws on everybody, the ghastly glamour, the unnatural feelings it makes everybody have'" (p.425). Birkin agrees with her and they decide to go 'to Verona and find Romeo and Juliet'. Their escape from the Alps is rather ambiguous. Although Verona implies love it also implies tragedy. Also, although Italy seems a warm place, Birkin says, "'... a fearfully cold wind blows in Verona from out of the Alps. We shall have the smell of the snow in our noses'" (p.426). This is a clear anticipation of Gerald's tragedy some time after Birkin and Ursula leave for Italy. "Gudrun and Gerald were relieved by their going" (p.427). This relief is due to an unconscious desire Gudrun and Gerald have to be free and be by themselves so that they can destroy each other without witnesses.

I said before that Loerke means a danger to both couples. Birkin and Ursula escape from him. Gudrun and Gerald, however, do not. They are in a way tied to the 'wizard rat' by a strong link: their deep attraction to corruption and dissolution. Loerke can also be seen as a kind of concrete reason for Gudrun to leave Gerald. Before he appears Gerald and Gudrun have been already seen as going away from each other. Their affair is already falling apart. The cold air of the Alps influences them both. Gerald feels the place as if it were a kind of trap



which no one can escape from. He feels uneasy facing the icy cold mountains. His uneasiness is strengthened by Gudrun's separateness. This makes him feel more isolated and eager to destroy her because of her cold awareness of him: "He would rather destroy her than be destroyed" (p.392). When Loerke appears, the eagerness for violence between the couple seems to grow and Gudrun more than ever needs to feel free. She also feels a deep assurance within herself that she must

combat him. One of them must triumph over the other. Which should it be? Her soul steeled itself with strength. Almost she laughed within herself, at her confidence. It woke a certain keen, half contemptuous pity, tenderness for him: she was so ruthless (p.403).

Her confidence may perhaps be due to the fact that she unconsciously has found an ally in Loerke. Gerald must then be replaced by a more powerful symbol of depravity. A fearful battle between the lovers begins only to end with the defeat of the weakest. As the above quotation shows, Gudrun certainly does not feel weak. But Gerald also does not feel he is about to lose any battle. He will fight till death to prove he is the strongest. There is a whole set of violent love scenes between the two in which Gerald is sometimes a passive lover and Gudrun is the active one or Gerald is domineering and she is submissive:

She held her arms round his neck, in a triumph of pity. And her pity for him was as cold as cold as stone, its deepest motive was hate of him, and fear of his power over her, which she must always counterfoil (p.434).

or

She was as if crushed, powerless in him. His brain seemed hard and invincible now like a jewel, there was no resisting him.

His passion was awful to her, tense and ghastly, and impersonal, like a destruction, ultimate. She felt it would kill her. She was being killed (p.435).

And the next day, Gerald follows her like a shadow. They both think of quitting, but it is Gerald who seems to have no option in life apart from this exploitative relation:

'I can be free of her,' he said to himself  
in paroxysms of suffering...  
'Where shall I go?'...  
'Can you be self-sufficient?'...  
'Self-sufficient!' he repeated... (p.436).

Gerald in fact has no way out in his inner conflict. That old 'bubble of darkness' is returning to him ready to pop out of his eyes. He must stick to Gudrun. Or he must destroy her to be free of her. Besides this battle Loerke intermediates their relation. He is always there, haunting Gudrun, stimulating her to come and join him. Gerald realizes this sordid alliance and he and Gudrun fight: "She was afraid of Gerald, that he might kill her. But she did not intend to be killed" (p.443). It is a battle of wills, violence, perverse love-making in which they exchange their sado-masochistic roles. They finally break off the affair, but they still have a strong connection with each other. Gudrun feels her thoughts crowded with a tic-tac beating that resembles the night Gerald's father died. After having sex with Gerald, Gudrun feels as if she were becoming a machine. She feels that "Sometimes she beat her wings like a new Daphne, turning not into a tree but a machine" (p.108). In the Alps, during her conflict, she feels that

Indeed, she was like a little, twelve-hour clock, vis-à-vis with the enormous clock of eternity - there she was, like Dignity and Impudence, or Impudence and Dignity... She would have got up to look in the mirror, but the thought of the sight of her own face, that was like a twelve-hour clock dial, filled her with such deep terror, that she hastened to think of something else (p.457).

The problem with Gudrun is that she feels she has not a creative life and to realize this is to assert to herself that she is

like nothing; she is like Gerald. They are both parts of a mechanical structure, like cutting scissors.

Although they have broken off their affair, Gerald and Gudrun decide to depart from the Alps together for the sake of keeping appearances. (An ironical decision because Gudrun has already told Loerke and others that she was not married at all to Gerald.)

The day before the departure Gudrun goes for a tobogganing ride with Loerke. Their strange attachment is at its apex. Gudrun has already decided to go to Dresden following Loerke. On their last morning in the Alps, they go near the *cul-de-sac* where Gerald is to die. Gudrun feels released because she has nothing more to do with Gerald and also because she has found a partner who is like her (or worse than her). Surrounded by the mountains of ice and snow, they talk and have fun till Gerald suddenly appears, frightening them. There is a tense atmosphere between the three. Gerald, feeling mad anger, hits Loerke. Gudrun moves forward, in self-defense and at the same time trying to defend Loerke, and "She raised her clenched hand high, and brought it down, with a great downward stroke on to the face and on to the breast of Gerald" (p.463). With this blow she makes her prophecy of the 'last blow' delivered during the Water Party become true. Gerald who did not contradict her at that time, tries to fight back and strangle her. But he gives in. He is already defeated. Like an automaton he leaves Loerke and Gudrun and lets unconsciousness gradually take hold of him: "A weakness run over his body... A fearful weakness possessed him, his joints were turned to water. He drifted, as on a wind, veered and went drifting away..." (p.464). Thus, Gerald starts his peregrination towards death. At first he wants to sleep,

but he must go on till he finds death. Weakness wraps around him as he walks and "He only wanted to go on, to go on whilst he could, to move, to keep going, that was all, until it was finished. He had lost all his sense of place..." (p.465). As he walks, a fear of his own death, or murder appears to his mind as if to prove Birkin's theory of the victim and the victimizer. Gerald meets a symbol of his own life-sacrifice:

It was a half buried crucifix, a little Christ under a little sloping hood at the top of the pole. He sheered away. Somebody was going to murder him. He had a great dread of being murdered... (ibid).

The irony of this 'little Christ' and Gerald's fear of being murdered is that in a way Gerald associates his own death with Christ's. Christ was murdered and Gerald, in his suicide, will be both his own murderer and at the same time the murderee. He is the victim and the victimizer. Finally, in the 'cradle of snow', in the *cul-de-sac*, he finds an icy womb to curl in like a frozen foetus:

He had come to the hollow basin of snow, surrounded by sheer slopes and precipices, out of which rose a track that brought one to the top of the mountain. But he wandered unconsciously, till he slipped and fell down, and as he fell something broke in his soul, and immediately he went to sleep (p.466).

When the frozen body is found, Gudrun seems to feel nothing, as if she were cold and hollow. She telegraphs to Birkin and Ursula who come as soon as they can. Gudrun feels somehow guilty, as implied by the question she asks Loerke: "'We haven't killed him?'" (p.466). It is interesting to notice that Gudrun also blames Loerke. She will not bear the guilt alone.

As soon as Birkin meets Gudrun, she immediately feels guilty: "She knew he knew" (p.467). But Birkin is too much

shocked to really blame Gudrun. His best friend is dead and Birkin's desire to have a close contact between himself and the other man is frustrated: "He wondered if he himself were freezing too, freezing from the inside" (p.468). Something seems to be dying within himself and his feelings are projected outside like the mourning of a man who has lost a lover, his man-lover. Ursula is horrified. Birkin is cruel to her as if it were her fault that the foetus-like dead Gerald rejected his bloodbrotherhood:

Then [Birkin] suddenly lifted his head and looked straight at Ursula with dark, almost vengeful eyes. 'He should have loved me,' he said. 'I offered him.' She, afraid, white, with mute lips, answered: 'What difference would it have made?' 'It would!' he said. 'It would.' (p.471)

Birkin sounds like a little boy crying after he lost or broke a loving toy.

Finally they return to England and the dead Gerald returns with them to be buried there. Birkin and Ursula go to the Mill to stay for some time. Their return to the world they wanted to reject seems to imply their uncertainty because Lawrence does not say when they will leave England again. He only says that they "stayed at the Mill... for a week or two" (p.472). There is no certainty whether they will stay in England or will leave it forever. Their return is marked by a feeling of pessimism because of Gerald's death. Also because Gerald has meant too much for Birkin and he cannot feel Ursula's presence as the fulfilment he needs to go on living. It is interesting to notice that before the couple has gone to the Alps, Ursula has almost quarrelled with Birkin because he wanted to take Gerald and Gudrun with them. She has told Birkin at that moment that he did not need others to fulfil his life: after all, he had her by his side.

'You must learn to be alone. And it is so horrid of you. You've got me. And yet you want to force

other people to love you as well. You do try to bully them to love you. And even when you don't want their love.'

His face was full of perplexity.

'Don't I?' he said. 'It's the problem I can't solve. I *know* I want a perfect and complete relationship with you: and we've nearly got it - we nearly have. But beyond that. Do I want a final, almost extra-human relationship with him - a relationship in the ultimate me and him - or don't I?' (p.355).

At that time Ursula did not answer him. Now, after Gerald's death, and feeling Birkin's distance, Ursula returns to that suspended question:

'Did you really need Gerald?' she asked.

'No,' he said. 'You are enough for me, as far as a woman is concerned. You are all women to me. But I wanted a man-friend, as eternal as you and I are eternal' (p.472).

Birkin in fact does not really answer Ursula's question. He does not say that he needed Gerald, he says he wanted a man-friend which is quite a different answer. His 'want' for a man-friend is ambiguous, as he tries to justify his thirst for a different love between himself and another man: "'Having you, I can live all my life without anybody else, any other sheer intimacy. But to make it complete, really happy, I wanted eternal union with a man too: another kind of love,' he said" (ibid). Birkin's answer is viewed by Ursula as 'an obstinacy, a theory, a perversity': she cannot believe in this kind of love.<sup>2</sup> For her there is only one kind of love - that which she devotes to him. It seems here that Birkin's obstinacy for another kind of love is merely an attempt to escape from a relation of 'meeting and mingling' with Ursula because he cannot face it. He

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<sup>2</sup> Ursula's disbelief in Birkin's wish for a man-friend might be accounted for by her frustrated homosexual affair with Winifred Inger in The Rainbow. It proved to be a failure. Ursula might be thinking that if it had been a failure with her, Birkin's 'obstinacy' may also lead him to a frustration.

can only feel the 'unison in separateness' with her. With another man he should 'meet and mingle' as with Gerald in the ritualistic wrestling. It is almost as if he depended on this persistent idea to go on living as he depended for a long time on the 'spiritual mess' of Hermione. Thus the book ends with an unfinished discussion between husband and wife. This sense of suspended discussion is perhaps a hint that they will keep on arguing for a long time till one finds a way to convince the other. We do not know whether it will be Birkin or Ursula but certainly the answer to his search for a man-friend will be developed in the leadership novels.

One final question must be asked: do Birkin and Ursula really succeed in their search for a new world? Some ideas must be recalled in order to answer it: first of all, it seems that Lawrence has used as the basic plan for his novel the device: "take two couples and develop their relationships" (Moore, 1981: 102). One of the couples may succeed and the other may fail. The formula is simple. If we take Gerald and Gudrun we know that they have virtually failed. But, although Gerald is dead, Gudrun is still alive and apparently has found a substitute for him in the corrupt Loerke. As for Birkin and Ursula, they have somehow succeeded because they have broken their old relationships, quit their jobs, and have started a new life. However, the shadow of the past is still haunting them: his need for a man-friend is with him till his last sentence; they have returned to the old world and what seems worse: they are at the Mill, where Hermione has a deep influence over Birkin as symbolized by the rug she gave him. There is also the idea that Ursula is not the 'rose of happiness' she thinks she is. She, too, has within herself traces of the old corrupt world, as exemplified by the exchange

of lanterns in the Water Party and by the stockings Gudrun gave her. Therefore, both Birkin and Ursula contain elements of decadence counterbalancing their 'silver river of life'. Besides this, the old world has more living representatives than the new one, as I pointed out in the beginning of this analysis.

Halliday's group, Gudrun, the pregnant Minette, Loerke, Hermione: they are all alive. I think that the question at the beginning of this paragraph must be rephrased: what are the chances for Birkin and Ursula to survive in such a world of dissolution and corruption?

Women in Love, as part of Lawrence's second phase, still shows the persistent conflict between soul and body in the main characters. This division is clearly seen in Hermione and Ursula. The former is seen as the soul and the latter as the body. However, Ursula cannot be said to be a character whose main 'virtue' lies in her sensuality. She seems to be half-body and half-soul. Hermione, on the other hand, is the picture of the strong soulful woman, or another 'dreaming woman' like Helena in The Trespasser. The difference is that Hermione is not a victorious character as the women in Lawrence's first phase. Rupert Birkin is the one who still has trouble in defining whether he wants the soul or the body. But it can be said that in his attempt to build a new life with Ursula, who is not a passive woman nor is she a domineering one, he is trying to find his way. The main problem is that when he broke with Hermione and developed a theory of a relation based on 'star-polarity', in fact he did not know that his practice was not a balanced one but a very chauvinistic one as seen in the chapter "Mino". What he wanted really was a relation of dominance in which the male subjugated the female. His relation with Ursula



has been marked by a whole set of disagreements in which no one in fact convinces the other of who is right. The novel also marks the beginning of possible alternatives to the man-to-woman relationship as seen by Birkin's Blutbrüderschaft to Gerald and the 'female bonding' in the dance performed by the sisters. Also the novel presents the idea that modern love adopts a pattern of sado-masochistic reversal of roles as seen in Minette vs Gerald vs Gudrun. This component of modern love shows that inevitably one partner is defeated: Gerald dies. In this sense the other couple who is supposed to go out of this decadent world - Birkin and Ursula - to build a new one also shows that they contain seeds of corruption which they will carry to their new world. Thus Women in Love shows death and rebirth, but the rebirth is not very promising since decadence is still a strong component in the characters' minds.

## II

### "THE FOX" - THE SEARCH FOR FEMALENESS VS THE SUPREMACY OF THE MALE.

I believe that Lawrence in "The Fox" is raising these points:

- whether the awakening of femaleness means the loss of self control and masochism in women, or
- whether the supremacy of the male over the female is due to the kind of trickeries men use to achieve this goal.

The answer is certainly ambiguous for when readers get to the end of the novella, there is a strong feeling of unfulfilment in both man and woman. It is not my intention here to side with anybody-neither female nor male. The novella itself can be read in different ways: if you side with Henry (the prototype for the chauvinist male) you certainly will keep the fearful expectation that in the near future he will definitely have March under his complete power: selfless, robot-like, simply a soulless body ready to say 'yes' or 'no' as soon as her master snaps his fingers. On the other hand, if you side with March (the prototype for the half-awakened female) you will

be sure that she will put an end to the question of 'male supremacy' to live self-conscious in an environment that could allow her to express herself not as a robotized body but as a human being integrated with her femaleness.

What I intend to develop in relation to this novella will be traced by means of emphasizing the unconscious desire of March's search for femaleness and its implications, i.e., the process of transforming her 'male self' and behaviour into a female one. This process has two important contributions: Banford's and Henry's who help her in different but decisive ways.

There are in this novella at least three ideas which I intend to work. The first one is brought out in the first page of the story: "March was more robust. She learned carpentry, and joinery at the evening classes in Islington. She would be the man about the place" (p.85 - My underlining). It seems clear to me that Lawrence is intentionally presenting March, who is near thirty, with 'virtues' that are attributed especially to men. There must be a reasonable explanation for this: March is a girl who lives with a friend, Banford. There is nothing unusual up to here. Girls can live with other girls. But the way the story presents the two girls leads one to think that they are more than simple friends. Banford, also near thirty, is described as being "a small, thin, delicate thing with spectacles" (ibid). Furthermore, the girls work differently in the farm they run. Banford does the lighter work at home. whereas "March had four-fifths of the work to do" (p.87). This is certainly not very common. The way the girls are presented implies that they are like husband and wife, and that March, being the strongest, man-like, is the husband. Banford of course

stands for the wife. It is a homosexual marriage, though this is not explicitly stated by the author.

However, things are not to be defined so easily: that is to say that if the two girls were happy with their life together, this analysis would have its end right here. The story is more complex. The life of the husband-and-wife girls is not so balanced. They have outer and inner problems. The former are simpler because they can be solved as soon as there are conditions for it. For example, the girls have troubles with their poultry and their fowls mainly because of the war which prevents them from buying food easily. The worst of all are the inner problems which are more difficult to solve for they sometimes take a long time to be solved. The main inner problem (and outer too) is brought by the war. It is the fox. Although the fox is only an animal, it is he who brings a set of conflicts to both girls, but especially to March.

"Since the war the fox was a demon" (p.87). Indeed he is a demon for the outer problems he causes at the farm - stealing chickens - and for the conflict of identity he causes in March at the moment he appears in the farm. Since the very moment the fox is mentioned, he starts a kind of war boiling within the manly March and also between the girls. Lawrence first introduces the fox and then he says:

Although [the girls] were usually the best of friends, ... yet, in the long solitude, they were apt to become a little irritated with one another, tired of one another (ibid).

Since March and Banford share their lives together it is natural they should have quarrels, be sharp with one another, etc. But, taking into account the second idea I mentioned, a brief sentence related to March - "she was a creature of odd whims and

unsatisfied tendencies" - I am tempted to say that these 'unsatisfied tendencies' are definitely related to March's unconscious desire to become female rather than to appear man-like. And the fox starts to awaken in her a deep desire to become female. The fox can be seen as the externalization, the projection of her 'animus' or male side, which 'fascinates' the female in her. Hitherto we can say that she did not objectify this self. And the fox, being a male animal, exerts a certain power over the girl. Observe how she behaves when the animal meets her:

She lowered her eyes, and suddenly saw the fox. He was now looking up at her. Her chin was pressed down, and his eyes were looking up. They meet her eyes. And he knew her. She was spellbound - she knew he knew her. So he looked into her eyes, and her soul failed her. He knew her, he was not daunted (p.89 - My underlining).

First of all, notice that March is spellbound despite the fact he is 'lower' than she. Secondly, notice that the action is all performed by the animal; March only behaves according to what the fox does. Why is she spellbound by him and why is she "determined to find him"? March is not looking for the animal, she is looking for a man. Someone who would awaken in her her femaleness. The male fox then becomes a dominant figure haunting her, making her uncomfortable, not able to think or act. To remedy the troubles caused in the farm, March could simply shoot the fox, but she cannot. She cannot kill the one who "somehow dominated her consciousness, possessed the blank half of her musing" (p.91). She cannot kill the one who will awaken the woman she is not able to discern in herself yet. Months and months pass without any change in her life and in her companion's.

The only difference one notes in March's behaviour is that

one in which she feels in relation to the thought of the animal. Explicitly Lawrence says nothing, but one can infer that March is beginning to awaken from the drowsiness in which her femininity has been submerged throughout her almost thirty years. The appearance of the fox makes her feel as if she were in the period of female heat, looking for a male to mate with. Before this man comes into her life she will only be able to feel that

It was as if she could smell [the fox] at these times. And it always recurred, at unexpected moments, just as she was going to sleep at night, or just as she was pouring the water into the tea-pot to make tea - it was the fox, it came over her like a spell (ibid).

If Banford stands for March's 'wife', this means that she feeds March's masculine side. And if March is by now being haunted by these strange sensations provoked by a male animal, this also means that she is unconsciously trying to free her repressed female sensuality. She needs to be fed in her drowsy femaleness too. She needs a man. Banford is no longer fulfilling her. She needs more than a lesbian relationship. Yet, all these ideas are hidden from March's conscience. They will only rise to her conscious when a man, not an animal, comes to her life. This man appears in the figure of a soldier named Henry.

The two girls are too much used to her solitude mainly because they have, in a certain way, retired from contact with civilization. As they are used to their loneliness, without visitors, it seems clear that any strange sound from the outside at night makes them worried. In winter they become much more cautious for the dark falls early and Banford especially becomes afraid of tramps or any other threats. March, in her turn, is not physically afraid, she feels uncomfortable, disturbed

emotionally. This may be because she is in conflict over the duplicity of her being: she stands for the man, she has to be strong; on the other hand, she is a "sleeping princess" waiting for a man to come to her and awaken her femininity. Thus, her fragile emotions are in conflict with her strong physique.

On one of these evenings of early winter, the girls are in the kitchen after tea: March is crocheting and Banford is staring at the fire and listening to the sounds outside. Then a stranger arrives surreptitiously like an animal looking for a prey. The mystery of his coming is described by Lawrence in such a way that it seems easy to see March's dominance over Banford:

Suddenly both girls started, and lifted their heads. They heard a footstep - distinctly a footstep. Banford recoiled in fear. March stood listening. Then rapidly she approached the door that led into the kitchen. At the same time they heard the footsteps approach the back door. They waited a second. The back door opened softly... (p.92).

The moment the young man enters the kitchen there are several points which deserve special attention. For instance, there is a kind of balance between what he says and the answers he gets from March. First of all, this young man has a soft voice. This is noted when he greets the girls. Then "March recoiled, and took a gun from a corner" (ibid). Next, she cries in a sharp voice and the answer from the boy is again soft and vibrating. March continues her harsh tones whereas he goes on with his melodious voice. Later on they are simply talking. Banford is by this time hidden in fear till she understands that the youth is not a tramp. The second point to consider is that this young man has no name in the beginning. He is considered as 'a young soldier', 'the young man', someone who is 'boyish',

'the boy' and 'the lad'. It seems again that Lawrence is intentionally putting a gap between the boy and the girls. Or it could be a way to say that Henry is no more than an adolescent looking for adventures. He is about twenty and the way he is introduced leads one to think of him as being younger than he really is. Another point is that though he seems at first scared by March's sharp tones, he is not. It seems that he will take advantages from his arrival at the farm run by these two women. What seems curious to notice is that the young soldier seems scared when he enters the kitchen, but he never really shows fear because of March's gun. In fact, instead of going back, he advances towards the girls:

'Why, what's wrong? What's wrong?' came the soft, wondering, rather scared voice: and a young soldier, with his heavy kit on his back, advanced into the dim light...

The young man - or youth, for he would not be more than twenty, now advanced and stood in the inner doorway. (pp.92-3 - My underlining).

And surprisingly what comes next proves that March is no longer herself: her man has just come: "March, already under the influence of his strange, soft, modulated voice, stared at him spellbound" (p.93). She is unable to do anything against the newcomer. Her sense of impotence grows before this youth. For her now he has become the fox. He is what she has been expecting. He is her male:

But to March he was the fox. Whether it was the thrusting forward of his head, or the glisten of the fine whitish hairs on the ruddy cheekbones, or the bright, keen eyes, that can never be said: but the boy was to her the fox, and she could not see him otherwise (p.93).

Previously I said that this young man arrives at the farm as if he were an animal looking for a prey and the way March behaves seems to prove my point: she becomes his prey (even though she



has a gun), unable to do anything. He is stronger than she is, and her behaviour is that of a hypnotized animal, unable to move, to escape. It seems that he is stronger in terms of some subtle will power, not in terms of explicit strength. This is perhaps why March is paralyzed. All she can do is to hide herself as a way to get rid of the influence this 'boy' has on her:

March appeared in the doorway, took her [tea] cup, and sat down in a corner, as far from the light as possible... She shrank and shrank, trying not to be seen. And the youth sprawling low on the couch, glanced up at her, with long steady, penetrating looks, till she was almost ready to disappear... Her desire to be invisible was so strong that it quite baffled the youth. He felt he could not see her distinctly. She seemed like a shadow within the shadow. And ever his eyes came back to her, searching, unremitting, with unconscious fixed attention (pp.95-6).

Thus, during this first contact with Henry Grenfel, March tries to be hidden from him (even though his eyes are always placing him in an inferior position). But despite March's desire to be hidden from Henry, she in fact draws his attention to her. He tries to look for her in the dark, so as to dominate her. Now, there is no need to talk. The intensity of the meeting has transformed them both into animals which act instinctively without any need to be seen. And as I said, March is in a kind of female "heat", which is proved by the atmosphere between Henry and March. She has become the female animal and he is identified with the fox. As two animals therefore, they (or at least he) can be seen as liberating a characteristic smell which can be recognized only by themselves. This implies that they are ready to mate:

He was identified with the fox - and he was here in full presence. She need not go after him any more. There in the shadow of her corner she gave herself up to a warm, relaxed peace, almost like sleep, accepting the spell that was on her. But she wished to remain hidden... Hidden in the

shadow of her corner, she need not any more be divided in herself trying to keep up two planes of consciousness. She could at last lapse into the odour of the fox.

For the youth... sent a faint but distinct odour in the room, undefinable, but something like a wild creature. March no longer tried to reserve herself from it. She was still and soft in her corner like a passive creature in its cave (p.98 - My underlining).

The passage presents them as two animals (a wilder, dominant one, and a passive one). There is also a reference to March's divided self: her masculine side which has up to now been fed by her friend Banford; the other, her female side, is being awakened by this fox-like boy. Through the last sentence of the passage there is a clear statement that March is accepting passively the change. It is as if it were her fate to change.

Henry is allowed to stop at Bailey Farm till he finds a place to live. Here starts the war between March and her divided self: Banford (her male side) and Henry (her female side). The very night Henry stops at the farm March has her first dream, a signalling of her involvement with this boy. In the dream the point is that the fox/Henry is calling her femaleness to come to awareness. Her sexual impulses towards man are awakening from the river of her unconsciousness. When in the dream, the fox bites her wrist and whisks his brush across her face, she feels as if in flames. The passage implies that March wants vividly to be touched by a man. Or it may imply that March's 'submission' is masochistic; or even that Lawrence sees the male as intrinsically sadistic; the female is in some sense his victim. The fact that March feels as if burned and in pain may imply the conflict of having not yet decided her life (sexually) or that this decision will cost her too much.

Henry seems to be lazy. While the girls do their work the

next morning he simply goes to shoot rabbits as if he had nothing to do to help the girls. There is also a suggestion that intentionally he does not find a place to stay in the town. He is not worried as he should be: "He left the matter to them. He was rather calm about it" (p.101). Moreover, when Banford tells him that he can stop at the farm, his behaviour is typical of people with hidden purposes who do not want to be discovered:

A smile like a cunning flame came over his face, suddenly and involuntarily. He dropped his head quickly to hide it, and remained with his head dropped, his face hidden (p.102 - My underlining).

The impression is that Henry schemes and plots, but, yet (like a child), he several times reveals his feelings, as the passage implies. And here he is exultant as if he had won his first round. The second one would be to hunt March. Henry is a false, perverse character. He has two ways of treating the girls. With March he is furtive and with Banford he is kind, gentle, but he sounds false. When he is sure of his staying "His face beamed, and he almost rubbed his hands with pleasure" (p.103).

Henry keeps around the farm, trying to help with the work,

- but not too much. He loved to be out alone with the gun in his hands, to watch, to see. For his sharp-eyed, impersonal curiosity was insatiable, and he was most free when he was quite alone, half-hidden, watching (ibid).

Now Lawrence points out what Henry is - a sharp impersonal young man who is not a farm worker, but a hunter, or a mercenary ready to catch an enemy for the sake of a prize or something similar. That is why he is almost always observing his surroundings, looking for his prey:

Particularly he watched March. She was a strange character to him. Her figure, like a

graceful young man's, piqued him. Her dark eyes made something rise in his soul, with a curious elate excitement, when he looked into them, an excitement he was afraid to let be seen, it was so keen, and secret. And then her odd, shrewd speech made him laugh outright. He felt he must go further, he was inevitably impelled (ibid).

Then the reader is caught up by the cold intentions of this youth who (though he looks like a boy) seems much more experienced than the two girls of thirty: he wants the farm which belonged to his grandfather, and to get it back, he simply decides he will marry March. He does not consider feelings, love, anything. But why does he choose March? I believe that this is because he may have realized her weakness, her double-sided personality; whereas Banford, though delicate, is stronger than March and she does not look like one who is in conflict with herself. She is not divided.

Also it could be said that Henry's choice of March means a kind of challenge for him. The way he decides he must have this manly woman may imply that for Henry to become a man he must go through the ordeal of killing the masculine side of this woman. Destroying her masculinity, he will be fully completed and initiated in life (or he may also be killing the female side of himself). And the fact that she is older than he does not seem to matter:

Why not marry March? He stood still in the middle of the field for some moments, the dead rabbit hanging still in his hand, arrested by this thought. His mind waited in amazement - it seemed to calculate - and then he smiled curiously to himself in acquiescence. Why not? Why not indeed? It was a good idea. What if it was ridiculous? What did it matter? What if she was older than he? It did not matter. When he thought of the dark, startled vulnerable eyes he smiled subtly to himself. He was older than she. He was master of her (pp.103-4 - My underlining).

The underlined sentences are the key to this interpretation. First of all Henry is a person who seems to decide his attitudes through thinking - calculation is the best word. And when you calculate something you do not put feelings in it. You simply behave as coldly and detachedly as possible. Secondly, he knows March's vulnerability, for he thinks of her eyes which express her undecisive self-knowledge. He knows that what her appearance shows is not what her inner self is. And, finally, he knows that because of this he is older than she. He has also decided he is her master. Too simple. No feelings are involved here. It is as if March meant a kind of mathematical equation that needs an exact solution. And Henry decides he knows it. It seems, however, that Henry only uses the farm as a rationalization for going after March. His attraction (not love) for her seems, therefore, deeper than mere greed. When we read that "He scarcely admitted his intention even to himself" (p.104) we feel that at the depths Henry is not so evil as he appears to be. Since he hides his intentions from his conscious self it may be possible that he does not really want to be aware of this evil. It is as if Lawrence meant that people develop evil only within the subconscious. The moment it comes to the surface of the person's conscience s/he can be destroyed.

The passage which describes how Henry will hunt March does not come really from his skillful mind. It is from the author's point of view that the hunting is described step by step. There is a clear interference from Lawrence at this point of the narrative. It is not Henry speaking: there are no quotation marks. Lawrence uses, instead, the present tense which proves his interference. The author describes even the risks Henry will run. March at this point becomes a deer - a deer is a very

quick and perceptive animal. If it is not approached carefully, intelligently, it will escape from the hunter. It is a battle of power. Power on the side of the hunter who must use the most accurate tricks to catch the animal. And power on the side of the deer which will fight for freedom:

It is a subtle, profound battle of wills which takes place in the invisible. And it is a battle never finished till your bullet goes home. When you are *really* worked up to the true pitch, and you come at last into range, you don't then aim as you do when you are firing at a bottle. It is your own *will* which carries the bullet into the heart of your quarry. The bullet's flight home is a sheer projection of your own fate into the deer. It happens like a supreme act of volition, not as a dodge of cleverness (pp.104-5).

As it is said, it is more a battle between mind and mind. It is not a question of firing a bullet into the flesh of the animal merely. No. Henry must get hold of March's soul, otherwise she will run away from his 'tomfoolery'.

Henry thus becomes a hunter. The important thing to notice is not the fact that Henry is a hunter but the fact that March is suspicious:

He was a huntsman in spirit, not a farmer, and not a soldier stuck in a regiment. And it was as a young hunter that he wanted to bring down March as his quarry, to make her his wife. So he gathered himself subtly together, seemed to withdraw into a kind of invisibility. He was not quite sure how he would go on. And March was suspicious as a hare. So he remained in appearance just the nice, odd stranger-youth, staying for a fortnight on the place (p.105 - My underlining).

The fact that March is suspicious may be a guide that leads to her dream of the fox singing. In the dream she could not approach the fox because he ran away and, as she identifies Henry with the animal, she becomes too sensitive and feels that he wants to take something out of her, and also that she is not quite sure if she wants to give him this something. This is

because she is not conscious of her coming change.

When Henry approaches March to start the hunting, there is another hint that he does not match entirely with the description of the ideal hunter. He acts exactly in the way described as being the wrong way to approach 'the animal':

'Well,' he said, and his voice was so soft it seemed a subtle touch, like the merest touch of a cat's paw, a feeling rather than a sound. 'Well - I wanted to ask you to marry me.'

March felt rather than heard him ... It seemed to her that fine sparks came out of him.

Then very suddenly she said:

'Don't try any of your tomfoolery on me'  
(pp.105-6 - My underlining).

Henry loses the first round of the hunt. March up to now is still mistress of herself. An interesting point here is the choice of the image for his voice: a cat's paw. A cat's paw is at the same time caressive and also aggressive because of the hidden sharp claws. Anyway, the hunter misses his first leap proving once more that he is not so clever as the hunter of the description. However, he is persistent for he does not give up. Perhaps the second round is exactly what Lawrence meant when he said that this hunt should be like a battle of wills. Thus Henry's persistence makes him get some success out of his second attempt:

'Yes, I do know what I'm talking about. Yes, I do,' he persisted softly, as if he were producing his voice in her blood... A swoon went over her as he concluded. He spoke rapidly in the rapid Cornish fashion - and his voice seemed to sound in her somewhere where she was helpless against it. 'Age is nothing'. The soft, heavy insistence of it made her sway dimly out there in the darkness. She could not answer (p.106 - My underlining).

Despite the fact that March tells him 'I'm old enough to be your mother' which implies the Oedipal dimension of the relation, Henry does not seem to care about this. In fact he has become

the hunter older than his prey. This is the moment in which he traps March pushing her into a corner and leaving her no choice for escape. He does not let her answer, speaking rapidly, leaving no room in her mind to think or to reply. His insistence sounds like injections reaching her blood like poison or like a paralyzing serum. She cannot answer. She can only feed on his insistent talk. Thus Henry has achieved part of his goal for he gets at the dark part of March's inner self "where she was helpless against it". He goes on in the hunt with his manipulative soft voice forcing her to say 'yes' to his proposal. But when he has almost mastered her, there is a break in the scene because Banford calls them back to reality.

From this day on, things at the farm change. The first one is that Banford is suspicious that something is wrong. This is seen in the way she challenges Henry about what he and March were doing before she called. The second change concerns Henry who starts behaving as if he had already become the owner of the place: "The youth... had come to tea in his shirt-sleeves as if he were at home" (p.108). This attitude disturbs Banford who asks Henry if he is not cold, implying her distaste for his shirt-sleeves. By now she feels as if she were menaced and from 'the delicate thing with spectacles', she turns out to be rather authoritative: "'If you feel all right as you are, stop as you are.' [Banford] spoke with a crude authority" (p.109). It is as if Banford were not seeing this young man as her young brother but as a dangerous enemy whose soft voice is like penetrating claws disturbing her life with March:

Banford was offended. For all his suave courtesy and soft voice, the youth seemed to her impudent. She did not like to look at him. She did not like to meet his clear, watchful eyes, she did not like



to see the strange glow in his face, his cheeks with their delicate fine hair, and his ruddy skin that was quite dull and yet which seemed to burn with a curious heat of life. It made her feel a little ill to look at him: the quality of his physical presence was too penetrating, too hot (ibid).

She also feels that there must be something going on between March and Henry because "She kept moving and looking round and listening to the wind, and glancing secretly from one to the other of her companions" (p.110).

This same night March seems to be far away from Banford and Henry. Her mind seems to be wandering through her unknown and half-awakened femininity:

Her whole figure was absorbed in its bearings as if she herself was miles away. In a sort of semi-dream she seemed to be hearing the fox singing round the house, in the wind, singing wildly and sweetly and like a madness (ibid).

Banford, unable to cope with the silent room, tries to interfere in March's thoughts. She wants to know what March is thinking. The latter "looked round with big, startled black eyes, and went pale as if with terror. She has been listening to the fox singing, so tenderly, as he wandered round the house" (p.111). The atmosphere in the room seems so heavy as if ready to fall down. March's answer is vague, distant and then she returns to her dream. The effect of this waking dream is so vivid that

March suddenly lifted her great dark eyes from her crocheting and saw [the fox]. She started, giving a little exclamation.

'There he is!' she cried involuntarily, as if terribly startled (p.112).

March is so disturbed by her fantasy that she is no longer able to distinguish in herself the difference between fantasy and reality: "'Whatever has got you Nellie?' [Banford] cried... 'Nothing! Nothing!' she cried crossly. 'Can't anyone speak?'"

(ibid). March's answer is an attempt to disguise her feelings. But Banford seems to get the meaning of March's cry and says: "Oh, Nellie, I hope you aren't jumpy and nervy. I feel I can't stand another thing! Whoever did you mean? Did you mean Henry?" (ibid). The fact that Banford refers to Henry and says she cannot stand another 'thing' may imply that she is becoming aware of the puzzled personality of March. Banford may be feeling afraid to lose March to the young man. That seems why she cannot stand her new mood. And once more March disguises her feelings saying to Banford "'yes. I suppose so,'... She would never confess to the fox" (p.113).

Two important events happen this same night which are worth examining. The first one is Henry's sense of ownership of the house and of March's will. He wants some tea: March obediently goes and gets tea for him. The fact that he is a visitor does not account for the attitude March takes. Previously it was Banford who was in charge of the housework, now March replaces her. The reversal of roles starts here. Banford is the same, but March is beginning to change. Henry is the main reason for her change. The second event refers to Henry and Banford. Now he starts calling her strictly 'Miss Banford' which implies his wish to keep her as distant as possible from him. It is not respect that makes him alter his way of addressing her, but a way to see her as an older person who has nothing to do with him.

The hunting of March is re-initiated as soon as Banford goes to bed. It is here that March seems to contradict Lawrence's narrative. Henry, directing again the conversation, asks March about her involuntary cry and she says that "'Why, I thought you were the fox!'" (ibid). On this same page, at the

top, Lawrence says that March "would never confess to the fox". There seems to be a distance between what the author wants the character to say and what the character herself says. But perhaps March has not confessed the truth before because Banford was also present in the room and now there is only March and Henry.

March tells Henry what she feels in relation to the fox (extensive to Henry too):

'Why, one evening last summer when I was out with the gun I saw the fox in the grass nearly at my feet, looking straight up at me. I don't know - I suppose he made an impression on me.' She turned aside her head again and let one foot stray loose, self-consciously (ibid).

The fact that March says that the fox has made an impression on her may imply that she is admitting to herself that she wants to become a female. This may also imply her struggle to admit this conflict in herself in front of a man whom she identifies with the fox and who makes her feel helpless. As the conversation continues Henry's attitudes give us the impression that they are the same as the fox's. When March observes that the fox seemed to be laughing at her, Henry repeats the fox's laugh: "'And you thought I was the fox, did you?' he laughed with the same queer laugh, like a puppy wrinkling his nose" (p. 114). March replies that she did and that "'Perhaps [the fox had] been in my mind without my knowing'" (ibid). This is definitely an assertion that her femaleness is being awakened due to the fox's presence. It implies the knowledge of her femaleness hidden by the strong presence of her masculinity.

Henry starts 'hunting' again and demands from her with his soft mesmerizing voice, an answer to his proposal. She refuses to answer due to her confused mind. He keeps near her touching

her, whispering softly, forcing her to answer him. But Banford interrupts again, calling March crossly from upstairs. Here there is a feeling that March is on a road that forks into two paths and must decide which one to go. On the one hand, there are the claims for her femininity - Henry. On the other, there is the maintainance of her masculinity - Banford. March's conflict increases. However, the road in which Henry is seems much more appealing: he is there, soft, caressive, demanding her, touching her. Whereas where Banford is, there is a kind of menace because of the cross calling: no caress is present. Banford sounds like a mother, a conscience, a nagging one:

'Nellie! Nellie! Whatever are you so long for?' came Banford's faint cry from the outer darkness.

But he held her fast, and was murmuring with that intolerable softness and insistency:

'You will, won't you? Say yes! Say yes!' (ibid).

Henry has already got March because he has kissed her with the same brushing kiss of her first dream with the fox:

... as she drew back, the fox, turning round to bound away, whisked his brush across her face, and it seemed his brush was on fire, for it seared and burned her mouth with a great pain... (p.100 - My underlining).

And as she did so, quick as lightning [Henry] kissed her on the mouth, with a quick brushing kiss. It seemed to burn her every fibre. She gave a queer little cry (p.115 - My underlining).

Besides this, there is Henry's demanding 'Say yes! Say yes'. Henry is so insistent that there is no choice for March. She is on fire, all her sexually repressed femaleness is awakened at once. She wants him and so he wins: "Yes! Yes! Anything you like! Anything you like! Only let me go! Only let me go! Jill is calling!" (ibid - My underlining).

On the following day Henry feels as if he himself were the

owner of the house for in the morning he starts a kind of childish guessing game with Banford. His purpose with the game is only for the sake of telling Banford that March belongs to him and so does the farm. It is as if he were a child who wants his mother to guess what he wants to say:

'Do you know what, Miss Banford?'

...

'Shall I tell her?' he said to [March].

...

'Whatever's coming?' said Banford...

'Why, what do you think?' he said, smiling like one who has a secret.

'How do I know?' said Banford.

'Can't you guess?' he said, making bright eyes and smiled pleased with himself (p.116).

Henry wants to make Banford curious and angry at the same time. When he finally tells her he is going to marry March the answer he gets from Banford is exactly what he was expecting: it reflects Banford's anger and also the conflict between the two girls:

Banford looked at [March] like a bird that had been shot: a poor little sick bird. She gazed at her with all her wounded soul in her face, at the deep flushed March.

'Never!' she exclaimed, helpless (ibid).

Now Henry has got a fearful enemy with whom a new battle is just beginning. A battle that will last till the day Banford dies. In this battle March seems to be as if out of context: she does not participate in the quarrel between her two lovers. Banford cannot understand why March is moving from her to Henry. She becomes insulting. For her, March is lowering herself because Henry is a man. To be with a man is disgusting, it implies loss of self-respect:

'My word, she doesn't know what she's letting herself in for,' said Banford, in her plaintive, drifting, insulting voice.

'What has it got to do with you, anyway?' said the youth in a temper.

'More than it has to do with you, probably,' she replied, plaintive and venomous (p.117).

In this atmosphere of competition March feels as if happy because she is the motive for the battle between Henry and Banford to occur:

March seemed to flourish in this atmosphere. She seemed to sit between two antagonists with a little wicked smile on her face, enjoying herself. There was even a sort of complacency in the way she crocheted this evening (p.118).

It seems a good therapy for March's divided self to be between the antagonists. This explains her new mood. She is feeling somehow proud of herself.

"[The girls] seemed to be losing ground, somehow losing hope as the month went by... they seemed to have to live too much off themselves. There was nothing to keep them up - and no hope" (p.88). This quotation is a way to remind us that since the beginning of the story the girls' relationship was not going to last long. When Henry arrives at the farm and 'hunts' March, he becomes the agent which dissolves the link that binds the girls. March, in her divided self, opens herself up and allows him to discover the flower of femininity hidden in her manly appearance. He makes her become a weak, defenceless woman. This means that she was not actually happy in her relationship with Banford. Banford, however, seems to be satisfied with her homosexuality. She does not need any man to fulfil herself. March fulfils her completely. As Henry's presence menaces the relationship, Banford stops being the delicate girl to be like she really is - the strongest, the dominant. Her delicacy is a mask to hide her strength. Henry has made her take this mask off and thus she starts behaving the way she really is. A way to fight Henry off is to make March aware of the kind of

relationship she is going to have with the man:

'No, Nellie, if you were to do such a thing as to marry him, you could never stop here... And I know, I know he's only counting what he can get out of you... He's just a good for nothing, who doesn't want to work, and who thinks he'll live on us... If you marry him he'll just make a fool of you... I know he will, if he can't get Bailey Farm out of us - and he's not going to, while I live. He'd soon think he was master of both us, as he thinks he's master of you already' (p.119).

In this speech, Banford points out at least seven terrible features of Henry's personality which are enough to destroy any relation. However, two things must be considered: first, one has to think of the two people involved in the conversation - the speaker and the hearer. The speaker is extremely jealous, angry and desperate because she is losing her companion. Everything she says can be taken just as jealousy and so it cannot be taken seriously. The hearer is unable to distinguish anything because she is in a kind of trance, of dizziness and enchantment because of the discovery of her new self. Therefore, she will never accept what the other says. All March considers as being worth saying is: "'I don't think he's as bad as that'" (p.120).

Besides all the defects Banford has pointed out, there is another one: Henry is an eavesdropper. Thus, he can plot perversely against Banford or whoever disturbs him.

Banford says that Henry is bossy, selfish, predatory, cold and deep. March does not hear. But Banford's evaluation is right. He wants to dominate others and since now he cannot fully develop his bossy spirit he goes out after hearing the conversation. He is murderously angry with Banford who is interfering in his plot. As he cannot yet kill her he must do something to release all his repressed aggression:

He crept back to bed, but felt as if the top of his head were coming off. He could not sleep. He could not keep still. He rose, quietly dressed himself, and crept out on to the landing once more...

Then he put on his boots and his overcoat and took the gun. He did not think to go away from the farm. No, he only took the gun... He went stealthily away down a fence-side, looking for something to shoot (pp.120-1 - My underlining).

This 'something to shoot' is his hidden wish to kill Banford. As he cannot shoot her now, this desire will be released by his shooting of an animal. And at this point of the story comes the killing of the fox. The scene is very strange for me because how is Henry going to kill the animal if it represents himself? The only possible interpretation I could find is that by killing the animal, Henry becomes able to assimilate it. And because Henry has assimilated the fox, there is no reason for the animal to exist anymore. It is living in Henry. He is the fox now. Also the fox represents March's renounced, slain masculinity. Thus she does not need to be divided in the attraction between the animal and the young man. She has always identified the animal with the man and, as they have become one, her attraction will be directed to Henry who is now the animal.

In the scene which precedes the killing of the animal, there is a suggestion that, even before shooting it, Henry's behaviour is fused with the animal's (and we have already seen this several times). All Henry's does relates to the senses, especially to smell which is characteristic of animals:

[Henry] sat a long time with his eyes fixed unchanging upon the gateway... he stood up, watching with all his eyes, thinking it might be a rat. But he felt he could smell the hot, sickly, rich smell of live chickens in the cold air.

And then - a shadow. A sliding shadow in the gateway (whose shadow? Henry's or the fox's?). He gathered all his vision into a concentrated



spark, and saw the shadow of the fox, the fox creeping on his belly through the gate. There he went, on his belly like a snake... (pp.121-2 - My underlining).

If one does not read the passage carefully s/he might mix the fox with Henry. There are several 'hes' in it, which confounds the reader.

When Henry shoots the fox there is a sense that he is indeed assimilating the animal in himself:

There was a commotion everywhere. The fowls were scuffling and cawking, the ducks were quark-quarking, the pony had stamped wildly to his feet. But the fox was on his side, struggling in his last tremors. The boy bent over him and smelt his foxy smell (p.122 - My underlining).

Henry's attitude is like that of an animal who kills other animals. He gets closer and smells the dead to feel if it is really dead or not. Acting like this, Henry becomes the fox and smelling his foxy smell, it can be transferred to the young man, integrating one with the other.

Because of the shot the girls wake up and open their window to see what is going on. Henry tells them and then he addresses March the following sentence: "'He will make you a lovely fur'" (p.123). This may imply that covering March with the fox's fur, he is somehow assuming a position of protection or of domination. Protection because the fur covers the shoulders and prevents cold. Domination because the fur will be over March's skin. As the fur belongs to the fox - Henry in other words - this may imply his wish to live imposing his will over hers. But even now March does not look amiably at this 'Trojan gift': "'You don't catch me wearing a fox fur'" (ibid). The fox fur could also suggest a dominant role for her, which she rejects.

Back in her bed March has a second dream which has several meaningful images which refer to her life as a whole. First of all, the dream signals Banford's death at the end of the story. The dream refers back to March's talking with Banford about Henry. Banford pointed out that "'While I live [Henry]'s never going to set foot [at the farm]'" (p.119). March's unconscious has thrown up to her in the dream what at that hour she was not able to consider. In the dream "[March] had to put Banford into her coffin. And the coffin was the rough wood-box in which the bits of chopped wood were kept in the kitchen, by the fire" (p.123). This fact also refers back to her talking with Henry about marriage and because Banford called them, they went into the kitchen carrying the logs: "He stooped at once to take an armful of little logs and carry them into the kitchen, where they piled in a corner. March also helped, filling her arms and carrying the logs as if they were some heavy child" (pp.107-8). This also refers to the way Banford is killed by the end of the story. She is killed by a tree that March decided to cut because it was dead and because "it would make such splendid firing, in these days of scarce fuel" (p.146). The wood-box may imply this tree which kills Banford. There is also a signalling of which part of Banford's body will be involved in her killing. March in her dream tries to look for something to cover her darling's body with. The only thing "she could find that would do was a fox skin" (p.123). Then "she folded the brush of the fox and laid her darling Jill's head on this..." (ibid - My underlining). In the killing it is suggested that Banford's head is smashed by the tree: "No one saw her crouch a little and receive the blow on the back of the neck" (p.152). In other words, in getting rid of Banford, March is losing her 'animus', or

masculine identification. With Jill gone, March will be female. She will be re-'polarized'. The most important signalling in the dream seems to be the involvement of the fox's skin with Banford's head. As the fox stands for Henry and the skin is directly involved in 'helping' to make Banford more 'comfortable' in her coffin, and March places it under Banford's head, this certainly anticipates Henry's participation in the killing of the girl. It is Henry/the fox who finishes cutting the tree which kills Banford.

The following day the girls go to see the dead fox. March fondles the dead body of the animal as if she were caressing a male body, sensing it deeply and feeling terribly excited:

She passed her hand softly down it. And his wonderful blackglinted brush was full and frictional, wonderful. She passed her hand down this also, and quivered. Time after time she took the full fur of that thick tail between her fingers, and passed her hands slowly downwards. Wonderful, sharp, thick splendour of a tail. And he was dead! She pursed her lips, and her eyes went black and vacant. Then she took the head in her hand (p.124).

It is as if she were having her first sexual intercourse with a male. Furthermore, the way Henry looks at her and describes his feelings towards her leads to this idea of sexual intercourse: "He watched her, he could make nothing of her. Partly she was so shy, so virgin, and partly she was so grim, matter-of-fact, shrewish. What she said seemed to him so different from the look of her big, queer, dark eyes" (p.125 - My underlining). This sense of intercourse as being the first one with a male is brought out by the words "shy", "virgin" and also by March's sensations after touching the dead fox:

'My word, what a strong smell he's got! Pooo! It'll take some washing off one's hands. I don't know why I was so silly as to handle him.' And

she looked at her right hand, that had passed down his belly and along his tail, and had even got a tiny streak of blood from one dark place in his fur (ibid - My underlining).

The fact that she has got a tiny streak of blood in her hand implies the loss of her virginity and also her entry into the female world of sensual unrepressed feelings. She is becoming initiated as a woman, as a female.

Another image brought out by the fox's fur leads one to think that March's life at Henry's side is not going to be an ideal one: "Later in the day she saw the fox's skin nailed flat on a board, as if crucified. It gave her an uneasy feeling" (ibid - My underlining). The word 'crucified' here implies sacrifice. That is how her life with Henry will perhaps be. That is why she feels uneasy when seeing it. Also her uneasy feeling implies the possibility of her relation with Henry be a sado-masochistic one. Henry of course seems to be the sadist.

March's complete entry into the female world occurs when she changes her manly clothes and starts wearing woman's conventional clothes. She blossoms as a female when she sews a dress for herself.

Henry is caught up with sensual thoughts about March. Notice that this is the first time he thinks sensually about her. Before he was 'piqued' by her figure 'like a young man' (latent homosexuality in Henry?). Now Henry wants to discover her woman's breasts under her manly clothes. There is an interesting contrast Henry makes concerning March and Banford:

It seemed to him like some perilous secret, that [March's] soft woman's breasts must be buttoned up in that uniform. It seemed to him, moreover, that they were so much softer, tenderer, more lovely and lovable, shut up in that tunic, than were Banford's breasts under her soft blouses

and chiffon dresses. The Banford would have little iron breasts, he said to himself. For all her frailty and fretfulness and delicacy, she would have tiny iron breasts. But March, under her crude, fast, workman's tunic, would have soft, white breasts, white and unseen. So he told himself, and his blood burned (p.132).

This certainly defines quite well the qualities of both women. March though man-like, hides a feminine nature. Only she has to be discovered and that is what Henry is trying to do. Banford, on the other hand, hides her masculinity under her soft blouses and light dresses. The girls are opposites. But even though Banford hides her masculinity with 'delicacy', she cannot be said to look like a female (in conventional terms). Everything she says sounds rough, authoritative, showing that she is in fact much more manly than the other whose clothes disguise her as a man.

When the night comes, March appears wearing a light dress, just as if to prove everything Henry has been imagining. In her feminine clothes, March stops hiding her femininity. "And to [Henry's] amazement March was dressed in a dress of dull, green silk crape. His mouth came open in surprise. If she had suddenly grown a moustache he could not have been more surprised" (ibid). Furthermore, she seems now to be blossoming like a frail female: "She was blushing all the time..." (ibid) and "Through the crape her woman's form seemed soft and womanly" (p.133). Besides this 'surprise' the night also brings hints of Banford's death because of some words in the narrative:

'Oh, for goodness' sake, say something somebody,' cried Banford fretfully. 'It might be a funeral.' The boy looked at her and she could not bear his face.

'A funeral!' said March with a twisted smile. 'Why, that breaks my dream.'

Suddenly she had thought of Banford in the wood-box for a coffin (pp.133-4 - My underlining).

Then Henry invites March to go out with him: "'I think I'll go and look if I can see the she-fox, she may be creeping round. Won't you come as well for a minute, Nellie, and see if we can see something?'" (p.135). The way March answers shows her indecisiveness when the young man addresses her: "'Me!' cried March, looking up with her startled, wondering face" (ibid). March's surprise implies that she was not expecting the invitation. The 'she-fox' Henry says is no other than March herself who now dresses as a woman. It is interesting to notice that except for the surprising 'Me!' March does not say anything anymore. Banford is the one who questions Henry as if she were March's proprietor: "'I should think you're never going out at this time at night, Nellie!'" (ibid). Henry takes March's turn to answer in a declared fight with Banford. March is as if she had no voice, no will, nothing:

'Yes, just for a minute,' said the boy, looking round on her and speaking with an odd, sharp yelp in his voice.

March looked from one to another, as if confused, vague. Banford rose to her feet for battle.

'Why, it's ridiculous. It's bitter cold. You'll catch your death in that frock. And in those slippers. You're not going to do any such thing.'

There was a moment's pause. Banford turtled up like a little fighting cock, facing March and the boy.

'Oh, I don't think you need worry yourself,' he replied. 'A moment under the stars won't do any damage, I'll get the rug off the sofa in the dining room. You're coming, Nellie' (ibid).

Banford and Henry act as if they were competing owners of March's will. It is as if she were dumb or a little child whose parents are arguing about it, trying to decide whether the child must or must not play: "His voice had so much anger and contempt and fury in it as he spoke to Banford: and so much tenderness and proud authority as he spoke to March, that the latter answered: 'Yes, I'm coming' (pp.135-6).

From this point on, March has fallen completely under the power of the youth. She does not reply logically anymore. She mechanically obeys him. And though she seems repented of going out and wants to go back to the weeping Banford, Henry holds her tightly, forbidding her to go. He makes a sort of plea to her that sounds not like pleading but rather like blackmail and March submits to him, impotent to fight against his powerful authority over her. Henry's intelligence acts upon March as a spell, he knows how to trap her so that she cannot even have a sight of the house where Banford is: "He had put her in the corner, so that she should not look out and see the lighted window of the house across the dark garden. He tried to keep her all there inside the shed with him" (p.137).

The fact that Henry does not make love to March in the shed puzzles me: he has her under his power; she has submitted to him and the atmosphere favors him. However, he seems to reject love-making. It is as if he had realized something deeper in her which makes him run away from her. It seems that he has suddenly realized that she was much more than what he expected her to be. The idea of March being "a woman, and vulnerable, accessible..." makes him "shrank from any such performance, almost with fear" (p.138). Henry seems to be seeing in March a different kind of person and that "She was the woman, and he was responsible for the strange vulnerability..." in her. It seems that this sudden realization makes him shrink from her as if he were afraid of hurting her because she is not like other girls "nice enough for a bit of play". It may be that March is only fit for marriage, not for an affair. This forbids him to have sex with her. Probably if he makes love to her he will feel guilty as a victorian puritan. He therefore must be

'honest' so as not to 'hurt' her.

In their return to the house March's face looks different: she "had a delicate look on her face; she wanted to hide her face, to screen it, to let it not be seen" (p.140). (Is there a suggestion of a veil like an Arabian woman, submissive to her male?). To be with a man makes her now feel pleased:

She wished she could stay with him. She wished she had married him already, and it was all over. For oh, she felt suddenly so safe with him. She felt so strangely safe and peaceful in his presence. If she only could sleep in his shelter, not with Jill... (p.141).

She rejects the repressive Banford and "she wanted the boy to save her" (ibid).

The following day Henry returns to his camp in Salisbury Plain. His marriage with March is arranged for Christmas. However, nine days after his leave, March writes him a letter breaking the engagement. Banford has got March back to her: "... when I am along with Jill I seem to come to my own senses and realize what a fool I am making of myself, and how I am treating you unfairly ... I don't see on what grounds I am going to marry you..." (pp.142-3). March seems sure that she has much more in common with Banford who "is ten times more real to me. I know her and I'm awfully fond of her... We have a life together. And even if it can't last for ever, it is a life while it does last" (p.143). Banford is her choice because with her March feels free whereas with Henry she cannot see any of the prospects she has with Banford. She chooses Banford because with her, the world is familiar. Here we have again the battle between an old and familiar self versus the new unknown self. The dark part of herself - her femaleness - shrinks from this acknowledgement. Being manly near Banford is much more familiar



to March. With Henry she will have to assimilate the female part of herself which in the letter she denies. Of course Banford is physiologically the same, another woman, while Henry is 'sexually' other.

Despite March's reasons, Henry does not give up. He knows that Banford is responsible for March's refusal of him:

In his mind was one thing - Banford. He took no heed of all March's outpouring: none. One thorn rankled, stuck in his mind. Banford. In his mind, in his soul, in his whole being one thorn rankling to insanity. And he would have to get it out. He would have to get the thorn of Banford out of his life, if he died for it (p.144 - My underlining).

Having decided to make Banford vanish from his life Henry asks for a leave of absence to solve the matter. He then rides madly on a bicycle to get to Bailey Farm.

At the farm March is busy trying to cut a dead tree. This is the third main idea of this analysis, the one which I intend to take as my final point. Summarizing the first two: one is related to March's manly appearance in which she disguised her divided self. The other idea refers to March's 'unsatisfied tendencies' which culminates in her trance when she discovered her female side through the fox and then through Henry. These first ideas are solved, one may say, by the time March finally blossoms in the scene of the dress she wears and which reveals her womanly forms - external and internal. The last idea, which refers to the cutting of the dead tree, leads to the total recognition in March of her hidden femininity and the destruction of her masculine side. The cutting of this tree implies several things which deserve some consideration. Firstly, the tree relates to March's masculinity. It has, as the tree, died in the summer, just before the fox's coming. March's masculinity

was dying because she was discovering in herself the duplicity of her being and also because of the necessity of having to make a choice. Her mind could never accept to being male and female at the same time. Her affair with Banford was collapsing: "there was nothing to keep them up - and no hope" (p.88) since that time. The dead tree "had died in the summer, and stood with all its needles brown and sere in the air" (p. 146). Banford, who stands for the feeding of March's male side, can be seen as the needles of the dead tree which, though dead, may still hurt. Banford, being alive, means the persistence of this side of March's personality. The tree (and Banford in extension) must be cut: "So March determined to have it, although they were not allowed to cut any of the timber" (ibid). March, having decided to cut the tree (a phallic symbol or a representation of the clitoris that represented March's masculinity), is unconsciously trying to get rid of her male side. A second idea is that March alone will never be able to destroy this part in herself. There must be someone else to help her. This 'someone else' is no other than the man who awakened the female in her: Henry. March is having trouble cutting the tree when Henry arrives. No one who is there (Banford and her parents) except for March recognizes the man in the distance. All her previous reasons in the letter disappear: "The moment she saw his glowing, red face it was all over with her. She was as helpless as if she had been bound" (p.148). She is no longer feeling safe with Banford. Henry has again aroused in her the same sense of helplessness as when he first appeared in the farm. He is something she cannot fight against.

When he asks what they are doing, "March seemed not to hear, as if in a trance" (p.149). Banford answers in her place

and once more the answer goes back to the sense that March alone (without Banford's help) has discovered her femininity: "'Nellie's done it all, I've done nothing,' said Banford". Then Henry says "'Let me just finish it for you, shall I?' said the boy" (p.150). It seems to me that as he is partly responsible for March's awakening, he must also help to destroy what is left of her masculinity represented by the dead tree.

Henry replaces March and when he is going to start the cutting some ducks appear in the way the tree is supposed to fall. Banford tries to send them away. But the ducks turn to her in a fierce way as if to warn her of something: "... they came eagerly towards her, opening their yellow-green beaks and quacking as if they were so excited to say something" (ibid). Banford does not take this 'warning' and goes behind them trying to make them find another way, and she goes near the fence exactly where the tree is going to fall. Seeing her there Henry becomes a hunter again: he looks at her and looks at the tree as if thinking what might happen:

As he looked into the sky, like a huntsman who is watching a flying bird, he thought to himself: 'If the tree falls in just such a way, and spins so much as it falls, then the branch there will strike her exactly as she stands on the top of that bank' (p.151 - My underlining).

Poor Banford, if she only could penetrate the mind of this devilish hunter she would never have got so close to the fence! His perversity is so strong that he seems to exert a kind of hypnotism that spellbinds people so that they behave in the exact way he wants them to do. He is like a snake mesmerizing its prey:

In his heart he had decided her death. A terrible force seemed in him, and a power that

was just his. If he turned even a hair's breath in the wrong direction, he would lose the power (ibid - My underlining).

Furthermore, the way he asks Banford to go away from the fence sounds like a challenge. He knows that Banford will not obey him. She will stay where she is: "The tone of his voice seemed to her to imply that he was only being falsely solicitous, and trying to make her move because it was his will to move her" (ibid). Then it is done. Banford does not move following her father's judgement - he disagrees with Henry about where the safe place to stand is. Thus she rejects Henry's (insincere) warning. The tree falls on Banford's head, proving the premonition of March's dream. This murder is not perceived by anybody though there are three eye-witnesses: March and Banford's parents:

No one saw [Banford] flung outwards and laid, a little twitching heap, at the foot of the fence. No one except the boy. And he watched with intense bright eyes, as he would watch a wild goose he had shot. Was it winged or dead? Dead! (p.152).

Henry's behaviour is like that of a professional murderer. He simply says, as cold as ice: "'I'm afraid it's killed her'" (ibid) as if he had nothing to do with the death.

After this scene of cruelty Lawrence simply points out that "[Henry] had won" (p.153) as if the story itself had been a way to praise the male supremacy. But it is not. And Lawrence himself is not so sure of this so-called supremacy, otherwise he would simply end his story here:

He never moved, but looked down on her. And among all the torture of his own heart and bowels, he was glad, he had won.

After a long time he stooped to her and took her hands.

'Don't cry,' he said softly. 'Don't cry.'

She looked up at him with tears running from her eyes, a senseless look of helplessness and submission. So she gazed on him as if sightless, yet looking up at him. She would never leave him again. He had won her. And he knew it and was glad, because he wanted her for his life. His life must have her. And now he had won her. It was what his life must have (ibid).

This would be a satisfactory end because March is seen in submissive terms in relation to Henry. She, who started looking down at Henry, is now looking up at him which shows her inferiority towards the man. But Lawrence's story goes on and the end of the novella does not show clearly who is the master of whom. In fact Lawrence's narrative shows an internal conflict between March's will-to-independence and Henry's chauvinistic desire to put her down at his feet. There is no conclusion in the battle as we will see in more detail in the conclusion of this work.

"The Fox" closes Lawrence's second phase. This novella plus Women in Love marks the struggle for balance in perhaps the most serious way. And although neither of them clearly presents a successful love-match, Women in Love can be said to present through Ursula and Birkin a feeling of a more or less balanced couple exactly because they preserve their differences. This does not occur in "The Fox" because the characters do not in fact verbalize their opposite opinions. Birkin and Henry are indeed chauvinists, but it can be said that because of Birkin's intellectuality, he seems to hide this 'virtue' of his character in a better way than Henry. Birkin, no matter that his practice is miles away from his theory, will never admit that he wants to dominate Ursula. Henry, on the other hand, is no more than an adolescent who has no such intellectuality as Birkin's. He is in fact rude and perhaps due to this his practice is 'more

sincere' than Birkin's. Henry is much closer to be a 'dark male' than is Lawrence's spokesman in Women in Love. However, he cannot be entirely considered as a dark male as is Cipriano in The Plumed Serpent. Ursula and March are not really soulful as Hermione, Mrs Morel, and Helena, but both heroines can be considered as independents. They do want balance. Their men do not.

## CHAPTER V

### *THE PLUMED SERPENT - THE ASCENDENCE OF THE DARK MALE*

'... the balance lies in that when one goes up,  
the other goes down. One acts, the other takes.  
It is the only way in love.'

(Aaron's Rod, p.287).

During the so-called 'leadership period', Lawrence finally decided that his previous yearnings for balance in Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow and Women in Love will no longer constitute the main quest of his characters. Women must definitely bow and submit to the men. It is in his third phase, or the period represented by Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo and The Plumed Serpent that Lawrence experiments with punishing his strong female characters by attempting to destroy their spirituality and transforming them into blind parrots of male supremacy. It is in these three novels that Lawrence develops the bloodbrotherhood theme with an apparently more successful result. It is also in the leadership novels that the author provokes a certain collapse in the relation between man and woman. This relation is definitely placed in a secondary sphere. The man-to-man relationship is in a fierce opposition with the man-to-woman relation. However,

even here Lawrence could not present an achieved balance. The balance is still related to Birkin's theory of 'star-polarity', or, as Ursula sees it, as one mate being the 'satellite' of the other. In the man-to-man 'friendship' there will be a dominant partner and a submissive one. This is what the relationships of Aaron and Lilly, Kangaroo and Somers, and Ramón and Cipriano imply. It seems, therefore, that in essence Lawrence has not changed. His mind still cannot cope with equilibrium. This is also true in relation to Lawrence's eternal conflict between soul and body. These two elements are still not in harmony. Each belongs to a different character. In these novels, the male characters are married but unhappy in their marriages. Their frustrated relations lead them to break them in order to search for a 'rebirth' in another kind of relation with other men. But, as I said, in these relations is always present the idea of submission to a more powerful and authoritarian partner.

In these novels the search for power is a strong theme. Not only power in personal relations but power in the political sense. Daleski, in The Forked Flame (1965), defines the three novels of Lawrence's leadership phase:

In Aaron's Rod, it will be remembered, the world was to be saved, prospectively, by a leader who would know how to exercise power. In Kangaroo power is considered in relation to politics and to possible alternatives to an outmoded system of democracy, but in the end political programmes are found to be wholly inefficacious. Somers, the Lawrence-like protagonist of the novel, finally realizes that 'the only thing is the God who is the source of all passion. Once go down before the God-passion and human passions take their right rhythm' (p.221). As the passage quoted above indicates, it is to 'the great dark God, the ithyphallic, of the first dark religions' that he turns - and it is this God who is resurrected in The Plumed Serpent. The myth, however, leaves us with the uncomfortable suspicion that the God is reborn as much to vindicate a mode of personal



relations that Lawrence seems determined to establish as to point the way to salvation (p.213).

In The Plumed Serpent this 'way to salvation' is enacted, as Daleski implies, through the rebirth of the Quetzalcoatl God. This novel seems to be a result of the frustrated personal relation between the mentor of the new religion - Ramón Carrasco - and his wife Doña Carlota. Ramón has been married to this woman, who in several ways has much in common with the soulful women of Lawrence's previous novels. One may draw a parallel between Carlota and Mrs Morel and also to the heroine of The Plumed Serpent, Kate Leslie, and see that their husbands' search for a major fulfilment outside their homes is due to their frustrated lives inside the homes they share with their wives.

In this chapter my main concern is to show that Lawrence, up to a certain point, still takes the woman's point of view of his early novels and somehow distorts it as a way to direct the woman not to independence nor to a balanced relation with a man, but to her sacrificial submission to the male power. She leaves her soul apart from herself and submits in the flesh. This comes after a battle between her old and new self. Man also goes through this same battle and his choice for a new self implies the creation of a new religion which still divides body and soul, despite the author's deep effort to achieve with the Quetzalcoatl religion a union of these two halves.

### 1. The farewell to the old self

Ramón and Kate are two different characters with points in common: both are departing from an old and tiring life in which

they have tried hard not to be swallowed up by their ex-partners. They are somehow similar in the sense that they are soulful characters. They differ in the sense that each uses his/her mind for different purposes. Ramón, getting rid of his old life, attempts, and apparently succeeds, in transforming his country into a place where people can meet in 'the twilight of the Morning Star'. Kate, on the other hand, attempts to get rid of her old self and knows almost nothing about her future till the moment she meets Cipriano and Ramón and becomes the doubtful Malintzi, the goddess of forgiveness.

The Plumed Serpent evaluates the two characters differently. Lawrence in depicting Kate shows her at first positive but with some suspicious traits. The point of view in the novel is almost entirely hers and sometimes we do not know if we trust Kate as a separate character or if we see her as one of Lawrence's mouthpieces. Kate is seen several times as if the author were interfering in her own thoughts so as to produce exactly the kind of feeling that he would have if he were her. Through Kate, for instance, Lawrence propounds a positive view of the man-to-man relation:

It seemed to Kate that the highest thing this country might produce would be some powerful relationship of man to man. Marriage itself would be always a casual thing (p.167).

Female characters in Lawrence's previous novels would never be able to accord with the above statement. It would be useful to contrast Kate's thought here with Ursula's quarrel with Birkin at the end of Women in Love. There, Ursula could not admit the possibility of Birkin having a man-friend such as he wanted to find in Gerald Crich. Ursula told Birkin that it was a 'perversity', an 'obstinacy' to have such a communion with a

man. But in The Plumed Serpent Kate, a woman, is the one who first of all admits this possibility even though she has not (yet) noticed Ramón and Cipriano's tendency towards homosexuality. It seems that Lawrence is forcing such a thought on Kate as a way to punish Ursula (or Frieda?) for her denial of Birkin's desire for a man-friend. Also it seems that in viewing the possibility of a man-to-man relationship Lawrence is denying Kate the right to choose or to find a man for her to love. There is also the fact that in Women in Love Lawrence has put in Ursula's mouth the arguments to reject Birkin's desire. Now in The Plumed Serpent, the author denies this capacity to Kate since it is he who reports Kate's thoughts. She does not say anything directly. Lawrence speaks for her and this implies a narrative which is strongly controlled by the author so as to prevent his characters from saying things that he would not have them saying. This fact weakens the book because the author seems to be much more worried about conveying a certain message than letting the message flow through the characters. Kate, therefore, can be seen as perhaps another Ursula, more corrupt and more tied to the author's interests than to her own.

Another parallel can be drawn between Ursula and Kate in the sense that Ursula is given a chance to choose Birkin as her husband. She is also allowed to disagree with his theories. This fact implies that Lawrence was sympathetic to Ursula because he did not deny her the right to have a different opinion from her partner. Ursula is not forced by the author to bow and submit to Birkin, although he unconsciously wanted her to do it. Lawrence's behaviour with Kate is, on the other hand, completely different. He 'forces' her to accept a husband with whom she has nothing in common. Cipriano is thrown to Kate as her

ultimate choice, Kate is not given any chance to reject him. Lawrence pushes Kate into Cipriano's arms as if he were saying: "Here you have everything you deserve". It is a 'prize' for her soulful character, which has always thought in terms of a balanced relation with a man. Cipriano, Lawrence's new-born dark male, is the master; Kate must be his servant. The worst of all is the idea that Lawrence puts them together and stresses all the time the couple's strangeness. The problem seems to be that even being strangers, Lawrence forces Kate to be with this man whom she does not love and who denies her the right to have sexual pleasure in their intercourse. Their marriage is decided because the man, Cipriano, decides it. The man looks as if he had mesmerized Kate (like Henry's dream of happiness with a mesmerized March) and she feels impotent to answer him. He decides everything:

His desire seemed curiously impersonal, physical, and yet not personal at all. She felt as if for him, she had some other name, she moved within another species...

Yet surely, surely he was only putting his will over her?... he had made her see the physical possibility of marrying him ... But surely, surely it would not be *herself* who could marry him. It would be some curious female within her, whom she did not know and did not own...

Really, he seemed sinister to her, almost repellent. Yet she hated to think that she merely was afraid: that she had not the courage...

'Well!' he said suddenly. 'When shall it be?'

'What?' she said, glancing up into his black eyes with real fear.

'The marriage.'

She looked at him, almost hypnotised with amazement that he would have gone so far. And even now, she had not the power to make him retreat.

'I don't know,' she said.

'Will you say in August? On the first of August?'

'I won't say any time,' she said (pp.259-60).

Although Kate does not answer Cipriano, it is clear that she has fallen under the man's spell and will not contradict him. And

this fate implies punishment because Kate is in fact in love with the other man, Don Ramón, and Lawrence does not allow them to marry. Ramón is the right partner for Kate, as she thinks:

And perhaps Ramón is the only one I couldn't quite escape from, because he really touches me somewhere inside. But from you, you little Cipriano, I should have no need to escape, because I could not be caught by you (p.225).

The question is, therefore, how come the idea that Kate accepts the 'little Cipriano' as her husband? The answer is that she does not accept him: Lawrence forces her to marry Cipriano because with Ramón Kate would have perhaps the same life as she seems to have had with her previous husband Joachim. Kate and Ramón would fight for 'balance', for 'meeting and mingling'. This 'balance' neither Ramón nor Cipriano wants. As Ramón seems more flexible, he and Kate perhaps would not have a relation of domination and submission. Marrying Kate with Cipriano, Lawrence will definitely attain his desire for the woman's submission (as he wanted between March and Henry in "The Fox") because Cipriano's sadism as a lover will put Kate at his feet.

It seems important to talk about Kate's previous marriage to Joachim as a way to follow the steps of her 'submission' to Cipriano and her frustrated love for Ramón.

Kate spends her fortieth birthday (about Lawrence's age!) in Mexico. The fact that she is now forty years old makes her see herself as if she were on the threshold of her life. She has crossed a long road to be where she is now, and she has to see forward so as to discover what life has in store for her. The point of Kate's conflict is explained when she realizes what her life has been and what it is to be in the future: "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 other side something different: reserve, responsibility, a certain standing back from "fun" (p.50). For Kate, she has lived half a life, a "bright page with its flowers and its love" which ended with the death of her second husband Joachim. The future for her is a new page and it seems that her prospects are not good because she feels the future as a 'dark page'. The point is perhaps her fear of Mexico and the sense of doom it evokes in her. It is as if she were on a "high plateau of death". Her conflict derives from this sensation of doom, and from having to decide whether to stay or to go away from Mexico. She knows that somehow she wants a new self because her old one lies behind her in Europe, associated with her dead husband:

Joachim Leslie, her dead husband, she had loved as much as a woman can love a man: that is, to the bounds of human love. Then she had realised that human love has its limits, that there is a beyond. And Joachim dead, willy nilly her spirit had passed the bounds. She was no longer in love with love. She no longer yearned for the love of a man, or the love even of her children. Joachim had gone into eternity in death, and she had crossed with him a certain eternity in life. There, the yearning for companionship and sympathy and human love had left her (pp.61-2).

Kate apparently knows that she does not want 'human love' or 'companionship'. This she has already shared with Joachim. Now she wants other feelings to fulfil her inner yearnings: "the flower of her soul was opening" (p.62). One may think that what she indeed wants is a communion of her soul with another soul for "she must preserve herself from worldly contacts" (ibid). If Kate is really eager to 'open her soul', one wonders again why she has submitted herself to the dark male in Cipriano who has no connection with soul. Everything about him refers to his body

and his sensuality and this seems to be what Kate does not want. What is then Lawrence's purpose in marrying this woman with Cipriano? Is Kate wishing unconsciously for a communion in the flesh though she does not realize this? The answer does not seem clear since Lawrence does not provide it in his narrative. Kate's marriage to Joachim looks much like Lydia's to Paul Lensky. Both men are revolutionaries. Their difference lies perhaps in the fact that Lydia lived through a blind obedience to Paul's ideals. She did not think by herself. Joachim, on the other hand, seems more flexible and Kate does not apparently complain about the fact that she lived through Joachim. The idea one gets, looking at Kate and Joachim's marriage, is that Kate is a woman who can only love men who are not ordinary, as Joachim was not:

'...It took me years to understand that a woman *can't* love a man - at least a woman like I am *can't* - if he is only the sort of good, decent citizen. With Joachim I came to realise that a woman like me *can* only love a man who is fighting to *change* the world, to make it freer, more alive... A woman who isn't quite ordinary herself can only love a man who is fighting for something beyond the ordinary life' (pp.74-5).

This makes Kate seem much more like Ramón than Cipriano. Firstly because Ramón wants to change Mexico, he is a fighter, as Kate says. Secondly because Cipriano is only a shadow of Ramón. He takes no attitude apart from those Ramón demands of him. Furthermore, Joachim was an Irish leader who fought to free Ireland from British dominion and Cipriano belongs to the Mexican army, he is a general and he is transforming nothing. He is a mere soldier in the lowest sense. He is no fighter. Only Ramón seems able to give Kate what she wants:

... she knew that what she wanted was for her soul to live. The life of days and facts and

happenings was dead on her, and she was like a corpse. But away inside her a new light was burning, the light of her innermost soul...

Ramón had lighted [her soul]. And once it was lighted the world went hollow and dead, all the world-activities were empty weariness to her. Her soul! Her frail, innermost soul! She wanted to live *its* life, not her own life (p.337).

That seems why she decides to stay in Mexico: to revive her soul. This new self is apparently what she wants. However, Lawrence interferes and puts Kate in Cipriano's arms. He who is no soul, no spirit. He, a man who is only flesh and blood! The narrative is then a tug-of-war between Kate's fearful wish to live by her soul and Lawrence who is pulling her towards a purely carnal relation. Once, when Kate has saved Ramón from dying, she thinks that he has lost much blood and that "she too, in other ways, had been drained of the blood of the body. She felt bloodless and powerless" (ibid). Here Lawrence takes the advantage of Kate being 'bloodless and powerless' and pulls Cipriano to her: "... the new blood would come. One day Cipriano came..." (ibid). Lawrence is indeed forcing a meeting of Kate and Cipriano as if to say that Kate cannot live by her soul, but only by her body. It seems that she does not deserve Ramón. He is not for her.

Ramón's life with Doña Carlota is very different from Kate and Joachim's. The main and big trouble with Ramón's marriage is that in ideas he differs from his wife. She is in some aspects, as I pointed out before, very similar to Mrs Morel. Carlota is another soulful woman, a fierce defender of her children against their father. Here there is a difference in the quality of her defense in relation to Mrs Morel's: Carlota defends her children against Ramón's ideas. The poor father of Sons and Lovers can hardly be called a man of thought. Also



Ramón cannot be compared to Walter Morel in what refers to the children. Walter loves his children and is put apart from them because of the mother. Ramón, on the other hand, does not seem to love his children very much. I would rather say that he feels some contempt for them. This may occur because Ramón feels as if they belonged exclusively to Carlota and not to them both. And Ramón in a way despises his two sons who have preferred to follow their mother's ideas. One may even say that although Lawrence in his later works has tried to redeem his father, he could not because these children of The Plumed Serpent, like the ones of Sons and Lovers, still hate the father (although Ramón cannot in the least be said to represent the father. He would rather represent Paul Morel because of his conflict with soulful women) and the children even say that when they grow up they will kill Ramón.

Ramón fears women like Carlota (and Kate) because they compete with men with their ideas. They represent a danger for men like Ramón who needs by his side a submissive woman (like Teresa whom he marries by the end of the novel) so that he can be the master of the home. Ramón classifies women as if they belonged to two classes, as he tells Kate:

'Those that want to be ravished are parasites on the soul, and one has revulsions. Those that want to ravish a man are vampires. And between the two, there is nothing.'

'Surely there are *some* really good women?'

'Well, show me them. They are all potential Carlotas or-or-yes, Caterinas...' (pp.300-1).

What Ramón implies with his sophisticated talking is that he does not believe in a relation of harmony between man and woman. Carlota, as he implies, is a 'ravisher', a 'vampire', as well as Kate. He must get rid of Carlota and he will never be able to love Kate because she is also a 'ravisher'. He also implies

(although there is no mentioning) that if it is impossible to love a woman, man must turn to a man and love him. However, if it is not possible to love a woman because it is like a battle of wills and the partners are either 'victims or victimizers' it strikes me that it does not depend on the sexes involved, for even in a man-to-man relationship there may be a relation of dominance between the two. One partner will 'victimize' the other. Thinking in these terms Ramón explains to Kate why he never gave himself to Carlota: he keeps himself for the other man he may be expecting to meet. This fact somehow destroyed his marriage with Carlota. She resembles Mrs Morel here in the sense that Carlota wants Ramón the way she "would have him be" (p.380). Mrs Morel also wanted to transform Morel the way he would fit to her. Carlota feels that as Ramón is not up to her ideal she has failed.

The couple does not respect each other's ideas. Ramón despises Carlota's Christianity and charity. She, on the other hand, knows that all his desire to revive Quetzalcoatl is based on the power motive:

'Power! Just power! Just foolish, wicked power... he wants to be worshipped. To be worshipped! To be worshipped! A God! He, whom I've held, I've held in my arms! He is a child, as all men are children. And now he wants - to be worshipped-! (p.181).

Here we may compare Kate's relationship to Joachim with Ramón and Carlota's. Joachim told Kate before his death that he felt somehow responsible for not reaching his goal either in his struggle to free Ireland or in his love life with Kate. It may be said that Joachim's revolutionary life has been only an escape from a deeper relatedness to Kate because he may have feared her as a woman. And so it happens with Ramón and

Carlota. The fact that Ramón wants fiercely to build a new religion may be seen as an evasion of his intimate life with Carlota. He fears her and because of this fear he escapes home as Joachim perhaps did. This seems to be why Ramón feels that Kate, like Carlota, has 'ravished' Joachim.

When Ramón intensifies the revival of Quetzalcoatl, Carlota goes to live in Sayula, leaving Ramón in his *hacienda* in Jamiltepec. She only comes to meet him again when Ramón opens the church to the new God. When the new followers are inside the church in their positions of "male erectness" and "female submission" Carlota rushes into the church screaming like mad and faints. Cipriano and Kate take her outside the church. Carlota is dying because she could not control her husband and she feels she has been murdered by Ramón. Here seems to be one of the climaxes of the book's anti-maternal (or anti-Frieda) hysteria. Cipriano in seeing Carlota dying, accuses her:

'Ramón, he's murdered me, and lost his own soul,' said Carlota. 'He has murdered me, and lost his own soul. He is a murderer, and one of the damned. The man I married! The man I married! A murderer among the damned!'

'Doña Carlota!' [Cipriano] said, looking down at her dulled hazel eyes, that were fixed and unseeing: 'Do not die with wrong words on your lips. If you are murdered, you have murdered yourself. You were never married to Ramón. You were married to your own way' (pp.379-80).

Cipriano, a shadow of Ramón, defends him against the possessive wife. Carlota is seen like a culprit having to defend herself against Ramón's advocate. I believe that if Cipriano had already been initiated as the Huitzilopochtli God he would certainly strangle the defenseless Carlota for what he presumes she has done to his master Ramón. As he cannot, he helps to hasten her death with insults which even Carlota's 'ghost' refuses to hear: "... you stale virgin, you spinster, you born

widow, you weeping mother, you impeccable wife, you just woman... Oh die! - die! - die! Die and be a thousand times dead! Do nothing but utterly die!" (p.381). The point is perhaps that both men, Ramón and Cipriano, have united themselves against the female, their soul-enemy. It may also be observed that Cipriano is by Carlota's death bed, rather than Ramón himself. Ramón would not (perhaps) have thrown at Carlota so many harsh words and as he is not there, Cipriano replaces him to condemn Carlota.

Through Carlota's death Ramón frees himself. Now he does not belong to any woman, nor does he belong to his own children. As soon as the mother dies, Ramón dispenses with the children because he does not want them near him. Father and children have a quarrel and Ramón even compels his children to live apart from him. The religion of Quetzalcoatl is at the surface of their separation but in fact what makes Ramón leave his sons is his hatred for what they represent. They are a living part of Carlota's ideals and as they do not match Ramón's, he despises his children as an extension of his hatred for Carlota. The children are part of his past, of his old self and as he wants a new self, he turns the page of his dark past to open up the promising bright page of his future as the God Quetzalcoatl.

## 2. Meeting the new self: the marriage of opposites

Ramón once said that "'There is no such thing as liberty. You only change one sort of domination for another... liberty is a change of chains'" (pp.77-8) and, although he has directed his words to social politics, they may also be connected with love relations. There are at least three moments to which I want to

devote special attention: the opening of the Quetzalcoatl church, Kate's marriage to Cipriano and the bloodbrotherhood ritual between Ramón and Cipriano.

The Quetzalcoatl religion is defined basically by the idea that men and women shall meet in "the twilight of the Morning Star". In other words, the doctrine of this religion preaches the theory of 'balance'. However, what this religion actually means is the formal and total submission of the female. It also implies a 'change of chains': people are being freed from the authoritarianism and domination of the Catholic church to be entirely submissive to the new God. Putting it clearly: the Quetzalcoatl religion exerts yet another form of domination over its followers who, in their turn, are subdivided: men dominate their women: women are worshippers of the men and they all (men and women) are worshippers of Quetzalcoatl. Cipriano, Ramón's official spokesman, commands the new followers as if he were dealing with a bunch of monkeys without will:

[Cipriano's] voice rang out clear and military:  
 'Hear me, people. You may enter the house of Quetzalcoatl. Men must go to the right and left, and remove their shoes, and stand erect. To the new God no men shall kneel.  
'Women must go down the centre, and cover their faces. And they must sit upon the floor.  
 'But men must stand erect.  
 'Pass now those who dare' (p.371 - My underlining).

First of all, the above passage conveys the males' domineering position, sandwiching the crouched passive females. Secondly, the women's covered faces imply both their blind obedience to the erect male and also to Quetzalcoatl whom they are not even allowed to face. They are inferior to the men and to the God.

The most degrading thing about the new religion is that it does not respect the liberty of people who disagree with

Quetzalcoatl and choose not to follow it. Lawrence, in a clear symptom of nervous breakdown, introduces human sacrifices which are performed by the living god Hutzilopochtli, the bloody executioner of Quetzalcoatl. It is the apex of Lawrence's madness in writing this book. The choice of the new religion which replaces Catholicism is, instead of a regained freedom, a regression to barbaric rituals of murder where Cipriano incarnates the power to decide people's lives. Lawrence also imposes an acceptance of the murders on Kate. Her acceptance is a denial of her previous refusal to see the bullfight in the beginning of the novel which, compared to the human sacrifices, is only minor brutality. These two different moments in Kate's life show two Lawrences: the sane author who treated his character as a human being showing the nauseating sensation Kate felt in seeing a spectacle of violence in the bullfight and the insane one who transformed the woman into an accomplice of human violence. In the bullfight Kate was horrified by what men made the animals do:

Kate had never been taken so completely by surprise in all her life. She had still cherished some idea of gallant show. And before she knew where she was, she was watching a bull whose shoulders trickled blood goring his horns up and down inside the belly of a prostrate and feebly plunging old horse.

The shock almost overpowered her. She had come for a gallant show. This she had paid to see. Human cowardice and beastliness, a smell of blood, a nauseous whiff of bursten bowels! She turned her face away (p.13 - My underlining).

And she ran way from the place unable to face the stupidity and violence of the show. And then we see a new Kate who agrees with human sacrifices! It is as if Kate herself had forgotten her senses to feel herself superior to the sacrificed people. She is a goddess:

... when she remembered [Cipriano's] stabbing the three helpless peons, she thought: why should I judge him? He is one of the gods... Why do I care if he kills people? ... He is Huitzilopochtli, and I am Malintzi. What do I care, what Cipriano Viedma does or doesn't do? Or even what Kate Leslie does or doesn't do! (p.431) - My underlining).

What she considered in the bullfight as 'human cowardice and beastliness' becomes in the human sacrifices a thing of the gods. Kate does not care, she does not judge. Lawrence, to fulfil his purpose, divides Kate into two different entities: the conscious self rejects the sacrifices, but the unconscious one (Huitzilopochtli and Malintzi) accepts them as part of the game. And as different entities the characters are allowed to do whatever their instincts demand them to do.

Summarizing: the new religion is only a change of one kind of domination for another version: Quetzalcoatl dominates men and women, and men dominate women. The dictatorship of the God of 'the Morning Star' rejects its opponents murdering them in front of a frightened crowd of followers. Finally, Lawrence divides the characters into two: Ramón is the thinker through Quetzalcoatl; Cipriano is the executioner through Huitzilopochtli and Kate disguises herself as Malintzi as a way to approve the murders and to hide from her conscious self that as Kate she cannot accept them as she could not accept the bullfight.

When Kate decided to stay in Mexico she seems to have decided to forget the old Kate who was married to Joachim and who represented a woman without great yearnings in relation to her soul and body. Yet she was too spiritual up till Mexico. That Kate she left in Europe and the new Kate will attempt to discover in herself a new seed of life which must be exclusively fed by the soul. However, it seems that underneath the surface of this new self, there are special yearnings related to her

unfulfilled sensuality that she hides in the disguise of a soul fulfilment. This unfulfilled self is particularly stressed by Lawrence since he puts Kate in some situations which contradict her wish for a communion with the soul. One of these situations is presented when Kate is in Ramón's *hacienda* and she observes him. The embarrassing thing about Kate's looks at Ramón is that she consciously wants to feel him only as a man of soul, but what she projects in her thoughts is a terrible desire for Ramón as a man of flesh and blood who emanates pure sensuality:

Ramón sat forward in his rocking-chair, holding his cup in his hand, his breasts rising in relief. And on his thighs the thin linen seemed to reveal him almost more than his own dark nakedness revealed him. [Kate] understood why the cotton pantalons were forbidden on the plaza. The living flesh seemed to emanate through them.

He was handsome, almost horribly handsome, with his black head poised as if it were without weight, above his darkened, smooth neck. A pure sensuality, with a powerful purity of its own, hostile to her sort of purity. With the blue sash round his waist, pressing a fold in the flesh, and the thin linen seeming to gleam with the life of his hips and thighs, he emanated a fascination almost like a narcotic asserting his pure fine sensuality against her... He emitted an effluence so powerful that it seemed to hamper her consciousness, to bind down her limbs (p.202).

Here Kate is almost unaware of Ramón's body from the waist up. She concentrates her looks on the man's thighs and hips which certainly imply her sensual desire for the man and denies her conscious wish for his soul and her soul. Lawrence seems to mean that no matter how much Kate thinks of soul in her conscious mind what she really wants (or Lawrence wants for her) is an unconscious strong desire for a dark communion in the flesh. That seems to be why Kate wants to be 'punished' by Ramón and Cipriano:

'Let me close my eyes to [Ramón], and open only



my soul. Let me close my prying, *seeing* eyes, and sit in dark stillness along with these two men. They have got more than I, they have a richness that I haven't got... The curse of Eve is upon me, my eyes are like hooks, my knowledge is like a fish-hook through my gills, pulling me in spasmodic desire. Oh, who will free me from the grappling of my eyes, from the impurity of sharp sight! Daughter of Eve of greedy vision, why don't these men save me from the sharpness of my own eyes!' (pp.202-3 - My underlining).

The condemnation here seems to be not only a condemnation of Kate's sexual impulses but the fact that they come through the eye; that she looks at Ramón as if he were an object. Hence this is a possessive, or mental form of desire. Usually this kind of voyeurism is only attributed to the male. It is as if love-through-the-eye is associated for Lawrence with the old habits of the mental predatory female beginning with Hermione and Gudrun and even Helena (though she was a puritan). It is not just Kate's sensuality that is being condemned, but her daring to mix it up with consciousness. Note also how the sexes have changed roles here: Ramón with the magnetic female attractive power and Kate being attracted like a voyeur. Kate (or Lawrence) accuses herself and considers Cipriano and Ramón as her superiors: furthermore, she can only be saved from her sensuous sense of sin by these two men. Of course the author will not allow Ramón to 'save' Kate because Ramón is the motive of Kate's 'sin'. Cipriano is then left to 'save' the woman from the sin of sensuality - and he will perform this salvation by using the same instrument which she wants to exclude from her female consciousness: Cipriano will 'redeem' Kate by means of the sex she wants to have with Ramón.

Lawrence then pulls Kate to Cipriano and forces her to marry him. The point of the marriage is, like the opening of the Quetzalcoatl religion, female submission and the assertion

of male supremacy. Ramón celebrates the ceremony in the evening, the meeting of the day and the night. However, the marriage is miles away from any meeting of male and female in "the twilight of the Morning Star". It is rather a swallowing of the woman by the man. The words and gestures of the marriage celebration emphasize the passivity of the wife, although Ramón begins the ceremony talking about the meeting of day and night which expresses balance between man and woman:

'Barefoot on the living earth, with faces to the living rain,' said Ramón in Spanish, quietly, 'at twilight, between the night and the day, man and woman, in presence of the unfading star, meet to be perfect in one another. Lift your face, Caterina, and say: *This man is my rain from heaven*' (p.361).

After Ramón's strong and beautiful rhetoric, the stress is finally put on Kate's passivity:

Kate lifted her face and shut her eyes in the downpour.

'This man is my rain from heaven,' she said.

'This woman is the earth to me - say that, Cipriano,' said Ramón, kneeling on one knee and laying his hand flat on the earth.

Cipriano kneeled and laid his hand on the earth.

'This woman is the earth to me,' he said.

'I, woman, kiss the feet and the heels of this man, for I will be the strength to him, throughout the long twilight of the Morning Star.'

Kate kneeled and kissed the feet and heels of Cipriano and said her say.

'I, man, kiss the brow and the breast of this woman, for I will be her peace and her increase, through the long twilight of the Morning Star.'

Cipriano kissed her and said his say.

Then Ramón put Cipriano's hand over the rain-wet eyes of Kate, and Kate's hand over the rain-wet eyes of Cipriano... (p.362 - My underlining).

It seems clear that this is a marriage of the flesh which has nothing to do with the communion of the soul Kate wanted.

Firstly because of the rain and the earth: Cipriano is the rain, or the semen; Kate is the earth, the fertilizing womb. Secondly, because their meeting implies the negation of any

other kind of intimacy save for the meeting of the flesh. The marriage has only advantages for the male because he is in a superior position. He comes from heaven, Kate from the underworld, since she is the earth. Cipriano puts his hand on the earth which implies his strength against the passive and receptive earth. The submissive and powerless wife kneels and kisses 'the feet and heels' of the almighty husband which implies her blind obedience (and inferiority) to him. Again Cipriano's superior position stresses his authority and protectiveness when he only kisses her 'brow and breast'. In this marriage Kate is giving up all her rights as a female to the dark powerful male. However, this marriage is only thoroughly complete when Kate and Cipriano have sex and he denies her her sexual satisfaction:

[Kate] realised, almost with wonder, the death in her of the Aphrodite of the foam. By a swift dark instinct, Cipriano drew away from this in her. When, in their love, it came back on her, the seething electric female ecstasy, which knows such spasms of delirium, he recoiled from her. It was what she used to call her "satisfaction". She had loved Joachim for this, that again, and again, he could give her this orgiastic "satisfaction", in spasms that made her cry aloud.

But Cipriano would not. By a dark and powerful instinct he drew away from her as soon as this desire rose again in her, for the white ecstasy of frictional satisfaction, the throes of Aphrodite of the foam. She could see that to him, it was repulsive. He just removed himself, dark and unchangeable, away from her (p.463 - My underlining).

Cipriano is the sadistic male who, as Kate Millet points out, only feels complete in this denial of Kate's orgasm. Lawrence has put the female under the worst conditions of submission and, furthermore, he makes her become a masochist accepting this violation of her potential as a female. Kate is forced to realize that "when this sort of "satisfaction" was denied her, came the knowledge that she did not really want it, that it was really

nauseous to her" (ibid). Lawrence again controls the narrative and manipulates Kate like a puppet on his knee. Only thus could he force Kate to accept Cipriano's sadism. It is perhaps an extension of her sense of sin we noted when she desired Ramón sexually and longed for the men to 'save' her. Thus, Cipriano 'saves' her by punishing her in their sexual relations.

What seems strange and somehow false in this marriage is that Kate's feelings about a relation of balance is completely distorted in her relation with Cipriano. Once she told Ramón that she was aware that Cipriano would never meet her: "'He would come to take something from me and I should have to let him. And I don't want merely that'" (pp.297-8). And she adds that she as a woman wants "'... a man who will come half-way, just half-way to meet me'" (p.298). The other 'half-way' will be her own going to meet this man. This idea implies the balance she wants and not Cipriano's authoritarian yet childish demands upon her. Ramón apparently agrees with Kate for he says: "'A woman who just wants to be taken, and then to cling on, is a parasite. And a man who wants just to take, without giving, is a creature of prey'" (ibid). Ramón implies in his speech a certain alliance with Kate against a relation of domination. This contradicts every single attitude taken by the Quetzalcoatl followers, including Ramón himself when he marries the submissive Teresa (a 'parasite' in his own terms) and passes Kate on to the sadistic Cipriano. Moreover, in this same conversation Lawrence again expresses through Ramón the notion that the only possibility of a meeting of 'half-way' walkers is bound to occur between men, never between man and woman:

'And I'm afraid Don Cipriano might be [a creature of prey],' said Kate.

'Possibly,' said Ramón. 'He is not so with me.'

But perhaps he would be, if we did not meet—perhaps it is our half-way—in some physical belief that is at the very middle of us, and which we recognize in one another. Don't you think there might be that between you and him?'

'I doubt if he'd feel it necessary, with a woman. A woman wouldn't be important enough.'  
Ramón was silent (ibid).

Ramón's silence is a clear signal of his mute agreement with the lack of importance of a woman in this meeting in a balanced relation with a man. And the fact that he mentions a sort of 'physical recognition' between him and Cipriano reinforces the idea that what Kate wants with a man who is not a 'creature of prey' is only possible between men. It is the bloodbrotherhood Birkin wanted with Gerald. Lawrence speaks through Ramón again to say that

'... with a woman, a man always wants to let himself go. And it is precisely with a woman that he should never let himself go, but stick to his innermost belief, and meet her just there' (ibid).

To complement this idea, Lawrence, some pages earlier, interfered in the narrative to assert the only possibility of balance in relationships:

Men and women should know that they cannot, absolutely, meet on earth...

When men meet at the quick of all things, they are neither naked nor clothed; in the transfiguration they are just complete, they are not seen in part.  
The final perfect strength has also the power of innocence (pp.277-8 - My underlining).

Kate's assertion that she wants balance is therefore thrown away by the author in the marriage with Cipriano. The latter will never give and take. He will only take from her and she will never be allowed to ask for anything except to accept her submission. The strange thing is that all her efforts to attain balance are suddenly replaced by an absurd desire to

submit and accept the physical appeal of Cipriano. This desire is certainly not hers but Lawrence's stubborn authoritarian hand manipulating the mind of Kate to accept the male supremacy. Or it could be said that what Lawrence is doing is 'remarrying' Walter Morel, personified by the dark male Cipriano, with Mrs Morel, seen through the soulful Kate. The reworking of this marriage is again only sensual but its aggravating point is that Kate did not really want it and even her acceptance of Cipriano sounds unconvincing, as if her very thoughts were being squeezed in her mind to obliterate all forms of criticism. She, who has rejected the small general for a long time, succumbs in front of the great and potent Pan:

Ah! and what a mystery of prone submission, on her part, this huge erection would imply! Submission absolute, like the earth under the sky. Beneath an over-arching absolute.

Ah! what a marriage! How terrible! And how complete! With the finality of death, and yet more than death. The arms of the twilight Pan. And the awful, half-intelligible voice from the clouds.

She could conceive now her marriage with Cipriano; the supreme passivity, like the earth below the twilight, consummate in living lifelessness, the sheer solid mystery of passivity. Ah, what an abandon, what an abandon, what an abandon! - of so many things she wanted to abandon (p.342).

Is this the same woman who thought of a man walking half-way towards her? Definitely, no. Lawrence indeed invades her thoughts to hammer in his point through these repetitious sentences, that she must submit and have no soul of her own, no body of her own. All this passage seems perfect to the March Henry yearned in "The Fox".

Lawrence in his attempt to remarry his parents cannot, even now, help disliking his father in Cipriano because he insists on stressing Cipriano's smallness in his uniform of a

general. And furthermore, if Kate is fully convinced that she must submit to the dark male, why does she avoid his eyes? Poor Lawrence, although he has tried hard to convince Kate (and us) of Cipriano's giant sensuality and authority, he cannot help showing his own lack of belief in what he is doing. Kate submits to Cipriano and, with her eyes closed, she sees instead of her husband, the man she loves: and this man is Ramón.

I said that the bloodbrotherhood theme of Women in Love is developed with some success in The Plumed Serpent. It is prominent in the ritual of Cipriano's initiation as the God Huitzilopochtli. Ramón is the initiator. Before this ritual is celebrated there are, as I have pointed out, several suggestions that only between men it is possible to achieve a perfect communion. This idea is worked out throughout the book in terms of Ramón and Cipriano's attraction towards each other. More than simple friendship, the idea of this attraction is essentially homosexual. Through these two men Lawrence divides soul and body. Ramón is the thinker, the priest of ideas, the soulful bird of Quetzalcoatl. Cipriano is the bloody general, small in stature and in mind, he is the snake, attached to the earth, to the sensuous underworld. It is in the meeting and mingling of the bird with the snake that Lawrence wants to achieve the perfect union between soul and body. The Plumed Serpent enacts through Ramón and Cipriano the theme of the perfect marriage of opposites. Bird and snake are the symbols of the bloodbrotherhood. The strange thing is that if it is a marriage of 'opposites' why does Lawrence conceive it in the soul and body of two men? The problem is that Ramón, as the soul, seems to be a 'pacifist' and Cipriano, as the body, is a sadist as seen in the human sacrifices he performs and in his sexual

relations with Kate. Does it imply that the bloodbrotherhood is also a relation of domination? Ramón has been complaining throughout the novel that women are ravishers of men and that they destroy men. Cipriano has proved to be a savage in his sexuality. Lawrence tells us that only men can achieve a perfect balance. What balance is this if Ramón does not want to be ravished and the man he chooses to be his partner is a sadist? Does it imply that Ramón does not want to be ravished by a woman but by a man?

All these questions find no answer in the book. The principal factor which has led me to ask them is that Lawrence puts homosexual overtones into every single meeting between these two men. Let us take a look at some scenes in which both men are seen in a very close contact.

First of all there is a relation of pure dependence uniting Ramón and Cipriano. Dependence mainly in the sense that Cipriano seems to know nothing about himself. He tells Kate that Ramón "... knows better what I am" (p.88). This implies a blind faith in the man of soul who may be seen as deciding what the other man must be. Ramón is his master. It may be said that Cipriano wants to discover himself in Ramón. After they embrace each other in front of Carlota and Kate, Lawrence describes the sensation of the embrace:

Ramón abstractly laid his hand on Cipriano's shoulder, looking down at him with a little smile. 'Que tal?' he said, from the edge of his lips. 'How goes it?' 'Bien! Mui bien!' said Cipriano, still gazing into the other man's face with black, wondering, childlike, searching eyes, as if he, Cipriano, were searching for himself, in Ramón's face. Ramón looked back into Cipriano's black, Indian eyes with a faint, kind smile of recognition, and Cipriano hung his head as if to hide his face, the



black hair, which he wore rather long and brushed sideways, dropping over his forehead (p.200 - My underlining).

The first implication of this embrace is that Ramón, as the soul, is in a superior position to Cipriano. This is explained by the two men's features: Ramón is tall and Cipriano is embarassingly small. Also as the soul, Ramón occupies a higher position than Cipriano as the body. There is a clear idea that Ramón looked down at the other man and this stresses his inferiority. The second implication is that of dependence on the master. Cipriano looks at Ramón with a 'childlike' look. Ramón can be seen as the father with whom the son wants to be identified. Cipriano, as the son, looks for himself in Ramón, the father. Third, there is the idea of Cipriano looking for protection in Ramón as when he wants to hide himself in the other man. This may imply his dependence on Ramón and perhaps a certain fear that other people (Kate and Carlota) perceive that he is not what he seems to be.

Cipriano's eyes betray the quality of his attachment to Ramón. In watching him, Cipriano would feel love, fear, trust and incomprehension. The last element, incomprehension, may be understood by the fact that Cipriano cannot understand Ramón's language because it is not the language of the body but the language of the mind. Also there is the idea that when one cannot defeat his/her enemy one then must join him/her. This is exactly what happens to Cipriano: "He was always testing Ramón, to see if he could change him. When he found he couldn't, then he submitted, and new little fires of joy sprang upon him" (p. 210).

It can also be said that this relation of dependence

follows a double standard. Ramón, too, depends on Cipriano. For instance, Ramón, as the soul, would never 'descend' so low as to force people to join him in the Quetzalcoatl religion and here, he depends entirely on Cipriano to do this for him. Thus, Cipriano plays the general who coerces people to join the new Gods while Ramón is seated on his 'throne'. It may be said that without Cipriano's help, Ramón would never be able to become the new God because he, like Kate, hates common people. How would he be the God of peons, indians and humble people if he had not Cipriano as his 'prime minister'?

Ramón, as the bird of Quetzalcoatl, is a narcissist. He likes to be admired by those who follow him. That is why he poses as a model for the head of Quetzalcoatl. There is also his great connection with darkness. In it he loses himself to the outer world and enters into the world of the unknown communion with his other self - the self that wants a new discovery in the man of soul. And this self of the darkness may be his homosexual self which Ramón in the lighted world does not want to recognize:

[Ramón] took off his clothes, and in the darkness thrust his clenched fists upwards above his head, in a terrible tension of stretched, upright prayer. In his eyes was only darkness, and slowly the darkness revolved in his brain, too, till he was mindless...

Then suddenly, the clenched and quivering arms dropped, the body relaxed into softness. The man had reached his strength again...

Softly, delicately, taking great care not to think, not to remember, not to disturb the poisonous snakes of mental consciousness, he picked up a thin, fine blanket, wrapped it round him, and lay down in the piles of mats on the floor. In an instant he was asleep... (p.186).

It could be said that what Ramón really wants is to be in love with himself. Here, in the darkness, he needs nobody, only

himself, his nakedness, his mindlessness. Even Cipriano he does not need. Kate Millet (1971) has an interesting point about Ramón, Cipriano and Kate which explains part of this ritual of self love:

The heroes, Ramón and Cipriano, are Lawrentian men and mouthpieces, intellectual and earthly respectively. Together with the heroine, they form a characteristic Lawrentian triangle. Cipriano and Kate Leslie appear to be in love with Ramón, who appears to be in love with himself... Ramón is understandably self-sufficient. But in more relaxed moments, he enjoys some peculiarly erotic communion with Cipriano, as well as the pleasure of withholding himself from Kate, who is too imperfect to deserve him (p.284).

Ramón then wants a communion with his dark self, but as he feels that alone he cannot go any further, mainly in the Quetzalcoatl business, he comes to Cipriano's initiation as Huitzilopochtli. The ritual is another name for the bloodbrotherhood communion. This initiation takes place in the darkness where neither Ramón nor Cipriano is allowed to see each other's eyes. They would not be able to perform the act in daylight because it would reveal their homosexuality to themselves and they do not seem very much willing to take their masks off. They meet not as Ramón and Cipriano: they wear the disguise of the living Quetzalcoatl and the living Huitzilopochtli. On the literal level of personal identity the union of bird and snake would make no sense.

The ceremony of Cipriano's initiation looks like a scene of indoctrination. In it one man forces the other to forget the light of his conscience in order to enter into the world of instinct where the only touchable thing is the darkness. With the idea of making the initiation more vivid for his purposes, Ramón veils Cipriano's eyes first with his hands and then with

a strip of black fur. The interesting point here seems to be the connection between this initiation and the horses in the bullfight. The horses have their eyes covered with black stripes so as not to see their own death by the bulls. And although Ramón does not 'kill' Cipriano, he makes Huitzilopochtli 'swallow' Cipriano. In other words, the man Cipriano dives into unconsciousness so that the God take possession of his body. It is perhaps the death of the conscious man in Cipriano and the birth of the unconscious and instinctive savage Huitzilopochtli.

Ramón induces Cipriano to feel he is surrounded by darkness till he loses his own identity. He forgets the 'I' of his being and becomes a body without head and mind:

'Is it dark?'

'No, my Lord.'

Ramón knelt and pressed his arms close round Cipriano's waist, pressing his black head against his side. And Cipriano began to feel as if his mind, his head were melting away in the darkness, like a pearl in black wine, the other circle of sleep began to swing, vast. And he was a man without a head, moving like a dark wind over the face of the dark waters.

'Is it perfect?'

'It is perfect.'

'Who lives?'

'Who - !'

Cipriano no longer knew (pp.403-4).

Ramón has reached the apex of Cipriano's initiation. Cipriano has lost his conscious self and gives in to Ramón. And when this one touches his 'secret places' 'the marriage' between bird and snake is done. Both men fall unconscious: "Cipriano within the womb of undisturbed creation and Ramón in the death sleep" (p.404). Later on, to complete the marriage, soul and body, bird and snake "swam together, while the sun rose... They went to the house to rub oil in their limbs..." (p.405). It is the closest Lawrence could get to his Blutbrüderschaft where "there

is no beyond" and where only men can attain the perfect communion.

After this black ceremony the story takes a doubtful course in relation to Kate and also to Ramón. Kate is again uncertain whether she is happy or not with her marriage (only by Quetzalcoatl) to the bloody Huitzilopochtli. She begins again questioning her new self in relation to her old one. And after she is named 'Malintzi' by Cipriano she is confused and brings her old self to her mind. She seems to be not very pleased with her submission to her god-husband mainly because she still has a mind of her own to oppose to Cipriano:

'You treat me as if I had no life of my own,' she said. 'But I have.'

'A life of your own? Who gave it to you? Where did you get it?'

'I don't know. But I have got it. And I must live it. I can't be swallowed up.'

'Why, Malintzi?' he said, giving her a name.

'Why can't you?' (p.406).

The problem is that the vanity of becoming a God makes Cipriano think that he is more than a man. And Kate realizes this is a result of the Quetzalcoatl religion, as she tells Cipriano:

'Go back to [Ramón]. You only care about him, and your living Quetzalcoatl and your living Huitzilopochtli. I am only a woman.'

'No, Malintzi, you are more. You are more than Kate. You are Malintzi.'

'I am not! I am only Kate, and I am only a woman. I mistrust all that other stuff' (p.406).

Kate's sudden rebellion against Quetzalcoatl and Huitzilopochtli seems to be a result of her conflict with her two selves. In her new self she must accept submission and in her old she is free, independent. She is no goddess, no mystical wife of a savage. Her fierce opposition to Ramón and Cipriano may prove that Lawrence's belief in his own story is as frail as a soap

bubble:

'For heaven's sake let me get out of this, and back to simple human people. I loathe the very sound of Quetzalcoatl and Huitzilopochtli. I would die rather than be mixed up in it any more. Horrible, really, both Cipriano and Ramón. And they want to put it over me, with their high-flown bunk, and their Malintzi. I am Kate Forrester, really. I am neither Kate Leslie nor Tylor. I am sick of these men putting names over me. I was born Kate Forrester, and I shall die Kate Forrester. I want to go home. Loathsome, really, to be called Malintzi - I've had it put over me' (p.407).

The point is that Kate has realized that this goddess Malintzi is only a small and insignificant thing between the two great gods. And sandwiched as Malintzi all she can do is submit. She rebels.

The other shift of the story is that Ramón is not satisfied with his communion with Cipriano because he suddenly appears married again to a dark woman named Teresa whom he has saved from her exploitative brothers. Teresa, unlike the soulful Kate and Carlota, lives through Ramón and has no proper self. When Kate comes to know Ramón's new wife, all she feels is envy for Teresa. In fact all she wants is to be in Teresa's place: not to submit but to have the man she secretly loves with her. However, at the same time that she perceives that Ramón now looks like a Sultan (perhaps in parallel with Birkin looking like a Pharaoh after he has taken his 'dark knowledge' of Ursula in the chapter "Excuse") and she resents his appearance, in fierce opposition against the man:

And for a second Kate envied Teresa. The next second, she despised her. 'The harem type -'

Well, it was Ramón's nature to be a sort of Sultan...

'Harem tricks!' said Kate to herself. And she was somewhat impatient, seeing the big, portentous Ramón enveloped in the toils of this dark little

thing. She resented being made so conscious of his physical presence, his full, male body inside his thin white clothes, the strong, yet soft shoulders, the full, rich male thighs. It was if she herself, also being in presence of this Sultan, should succumb as part of the harem (pp. 434-5).

Kate is again desiring Ramón sexually. That is why she resents his marriage. Also it can be said that up to now Kate has decided not to mix the two Kates in two marriages (the one by Quetzalcoatl and the legal one) with Cipriano because she still had some hopes to have Ramón with her. As he is now married to Teresa, Kate has no hopes anymore and, therefore, this is the reason why she decides to marry Cipriano legally. It is perhaps one more punishment for herself since she could not have Ramón.

The only thing which seems inexplicable, at least at first glance, is that Kate is aware that both men need her for certain purposes: Ramón needs her mind as his friend and Cipriano needs her body for some moments. Then, Ramón has his submissive Teresa and Cipriano has his soldiers. Kate is left floating in the air with no connection with any of the men. My question is, why does she stay with them? It must be only Lawrence's stubborn desire to make her always submit even when she seems aware that Ramón and Cipriano have nothing to offer her. I would say that the author in these moments may be seen as Kate's super-ego. If he is taken like this, the only possible explanation for Kate's internal conflict is that her ego wants to get rid of both Ramón and Cipriano but her super-ego forces her to remain in this conflict and to be more inclined to stay by their sides and submit to them. Ramón and Cipriano are the bread of the sandwich and Kate is in the middle of them being squeezed by the soul and the body, having no chance to escape.

And if she tries to run away, the author pulls her back using the strategy of his authorial hand.

When Lawrence marries Kate legally to Cipriano the implication is clear: even though Kate has apparently decided to return to Europe after the marriage, there is for her the link of her legal marriage which may inevitably bring her back to Mexico. And it is after the marriage that Lawrence, again unable to really convince himself that he is a chauvinist and that all he wants is to put the woman at the feet of the male, puts Kate in a terrible battle with herself. She becomes a divided woman who has a self that craves for submission and another self that desires her freedom. This is seen in her decision to return to Europe:

The moment she has admitted the necessity, she realised it was a certain duplicity in herself. It was as if she had two selves, one, a new one, which belonged to Cipriano and Ramón, and which was her sensitive, desirous self: the other hard and finished, 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 Ramón and Teresa, and was not "free" at all (p.470).

Kate feels that her old self was a "prison" because it demands that she have a strong self-responsibility that perhaps she is tired of. The other self does not demand any responsibility because, being a submissive woman, all she has to do is to acquiesce to her master (the conflict seems exactly the same as March's in "The Fox") and this she is not so sure if she wants it or not. I would say that Kate had better look for another self, perhaps in the middle of these two extreme selves. This certainly is very much linked with Lawrence's personality



because he really is an author who is unable to juxtapose extreme feelings in a place where there is no extremity. He is always dual: it is either body or soul; domination or submission, etc. He cannot find a point of equilibrium in his duality. All his novels present this duality and The Plumed Serpent has shown that Lawrence could not, even though fiercely desiring it, put the woman down, or make her entirely submissive. Kate's two selves show clearly Lawrence's conflict. Ramón as the soul, Cipriano as the body also reinforce the impossibility of a point of equilibrium.

The end of the novel, which will be closely examined in the conclusion of this dissertation, shows that Kate in fact does not really decide whether she will go away or not. The ending marks the continuity of the conflict of which relation is more important: the man-to-man or the man-to-woman. What we gather is that Lawrence feels really unable to force Kate to stay in Mexico and be in peace with her submissive new self. There is a play with words by the end of the novel, as we will see later, which deliberately blurs the nature of her final decision.

To make a short summary here, I would say that although this novel attempted to destroy the woman's personality, making of her a mere vessel of receptivity in relation to the male supremacy, Lawrence has once more failed. Or rather the rhetorician and prophet has failed, but perhaps the artist has succeeded, i.e., the tale has proved wiser than the teller. Kate is seen as a dual woman because the author forced her to be like this. In splitting Kate's self into two, Lawrence's intention was to make her new self overcome her old and free self. However, the more he tried the less his intentional

purposes succeeded. The end of the novel proves the theory that Lawrence's female is still a strong soul and someone who is not lost and, therefore, not prepared to submit. As for the two men, the separate embodiment of soul and body, the only thing which Lawrence could attain was still the separation of these two entities of the self. In allegorizing Ramón as the soul and the little Cipriano as the body, the author still persists in the idea of the superiority of the soulful and shows his early preference for Calvinistic young men like Paul Morel rather than dark, sensual men like Walter Morel. The latter is still inferior. Also Lawrence could not reconcile father and son in these terms. The one who represents the soul is always superior to the one who is pictured as the body. Finally, the only element of partial success is the man-to-man friendship. Here, it seems that Lawrence has apparently proved to win his inner struggle with his homosexuality. In Ramón and Cipriano's ritual of bloodbrotherhood Lawrence could unite his soul with his body. However, as I have already pointed out, this union is somewhat curious because soul and body belong to different people. And no one can guarantee the perpetuation of the friendship due to Ramón's marriage to Teresa. Homosexuality was and still is a subject of darkness. In daylight the valid relationship is still seen between man and woman. Thus, the problem of Women in Love (marriage "balanced" by Blutbrüderschaft) goes on, pretty much unresolved. The basic problem has not changed, only Lawrence has become hysterical, and sicker.

The main proof for Lawrence's insecurity in this issue of homosexuality is that soon after he finished The Plumed Serpent, he had a nervous breakdown and in his recovery he started his 'peace with the female' in Lady Chatterley. And in this book the

strong element is the meeting between man and woman. The man-to-man relationship is a black page (or a 'wet dream'?) turned aside by Lawrence.

## CONCLUSION

Usually people deal in their conclusions with the convergent points of what they have been studying. They normally do not re-analyse passages previously examined. Because I think that Lawrence proposes 'theoretically' to work with a particular subject while his practice in the novels fails to match with his theory, I propose a different sort of conclusion. It seems to me a valid methodology to examine the endings of his stories so as to achieve the point of my conclusion.

The first important remark I would like to make relates to Lawrence's awareness of what he is as a writer. In an essay called "Why the Novel Matters"<sup>1</sup> he defines himself:

... 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 (Beal, p.105).

This 'superiority' refers to the author's idea that he, as a

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<sup>1</sup>All the essays by Lawrence cited here are from the book D.H. Lawrence: Selected Literary Criticism, edited by Anthony Beal in 1973. See complete bibliographical reference in the bibliography (pp. 385) of this dissertation.

novelist, deals with people in their wholeness of being. The novel is not an abstract form of expression. It is a living object because it deals with life and not with 'bits' of life as do the saint, the philosopher, the scientist, and the poet. However, the novelist is an artist and, as an artist, Lawrence says in "The Spirit of the Place", he is not perfect; the artist is a liar. This idea of the artist as a 'liar' refers to the author intending to write about something, but producing a work which does not express this 'something'. In other words, there is what can be called the battle between intention and feeling. Lawrence says that

The artist usually sets out — or used to — to point a moral and adorn a tale. The tale, however, points the other way, as a rule. Two blankly opposing morals, the artist's and the tale's. Never trust the artist. Trust the tale (Beal, p.297).

The interesting point of Lawrence's argument is that he is (consciously or unconsciously) including himself in this idea. As an artist he has a definite purpose, but his tales reverse what he wants to say and sometimes they deny his intention. This is the unconscious of the author fighting his conscious aims. And as Lawrence says "Never trust the artist. Trust the tale": he implies that his theory may be transformed into another thing when he sets forth to write his novels. I do think that in the long run this is true in Lawrence, although some critics do not seem to take his advice. These critics always look at the author's 'intention', at his theory, but not at his practice. A good example of this battle may be seen in Lawrence's idea of 'balance' in relationships. Lawrence indeed wants his characters to achieve a stage of equilibrium in their relations. This 'equilibrium', however, is hardly present in his novels, except

for Tom and Lydia in The Rainbow who attain a certain balance, but even this achievement, we see, is not permanent, since Tom dies early in the novel implying that the other couples must continue the search. Other novels show the struggle between the couples but no one can really say that they get 'there'. The couples would rather fight for dominance in the relation. This idea, I believe, proves that the author's feelings are different from his didactic intentions.

Another of Lawrence's 'intentions' refers to his idea that man and woman form 'the ideal pair'. In "Morality and the Novel" he claims that

The great relationship, for humanity, will always be the relation between man and woman. The relation between man and man, woman and woman, parent and child, will always be subsidiary.

And the relation between man and woman will change for ever, and will for ever be the new central clue to human life. It is the relation itself which is the quick and the central clue to life, not man, nor the woman, nor the children that result from the relationship, as a contingency (Beal, p.113).

How can it be that some of his novels try to put the relation between man and man in first plan and man and woman become secondary? One may just take a look at Women in Love which starts to present the man-to-man relationship as additional to marriage; or at The Plumed Serpent where this relation becomes the alternative to marriage. In other words, the man-to-woman relation is no longer important. Again theory and practice do not match. I do not want to claim that Lawrence is right or wrong: I say that he, like all human beings, is contradictory. We say we do what we think, but who guarantees the truth of this statement? "Never trust the artist. Trust the tale"! Lawrence probably never thought how much his statement could perfectly

fit his own personality.

More must be said about Lawrence's 'intentions' because they reflect what he is, or what he is not. In the just quoted essay his ideas about morality contradict his authoritarian attitudes when he wrote The Plumed Serpent. Lawrence argues that

Morality in the novel is the trembling instability of the balance. When the novelist puts his thumb in the scale, to pull down the balance to his own predilection, that is immorality...

The novel is not, as a rule, immoral because the novelist has any dominant *idea*, or *purpose*. The immorality lies in the novelist's helpless, unconscious predilection... If the novelist puts his thumb in the pan, for love, tenderness, sweetness, peace, then he commits an immoral act: he *prevents* the possibility of a pure relationship, a pure relatedness, the only thing that matters: and he makes inevitable the horrible reaction, when he lets his thumb go, towards hate and brutality, cruelty and destruction (Beal, p.110).<sup>2</sup>

I conclude that when Lawrence tried to 'force' the woman in Kate to fall at the feet of the man in little Cipriano, he simply imposed his own 'unconscious predilection' for the man as the master of the woman. He pressed his thumb down hard in the scale. Indeed this is 'immoral', by his own definition. Also in the predilection for a man-to-man relationship between Ramón and Cipriano, Lawrence was forcing the balance of the scale, mainly because he put into Kate's mind the sense that she as a woman was inferior to men and that they (men) form the 'ideal' pair. But Lawrence, although pressing his thumb heavily in the scale, could not help feeling ill with his own 'intentions'. That is one reason why he became so ill after completing the novel. He may have felt he was forcing a theory he could not

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<sup>2</sup>The interesting thing about "Morality and the Novel" and The Plumed Serpent is that the essay was first published in December, 1925 and the novel in January, 1926, only a month after the publishing of the essay! Probably Lawrence wrote both the essay and the novel at the same time.

even deeply believe in himself.

Furthermore, no one can accuse Lawrence of dishonesty in wanting to convey a particular message which would favor his own intentions. I say this due to the large number of open-ended stories he wrote. In "Why the Novel Matters", he says:

I don't want to stimulate anybody else into some particular direction. A particular direction ends in a *cul-de-sac*...

We should ask for no absolutes, or absolute. Once and for all and for ever, let us have done with the ugly imperialism of any absolute. There is no absolute good, there is nothing absolutely right. All things flow and change, and even change is not absolute. The whole is a strange assembly of apparently incongruous parts, slipping past one another... And at its best, the novel, and the novel supremely, can help you. It can help you not to be dead man in life... You can develop an instinct of life, if you will, instead of a theory of right and wrong, good and bad (Beal, pp.105-7).

All Lawrence says, I take as true in his novels. At the back of his mind he may have had the intention to 'teach' something, but his novels do not demand that the reader follow this or that path because it is the best way to live. Lawrence's novels are beyond this idea of good and evil. The main idea in what he says is that he does not want to coerce anyone in a particular direction. And this is really true in all the works I have been analysing throughout this dissertation. None of them ends with a 'moral lesson'. The endings are rather an exposition of contradictory feelings which show that, as in life, no one can really achieve 'the end' with a happy solution for all problems. Lawrence's endings express indeed his struggle to define his intentions. Let us then look at the endings of the fictions analysed in this work, comparing them in order to analyse this conflict in Lawrence.

We may classify the endings of the five novels and the



novella analysed in this dissertation as follows:

- a. The Trespasser — an ambiguous closed ending in dialogue
- b. Sons and Lovers — an ambiguous closed ending in  
narrative
- c. The Rainbow — an ambiguous closed ending in narrative.
- d. Women in Love — an open-ended story in dialogue
- e. "The Fox" — an open-ended story in dialogue
- f. The Plumed Serpent — an ambiguous open-ended story in  
dialogue.

Although some of the stories have similar characteristics, they must be seen individually to draw comparisons.

In The Trespasser it is necessary to recall some of the events which have led up to the ambiguous closed ending. Helena, the 'dreaming woman', is the main protagonist and the survivor of a love affair which ended in tragedy. Her lover killed himself after having spent a holiday with her on the Isle of Wight. Siegmund, a married man, is marked by his weak personality. With Helena, as well as with his wife, he has never been able to take any decision. He depended very much on both women. Helena has been for him a kind of mother to whom he was obedient, even though she destroyed him. Helena was incapable of giving herself entirely to him. Sexually he was frustrated and Helena fed his frustration. The only thing she was able to do was to demand from him a spiritual love which he could not give her. And as he was unable to defend his own points of view due to his weakness, he decided after a long and tormented conflict to kill himself. He could not have Helena; he could not divorce his wife; he could not have the love of his children, therefore his self-pity led him to suicide. Helena, after the result of this tragedy in which she was directly involved, fights to get Siegmund's violin,

a symbol of his creative power. When she gets it at the novel's end, she is already involved in another affair with Cecyl Byrne who is described as a potential Siegmund. Byrne, like his predecessor, is aware that he is in love with the 'dreaming woman', although he somehow knows that he will suffer: "'I might as well not exist, for all she is aware of me'" (p.213). This has happened with Siegmund too. Helena could only realize her former lover in her mind. Physically she was miles away from him. "'History repeats itself'" says Byrne, implying that he, although he knows how his predecessor ended his life because of Helena, wants to be the new Siegmund. Byrne sympathizes with Helena's dead lover: "[Byrne] always felt a deep sympathy and kinship with Siegmund; sometimes he thought he hated Helena" (p.214). Siegmund was a victim, Helena a victimizer. Byrne knows about this and that is why he thinks he hates Helena. One may ask then why he remains with her, hovering like an insect, a shadow by her side. It is the reworking of the myth of the mother goddess who is both the preserver and destroyer of her consort (son-husband). One can take Helena again as the 'femme fatale' exerting her strong influence upon her successive partners. Perhaps the difference between Helena's previous and her new lover lies in the fact that Siegmund's weakness forbade him to defy Helena, even in ironic comments as Byrne does. He knows he is in love with Helena but this fact does not prevent him from mocking at her or from saying things which Helena takes as fretful.

One interesting fact to mark is that the new affair begins exactly a year after Helena has met Siegmund. The woman and Byrne go to the same place where the mother-goddess destroyed her first son-lover. This implies that still the woman commands the action between the lovers because it is she who leads Byrne

to that fatal place.

Another fact which puts Byrne very close to Siegmund happens when Helena gets Siegmund's violin, a symbol of his vital essence, there is a sense of reverence in both Helena and Byrne towards the 'sacred fiddle': "This was Siegmund's violin, which Helena had managed to purchase, and Byrne was always ready to yield its precedence" (p.215). This implies that Byrne wants to become the new lover even though he senses the consequences: that he will be Helena's newest victim.

The language of the last pages of the book is marked by opposed images of life and death, coldness and warmth, sadness and joy. Again Lawrence uses images of past events in Helena's life to imply the potential repetition of the past in the present. Byrne, like Siegmund, has warm hands opposed to Helena's cold ones. The last pages mingle laughter and tears, the sound of rain and a bird singing. And they also reflect Byrne's unconscious awareness of doom hanging over his head:

'The rain continues,' he said.  
 'And will do,' she added, laughing.  
 'Quite content,' he said.  
 The bird overhead chirruped loudly again.  
 "'Strew on us roses, roses,'" quoted Byrne,  
 adding after a while, in wistful mockery: "'And  
 never a sprig of yew" - eh?' (p.216).

The interesting thing is that the sense of doom is put in terms of 'mockery' which implies that Byrne knows that something 'bad' will happen to him (or to them) but he does not care. He cannot, or he will not, do anything to prevent the doom.

More repetitions are seen — past juxtaposed with present — to show that Helena cannot escape from her past:

[Byrne] put his left hand, with which he had been breaking larch-twigs, on her chilled wrist. Noticing that his fingers were dirty, he held them

up.

'I shall make marks on you,' he said.

'They will come off,' she replied.

'Yes, we come clean after everything. Time scrubs all sorts of scars off us.'

'Some scars don't seem to go,' she smiled.

And she held out her other arm which had been pressed warm against his side. There, just above the wrist, was the red sun-inflammation from last year. Byrne regarded it gravely.

'But it's wearing off — even that,' he said wistfully (ibid - My underlining).

The main points to notice here are, first of all, the two kinds of marks: the dirty marks of Byrne's hands which "will come off" and the sun-inflammation Helena got with Siegmund (the symbol of her guilt?) which, it seems, will not "come off" ("Some scars don't seem to go"). The second point is that one of the marks — Byrne's — is physical and the other one is psychological which implies its strength in comparison with the other. The central motif is the repetition of images used with the previous couple with the difference that now Helena seems tired, weary and distressed while Byrne seems to want to nurse and comfort her. The son helping the tired mother! Even here Helena, although in a weary state of mind, is the dominant figure in the relation. The man is eager to help her no matter how hurt he will be in attempting to get close to the fatal woman. One good sign of their relation lies in the fact that with Siegmund Helena wore her hat with pins and, now with Byrne, she takes it off. This may imply that she no longer wants to hurt, but even here, the implication is not of submission for she still directs her desires. The man only bows to her demands:

She laughed, and, making a small moaning noise, as if of weariness and helplessness, she sank her head on his chest. He put down his cheek against hers.

'I want rest and warmth,' she said, in her dull tones.

'All right!' he murmured (p.217).

Byrne's last speech implies that he will acquiesce to the woman's need and will serve her.

In this ending, although written apparently as a closed ending, Lawrence lets the characters explore their own expectations. This implies, I believe, that the author is not imposing a fixed solution to the book. In letting his characters speak for themselves, the author is not controlling the narrative as he does in Sons and Lovers and The Rainbow. And although this is a dialogue, we perceive that the main implication is that the 'femme fatale', tired as she may be, will command the next step of her love affair. Because of Byrne's mockery, however, no one can guarantee that this man will only acquiesce and submit, like Siegmund did. The only hints which lead us to think of the domineering female as the central figure in the relation, are the ones which show the connection of Helena's past experience with the new one. If history is repeating itself in this affair, we may assume that if in the past the woman dominated her partner, leading him to death, in the present she will dominate Byrne. The consequences are unseen, but we can take for granted that the man is Helena's next victim. The assumption is, therefore, that love is a struggle in which one 'masters' the other. Helena may be seen as a figure of death in fact. The winner in this early novel is the fatal woman, but this pattern tends to shift in later works.

The ending of The Trespasser is the only one which seems to be closed and its connection with the other endings, except for Women in Love, "The Fox" and The Plumed Serpent, is that the woman is the strongest, she does not surrender to the man. She is the highest being, the spiritual bride. Here there is no balance. The 'fatal male' in The Plumed Serpent is not yet

born.

The next two endings which I have put together under the same classification, "ambiguous closed ending in narrative", are from Sons and Lovers and The Rainbow. The reason for this connection is that both novels end in narrative. The author does not let the characters speak because he does not want to lose control of his intention. The point of this incisive control of the narratives at the end of the novels means that the author wants unconsciously to impose the motif of rebirth on both Paul and Ursula. This imposed solution may signify Lawrence's wish not to end the novels as tragedies, even though the experience of the protagonists has been primarily tragic. The sequence of negative episodes in the two novels must be recalled — separately — to make my point clear.

In Sons and Lovers we recall that Paul has gone through a whole set of negative experiences which have provoked but not resolved the conflicts in his tormented mind. The environment of his birth and upbringing is responsible for the split in his conscience. His mother, a very spiritual woman, has mistreated her lower class husband in such a way that she destroyed any possibility for a happy relationship with Walter Morel. He, for her, was an inferior being because he was a man conscious only in the blood, whereas she was a woman led by mental consciousness. These are two extremes which, according to Lawrence, cannot relate but as antagonists. In the essay "Nathaniel Hawthorne and The Scarlet Letter" he says:

Blood consciousness overwhelms, obliterates,  
and annuls mind-consciousness.

Mind-consciousness extinguishes blood-  
consciousness, and consumes the blood.

We are all of us conscious in both ways. And the  
two ways are antagonistic in us...

There is a basic hostility in all of us between the physical and the mental, the blood and the spirit. The mind is "ashamed" of the blood. And the blood is destroyed by the mind. Hence pale faces (Beal, pp.349-50).

Therefore, there can never be a reconciliation between these two poles. The mother, as the powerful mind, has destroyed the blood-conscious father. Thus, the mother gathers her children by her side against the father who becomes an intruder in his own family. The strong woman swallows her eldest son, William, in the sense that she indirectly makes him live with his mind connected with her and his body connected with a 'blood-conscious' girl. The split kills him. Hence the mother who has rejected Paul, the third child, when she was pregnant with him, turns, after William's death, to Paul and makes his inner life like hell. Paul being very sensitive, with a hyper-conscious mind, is deeply attached to the mother. This prevents him from developing any connection with a woman apart from a 'soul' communion. When he meets Miriam, his first girlfriend, he meets his mother in a younger version. They fall in love, but this love is only spiritual with the aggravation that the mother recognizes herself in the girl and fights her off. The triangle goes then through a terrible battle for the soul of the young man. The mother wins because of the strong tie which connects her with Paul: the blood. Paul then seeks passion with Clara Dawes. But he fails because in reality what he was looking for in Clara was a remarriage between his parents. When he gets tired of the woman, he returns her to Baxter, her husband. All these troubles are due to his mother's excessive love. Paul fails with Miriam, fails with Clara and, in order to get rid of his mother's oppression, he 'kills' her when she is already being consumed by cancer. Even in her death Paul is not yet ready to

shed her influence. In the last pages of the book the main ideas of the narrative imply a strong sense of contradictions. Lawrence has control of the action but, even so, he is incapable of putting an end to the story in terms of a fixed solution. The contradictions of the narrative show clearly the author's instability. The story has a pattern of negative + negative + negative events with an incongruous positive outcome. The following sentences from the very end of the book express the nature of Paul's conflict:

Who could say that his mother had lived and did not live? She had been in one place, and was in another... Now she was gone abroad into the night, and he was with her still... But yet there was his body, his chest that leaned against the stile, his hands on the wooden bar... On every side of the immense dark silence seemed pressing him, so tiny a spark, into extinction, and yet, almost nothing, he could not be extinct... So much, and himself, infinitesimal, at the core a nothingness, and yet not nothing... She was the only thing that held him up, amid all this... He wanted her to touch him, have him alongside with her... (p.510).

All these contradictory remarks imply Paul's 'drift towards death'. Yet finally in the last paragraph of the novel there is an imposition of a 'happy ending':

But no, he would not give in. Turning sharply, he walked towards 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 (p.511).

Lawrence holds in abeyance Paul's impulse to commit suicide. This above quotation has several negative implications. First, 'phosphorescence' is a word with definitively negative connotation in Lawrence and it usually implies the woman's destructive power of will. Second, the idea of city does not normally imply rebirth in Lawrence. It implies corruption, degeneration. Third, going to the city is what Paul's brother William did and it destroyed



him. The turning to the city also implies an association with the mother's will because of her desire to make a middle class gentleman of her son. Therefore, the option to go the city does not seem very positive at all. It can also be added that there are several hints that the mother still has Paul's soul with her. The more Paul tries to elude the past, the less will he be free to use his soul as he likes. The mother still has strength enough to maintain Paul's split between soul and body. The turning to the city also does not guarantee that some steps further he will not return to his suicidal mood. Perhaps the sense of the author's control in the narrative accounts for Paul's 'salvation'. Anyway, the language is too ambiguous for us to take sides — either death or life. What we feel as readers is that Paul's split of consciousness is still very vivid in himself and the conflicting experiences he has had only served to increase the tension within himself. Therefore, despite the author's deep effort, the end of the novel does not provide the answer for Paul's divided self.

The Rainbow, as I said, has a similar pattern to Sons and Lovers because of the author's imposition of a solution which does not convincingly fit the series of negative episodes which Ursula has been going through till the very end of the novel.

In trying to define the three sections of the novel, we would say that the first generation is the most stable of the three. Tom and Lydia reach at the peak of their search, i.e., they attain 'balance' as I pointed out in chapter III of this dissertation. They attain balance simply by forgetting their individual differences. The individual self in their relation gives way to a collective self which encompasses both man and woman. They are one in two. However, their balance is soon

ended with the death of Tom and, after that, Lydia somehow returns to her previous unknown self, individual in herself. With Tom's death Lawrence makes his characters again start from scratch. The example of Tom and Lydia's balance is too weak, therefore, to be taken into account. As for the second generation, Ursula's parents do not achieve a strong sense of fulfilment. Their 'balance' is false chiefly because it is based on a relation of dominance of the female over the male. The 'fatal female' in Anna destroys the individuality of Will as accounted for by her (or their) disrespect for her husband. Anna assumes the man's role in the business of the home. Their meeting does not contain an equilibrium between soul and body. The only possibility for them to be 'equals' is in their obsession with sex. Both man and woman are like monomaniacs in their marriage. They seek for nothing apart from sex. Ursula, in her generation, is the one who must explore the world in order to painfully discover the seeds of human fulfilment. However, instead of fulfilment, all she is able to find is disillusionment. First in her love for her father: she soon discovers that Will's love is a dangerous one (see the chapter called "The Child"). Her second disappointment refers to her first lover, Skrebensky, who fails her. He is not a 'son of God' who would help her to know life. While Ursula is a strong female connected with the white power of the moon. Skrebensky is only a poor shadow disconnected from the word 'being'. Ursula 'destroys' him and is unfulfilled. Thirdly, she falls in love with her school-teacher Winifred Inger. The homosexual affair only serves to show Ursula the corrupted side of society. Winifred makes a perfect match with Ursula's uncle Tom. Both are representatives of corruption since they praise the machine instead of the human

being. In fourth place comes Ursula's extremely negative experience at Brinsley Street school. There she is forced to learn that society is not formed by individuals. Society has no place for them. Instead, there is only authoritarianism, power and submission. Ursula gives part of herself to that world of automatons and she 'succeeds'. However, the price has been too high because her soul is not the same after this disillusionment. She leaves the school and, a restless dreamer, she goes to the university where she once more becomes disappointed. The teachers are not 'priests of knowledge' as she thought they were. In the middle of her disillusionment she escapes from the university to recall Skrebensky to her mind. Thus she fails her examination. As for her lover, he again fails her, this time forever. He marries another girl and Ursula is not notified of the marriage. By this time she becomes pregnant by Skrebensky. This fact leads her to a 'nightmare' in which she gives over her previous search for fulfilment in life. She writes a letter to Skrebensky in which she says she will submit to him because of the child. Ursula is in a terrible inner conflict and because of it she confronts some horses which are no other than the tormented projection of everything she fears. In trying to escape from her inner fear she loses her baby by miscarriage. After all these horrible experiences we find another Ursula apparently ready to be reborn: but the idea of the old dreaming Ursula is still present in the new one. And here is the very flaw of the book. Lawrence puts an enormous effort into making us believe Ursula is really renewed. However, the most he can attain in his attempt is a sense of an unconvincing end.

For instance, when Ursula receives Skrebensky's cablegram

communicating his marriage, we find her analysing what sort of man she wants to meet:

There came a cablegram from Skrebensky: 'I am married.' And an old pain and anger and contempt stirred in her. Did he belong so utterly to the cast-off past? She repudiated him. He was as he was. It was good that he was as he was. Who was she to have a man according to her own desire? It was not for her to create, but to recognize a man created by God. The man should come from the infinite and she should hail him. She was glad she had nothing to do with his creation. She was glad that this lay within the scope of that vast power in which she rested at last. The man would come out of Eternity to which she herself belonged (p.494 - My underlining).

Certainly this man she will meet is not Skrebensky. The first point to notice in this quoted passage is that Ursula seems to be more mature, different from the Ursula who thought that the man she wanted should be a 'son of God' who would choose her as his companion. Now she wants a man who will not choose her but she will recognize him because both belong to 'Eternity'. Here she does not imply passivity but a certain degree of equality. Men like Skrebensky, with no soul, no self, she repudiates. I believe that there is a positive connotation in Ursula's evaluation. And, although Lawrence is in control of the narrative, he shows us an apparently mature woman in Ursula who is capable of discerning what she wants from life.

My second point refers to another apparent positive view related to Ursula. Through Lawrence's voice Ursula faces the 'civilized' colliers who look like the picture of death:

She saw the stiffened body of the colliers, which seemed already enclosed in a coffin, she saw their unchanging eyes, the eyes of those who are buried alive: she saw the hard, cutting edges of the new houses, which seemed to spread over the hillside in their insentient triumph, a triumph of horrible, amorphous angles and straight lines, the expression of corruption triumphant and unopposed, corruption so pure that it is hard and brittle... (p.495).

Although it may seem strange to take this passage as positive, we take it so because Ursula seems able to face the reality outside herself. She is not the only one in the world. However, at the same time that it is positive it can also be taken as negative: Ursula seems to see the colliers corrupted by civilization and progress as if she were in a higher position, as if she were out of the picture. It appears thus that she does not belong to the world which has corrupted the colliers. She seems blind to see that the same world which dehumanized men is the same one which made her go through all those terrible experiences which she now looks at as if she had overcome them.

The third and final point relates to the sudden pre-eminence of the rainbow symbol:

And then in the blowing clouds, she saw a band of faint iridescence colouring in faint colours a portion of the hill. And forgetting, startled, she looked for the hovering colour and saw a rainbow forming itself. In one place it gleamed fiercely, and her heart anguished with hope, she sought the shadow of iris where the bow should be. Steadily the colour gathered, mysteriously, from nowhere, it took presence upon itself, there was a faint, vast rainbow. The arc bended and strengthened itself till it arched indomitable, making great architecture of light and colour in the space of heaven, its pedestals luminous in the corruption of the new houses on the low hill, its arch the top of heaven (ibid).

Here Lawrence indeed seems to be putting his thumb in the scale to favor Ursula's rebirth with too much optimism. The author's imposition of a fierce element of hope in the rainbow is still seen only in Ursula's eyes which imply that she is trying to overcome all her previous sufferings simply by deciding that the rainbow will change everything. It seems that again she is putting an overdose of high expectations in the rainbow, like she did with Brinsley Street school, for instance. Who guarantees that the colliers themselves see the rainbow? In

looking at the final paragraph of the novel we see that only Ursula expects too much. The other people, the colliers, are seen as if by magic touch they had become good and are no longer corrupt:

And the rainbow stood on the earth. She knew that the sordid people who crept hard-scaled and separate on the face of the world's corruption were living still, that the rainbow was arched in their blood and would quiver to life in their spirit, that they would cast off their horny covering of disintegration, that new, clean, naked bodies would issue to a new germination, to a new growth, rising to the light and the wind and the clean rain of heaven. She saw in the rainbow the earth's new architecture, the old, brittle corruption of houses and factories swept away, the world built in a living fabric of Truth, fitting to the overarching heaven (pp.495-6).

It seems to me a terrible presumption of the author to think that the symbol of hope would make us forget everything the character has gone through. It also seems unreal the way Ursula visualizes the colliers after the rainbow appears. It is as if she had veiled her own eyes to reality. Corruption, progress — everything — will be swept away because of a rainbow which may only be another projection of Ursula's imaginative mind. The ending indeed seems a closed ending but the fact that it is conveyed through the author's voice only serves to signal Lawrence's fixed wish not to end his book in more negative terms. His optimism can be viewed in terms of his 'intentions' but not in terms of his 'feelings'. One denies the other. The 'message' is not optimistic at all. It only makes us think of the coherence of the ending.

Sons and Lovers and The Rainbow thus have closed endings with ambiguous optimism. Neither of the characters has strong motives to be happy or fulfilled. Neither of them attains balance. The search must go on through the characters of the

following novels.

Women in Love, "The Fox" and The Plumed Serpent I group together because of the common pattern between them, i.e., the dialogue form and the openness of their endings. However, their common pattern differs in the quality of the different expectations which link and/or separate characters. One can say that Lawrence goes from one extreme to the other; he oscillates between opposed solutions rather than finding a balance in some synthesis or mean.

Women in Love is one of Lawrence's best and most profound novels. It deals with the complexity of modern values as associated to human beings and their relationships. This novel goes beyond Lawrence's previous and later works because it presents a battle between old and new forms of love, and it somehow shows a development in the author's mind since he is capable of criticizing in his own characters aspects of his personality which he could not do before. As for instance, the hyper-conscious mind of his mother in Mrs Morel which he had not criticized either in Helena or in Gertrude Morel. In Women in Love he does criticize this feature of his mother's personality in Hermione Roddice. Also he is able to develop two characters who are essentially mental antagonists but who, up to a certain point, respect their individual differences: Birkin and Ursula. However, Lawrence still divides soul and body as two different entities, and we witness this in Birkin's hesitation between Hermione and Ursula. Besides this, there is the whole struggle between an old and decadent society and a desired new one where people are not corrupt. Full rebirth is impossible because one society contains the other and sequels of the old one may be found within the characters who intend to find a new world. There

is also the assumption that apart from the man-to-woman relation there are additional alternatives, as implied by the Blutbrüderschaft between Birkin and Gerald and a possibility of a female bonding as implied by Gudrun's clinging to Ursula in Hermione's home.

As I pointed out in chapter IV, this novel has two cycles: a cycle of destruction and a cycle of creation. The first cycle is the one in which Birkin has lived for some time and it is the old world which Birkin wants to reject with all its components: Halliday's group and Hermione. Birkin's rejection of this world implies his search for a kind of rebirth. The old world, however, is not destroyed because apart from its permanent members, there are others who involuntarily enter it, like Gerald Crich. Gudrun is also a representative of this world.

Two couples best represent these two cycles: Birkin and Ursula who want to find the new world, and Gerald and Gudrun who maintain the old world. When Birkin breaks off with Hermione and starts a new relation with Ursula, he tries to put in practice his theory of 'two stars balanced in conjunction'. However, as Birkin's theory does not match with his 'macho' practice, his relation with Ursula becomes very troubled and it is a long time till they find a certain equilibrium and they then decide to marry. The other couple, Gerald and Gudrun, embodies a relation of mutual destructiveness because of their sado-masochistic tendencies. The peak of their affair happens when they are in the Alps and Gudrun finds another man, Loerke, who begins to exert on her a strong attraction. This leads her to break with Gerald. Because of his self-destructive personality, Gerald seeks death in a *coul-de-sac*. Gudrun then flees to Dresden with Loerke.



The very end of the novel shows Birkin and Ursula back at the Mill, after Gerald's death in the Alps. What is most important in this part of the novel is that it brings back a discussion suspended when Ursula and Birkin got married: the man-to-man relationship. Birkin has struggled throughout the novel to have a bloodbrotherhood ritual with Gerald. This bloodbrotherhood between the two friends failed because Gerald, unable to cope with his latent homosexuality, rejects Birkin. Now, after his death, Birkin somehow blames Ursula as if she were responsible for the frustrated friendship with Gerald:

Then suddenly he lifted his head and looked straight to Ursula with dark, almost vengeful eyes. 'He should have loved me,' he said. 'I offered him.'

She, afraid, white, with mute lips, answered: 'What difference would it have made!'

'It would!' he said. 'It would' (p.471).

This discussion is expanded in the Mill where the couple has a fierce argument. Birkin still cannot cope with the fact that his friend is dead and that his death has destroyed something within him. Ursula, because she has become Birkin's wife, is somehow blamed, for if they were not married Gerald would have perhaps (in Birkin's eyes) accepted his bloodbrotherhood; then physical death would have no importance:

Birkin remembered how once Gerald had clutched his hand with a warm, momentaneous grip of final love. For one second — then let go again, let go for ever. If he had kept true to that clasp, death would have not mattered. Those who die, and dying still can love, still believe, do not die. They live still in the beloved. Gerald might still have been living in the spirit with Birkin, even after death. He might have lived with his friend, a further life (ibid).

The incoherence of Birkin's thoughts may be accounted for by his deep mourning, but he seems simply to have forgotten that Gerald was too much conventional and conservative to accept what he

offered him. Gerald would never admit homosexuality, or whatever term Lawrence uses to disguise it. Hence, stubbornly Birkin argues with Ursula, trying to defend his point of view about a man friend. One thing must be taken into account in their argument: Ursula opens the dialogue and this implies that she has not become submissive to her husband. In opening the conversation, Lawrence allows Ursula to express her opinion, even though she does not, or cannot, agree with her husband. She says: "'Did you need Gerald?' she asked one evening. 'Yes,' he said" (p.472). The fact that she opens the dialogue implies that she is also open to discuss the subject. And their discussion marks chiefly the existence of their differences which are preserved since both say what they want, what they think. And they do disagree with each other:

'Aren't I enough for you?' she asked.

'No,' he said. 'You are enough for me, as far as a woman is concerned. You are all women to me. But I wanted a man friend, as eternal as you and I are eternal.'

'Why aren't I enough?' she said. 'You are enough for me. I don't want anybody else but you. Why isn't the same with you?' (ibid).

Apart from their different points of view, we see that neither Birkin nor Ursula (nor the author) imposes the correct way to live. Ursula questions her husband, but she does not say 'I must be the only one in your life'. She asks, instead, why she is not enough. And even when she says that Birkin's need is "an obstinacy, a theory, a perversity" she is not saying that he must stop thinking the way he does. She is simply defending her opinion. Also in Birkin's reluctance to cooperate in the conversation, he is exercising his right to think differently from his wife. Thus the book ends with an unfinished argument between the couple. I believe that this final conflict of ideas

in the end of Women in Love illustrates Lawrence's choice to end his book in a dialogue form because he does not want to impose the idea that Birkin is the dominant figure in his marriage. Nor does the author want to say that Ursula is stronger than her husband. In preserving their differences, Lawrence implies that both Birkin and Ursula contain features of himself which may lead them to a balanced relation, or, on the contrary, it may lead the weaker party to be swallowed up by the one who is stronger. While the author sympathizes with Birkin's 'macho' theory, he also sympathizes with Ursula's violent questioning of this theory. The final implication is that both worlds, the corrupt and the 'uncorrupt', are intrinsically part of one another. This connection is apprehended not in the voice of the author but in the opposed ideas implied by the final dialogue. The characters' voices are not impositions, but a defense of their own points of view.

The novella "The Fox" is also an open ended story, but its quality is different from Women in Love. The term 'quality' refers to the mood of the stories as related to the author's intention in writing them. "The Fox" belongs to the beginning of Lawrence's struggle to put the woman down, at the feet of the man. I have already said that the three endings of the novels and the novella I am discussing at present, there is an oscillation on the author's part in defining which side of the scale he wants to favor. "The Fox" best represents this oscillation, because in this story Lawrence seems to have more sympathy for the man than for the woman, yet he also makes clear the protagonist's chauvinism from the beginning. Lawrence does not disguise it in a theory like Birkin's. We know that Henry wants to subjugate March from the moment he sees her and

realizes that she is more accessible than is Banford. On the other hand, we also know that the author's sympathy is somehow confused because at the same time that he wants to make March become submissive to Henry, he also makes March question whether she wants to be dominated or not.

The whole story of "The Fox" traces the development of Henry's fierce desire to annul March and to make her become a mere object of his male power. The good side of Henry's struggle is in that he, as the living embodiment of the male fox, awakens in March her femaleness. He also "kills" her masculine side when he destroys Banford. In the development of the story we also see some transformations in the character of Henry. This fact comes through the kind of treatment the author gives him: at first he is seen like a little boy, a soldier, a young man socially powerless. Then this treatment is transformed in terms of his qualification as a dangerous 'hunter' without feelings. This transformation shows him as an opportunistic man taking advantage of a woman who has, because of him, a terrible crisis of identity. And here lies the most negative aspect of his intention, which is that he is not aware that March is a delicate female being just awakened, and that while he frees her from her masculinity, he also frees her desire for independence. This yearning in March he does not want because as a man he will not allow her to fight for independence: in so doing, March will certainly fight him off because in this sense Henry is a kind of prison. He does not want her to think; he only wants her to live with blind eyes to the world, only following the direction of his commands. Even her sexuality he, like Cipriano, wants to deny. Sexual pleasure is only for the male, the almighty owner of the female. March, however, in discovering her female side, realizes

that she wants a balanced relationship with the man she loves. She does not want to live through him as he does. The end of the story is the description of this internal conflict between the couple. And here, Lawrence fully controls the narrative since the conflict is described in the author's voice. He does not let the characters speak freely. The moment of highest conflict for Lawrence in ending his story occurs when Henry has already killed Banford and he has March, as narrated by the author, with him forever. However, Lawrence seems not to be satisfied with the victory of his male character over March, otherwise he would not continue the story as follows:

But if [Henry] had won [March], he had not yet got her. They were married by Christmas as he had planned, and he got again ten days leave. They went to Cornwall, to his own village on the sea. He realized that it was awful for her to be on the farm any more (p.153).

And now the internal conflict of the characters is described by the author. He describes the sense of failure in both March and Henry:

But though she belonged to him, though she lived in his shadow, as if she could not be away from him, she was not happy. She did not want to leave him: and yet she did not feel free with him. Everything round her seemed to watch her, seemed to press on her. He had won her, he had her with him, she was his wife. And she — she belonged to him, she knew it. But she was not glad. And he was still foiled. He realized that though he was married to her and possessed her in every possible way, apparently, and though she *wanted* him to possess her, she wanted it, she wanted nothing else, now still he did not succeed (ibid).

March is not happy, there is still something missing. Her new life does not seem to fulfil her for "she felt she ought to *do* something to strain herself in some direction... If she was in love, she ought to *exert* herself in some way, loving" (p.154). But this right of exerting herself seems forbidden

to her because Henry "wouldn't let her exert her love towards him. No, she had to be passive, to acquiesce, and to be submerged under the surface of love" (ibid). In his narrative Lawrence asserts that Henry does not need a woman, he needs some kind of doll ready to open up her arms and mouth only when she is ordered to do so. She can never rise and "look forth above the water while they lived. Never" (ibid). Henry's idea of woman is medieval, horrifying. However, March is not exactly what he wants her to be: "She had been so used to the very opposite" (ibid), and it is very difficult to be transformed at once into the passive woman Henry wants her to be. In Lawrence's narrative, it seems that the characters are at different sides pulling a strong iron chain to see which of them will win over the other (unless they both fall down in the attempt). Therefore, this sense of failure persists till the last page of the story. Lawrence's interference in the narrative is even stronger than one might think. In feeling unable to side either with Henry or with March, he interferes to express his personal feeling about fulfilment. It is as if it were something unattainable. One may think that the goals of human beings (as implied by Lawrence) seem always different when they seem to get there: "You pluck flower after flower — it is never *the* flower. The flower itself is a horrible gulf, it is the bottomless pit" (p.156). Lawrence seems indeed pessimistic here. It is as if he himself had been trying and trying and never finding what he wanted. It also seems that he is anticipating that there is no end in Henry and March's struggle to attain their goals.

More about the inner conflict is stated through the author's voice: March has failed to make Banford happy and now she has also failed to fulfil Henry's ideals. Henry

wanted her to give herself without defenses, to sink alone and become submerged in him. And she wanted to sit still, like a woman on the last milestone, and watch. She wanted to see, to know, to understand. She wanted to be alone: with him at her side (p.157).

It seems clear that they want different things from each other. March wants him to discover life with her and he wants her to live through him as a shadow:

And he! He did not want her to watch any more, to see any more. He wanted to veil her woman's spirit, as Orientals veil the woman's face. He wanted her to commit herself to him, and put her independent spirit to sleep. He wanted to take away from her all her effort, all that seemed her very *raison d'être*. He wanted to make her submit, yield, blindly pass away out of all her strenuous consciousness, and make her just his woman. Just his woman (ibid - My underlining).

March's idea of femininity allows balance with the male, the mutual acknowledgement that both man and woman have souls and bodies; whereas Henry wants her, seemingly, to give up her "soul", which is associated with her old masculine, assertive self. He wants a satellite (like Birkin!), not an equal. Another monstrous desire Henry has refers to his wish for March to be like a Harem-slave. This sole mention of the Orientals' way of treating their women refers not only to the veil on the spirit, but to their sexuality. Henry wants to deny March's right to orgasm. The man only wants to make use of the woman, cutting out entirely her sense of pleasure.

The fact that Lawrence prolongs the inner conflict of the characters shows clearly that within himself he is also in conflict. He does not, or cannot decide what is going on with his characters' desires. If on the one hand he says that Henry wants a submissive woman, he, on the other, says that Henry cannot attain that because March does not seem to be capable of any of

these transformations. On the contrary, she wants her own independence. And at the same time "she was so tired, so tired like a child that wants to go to sleep..." (ibid). But she seems to be in a state of alertness as if she were a soldier on his sentry duty who is not allowed to sleep, no matter how sleepy he is — March "fights against sleep as if sleep were death" (ibid). This state of alertness makes her feel thus:

She *would* keep awake. She *would* know. She *would* consider and judge and decide. She *would* have the reins of her own life between her own hands. She *would* be an independent woman to the last (ibid).

This terrible struggle seems to last for a long time, for even on the last page, in the last sentence, there is no definition of who is the owner of the truth. Henry will fight till death to dominate March, to make her sleep to get the reins of her life:

She would not be a man any more, an independent woman with a man's responsibility. Nay, even the responsibility for her own soul she would have to commit to him. He knew it was so, and obstinately held out against her, waiting for the surrender (p.158 - My underlining).

But March, on the other hand, will never give in. Although she is sleepy and wants sleep as death, she will go on fighting till she fully wakes up to decide her life: "But she was so tired, so tired of everything. And sleep seemed near. And there was such rest in the boy... Yet she would not sleep: no, never" (p.157 - My underlining). Also, when Henry presents her with the alternative of crossing the sea to a new life, she

looked away to the sea's horizon, as if it were not real. Then she looked round at him, with the strange look of a child that is struggling against sleep.

'Shall I?' she said (p.158 - My underlining).

Lawrence now passes the floor to the characters because he feels



he can do no more in his own voice. The characters then are free to decide their lives. And March's first speech, 'Shall I?' implies that she is not sure of the reality Henry wants her to attain with him. Her eyes play an important part as if they were the only means for her to keep herself alive, breathing, acknowledging the world outside without much expectation. This may seem odd due to the fact that earlier in the story her dilated eyes (in contrast to her pursed mouth) represented her vulnerable feminine side — now they represent the opposite. It is her eyes which define her persistency in trying to be independent, to find her own way:

And her eyelids dropped with the slow motion, sleep weighing them unconscious. But she pulled them open again to say:  
'Yes, I may. I can't tell. I can't tell what it will be like over there' (ibid - My underlining).

It seems clear that March is not sure, I repeat, if she wants to cross the seas to go to where Henry wants her to go. The future for her is not seen as real. And this implies that she will not sleep. The doubtful answer 'Shall I?' expresses something new: it means that she is no longer obeying him as before. And also that she is willing to get out of the trance Henry has exerted over her throughout the novella. She wants now to become aware of the world without seeing it through the eyes of a man. And even Henry's last sentence does not sound very convincing concerning the nearness of his last and definitive conquest: "'If only we could go soon!' he said with pain in his voice" (ibid). For sure, certainty is not present in Henry's tone. He does not command as before. He simply expresses a wish which is not strong, and does not imply any surety, just a vague expectation. Furthermore, he senses that this battle will last for a long time, because no one who is absolutely sure of his

convictions has pain in the voice. And he does. Even the future seems to be far away in the distance. No. Up to the very end of the novella no one can say that it is March or Henry who is the owner of the truth. March can or cannot close her eyes and become his shadow. Lawrence till the last moment is not sure if he wants March to submit to Henry. This ending is perhaps the most ambiguous of the three exactly because there is no real verbalization of the conflict between the characters. There is only an internalization of it and, furthermore, the conflict comes, as I have shown, through the author's voice, not from the characters'. This may imply that neither March nor Henry know themselves in the way Birkin and Ursula do.

In the next novel, a concluding dialogue also marks Lawrence's indecisiveness. However, in The Plumed Serpent there is a strong feeling that Lawrence indeed wants to force the heroine of the story to surrender to the male power in her husband. The problem with this novel is the unconvincing tone in which the author preaches his intention. There are at least three reasons why this occurs.

First, Kate's new self demands a communion with soul and the author forces her to marry a perverse man who has no soul. Cipriano only exercises the power of his dark love in terms of his sadism. Kate is denied sexual pleasure because her husband does not allow her to have it (one may say that Cipriano practices what Henry preached to March). Furthermore, Kate is seen as if she had accepted punishment in submitting to the 'dark God' in Cipriano. The idea is that she, as a woman, has no right to orgasm. Lawrence seems to have forgotten that Kate actually wanted a communion with the soul of the other man, Ramón.

Second, the author interferes in Kate's thoughts to impose

the conclusion that in Mexico the only possibility for a balanced relationship is the one between men. Women are secondary. The strange fact is that Kate, a woman, thinks about this as if she were an inferior being because of her sex.

Finally, the man-to-man relationship, which is supposed to be the most balanced, is in itself divided since the two men who initiate themselves in the bloodbrotherhood ritual are seen in terms of one being the soul (Ramón) and the other being the body (Cipriano). Moreover, this relationship between men is an affair of the darkness since both men are married in daylight to women (especially Ramón who marries a submissive dark woman whom he classifies as a parasite). Also in the division between soul and body, the soul is seen in superior terms. Ramón, who represents the soul, is tall and handsome and is superior to Cipriano who, as the body, is small in stature and sinister in his deeds. Killing people is something that the soul cannot perform: the body is the executioner.

I would say that the highest Lawrence could achieve in this novel is that his bloodbrotherhood is really stronger than in any other novel which develops this same theme. In The Plumed Serpent it is more successful because Ramón and Cipriano are still together by the end of the novel, in a clear reference to their communion. Neither Ramón nor Cipriano is physically dead, like Gerald was in the end of Women in Love, and this fact certainly implies a degree of success in their relation. On the other hand, both Ramón and Cipriano as characters are never as alive as Gerald and Birkin. They are 'wooden'. When Kate comes to tell them her decision to stay in Mexico, Lawrence portrays her as an intruder:

She had come to make a sort of submission: to say she didn't want to go away. But finding them

both in the thick of their Quetzalcoatl mood, with their manly breasts uncovered, she was not eager to begin. They made her feel like an intruder. She did not pause to realise that she *was* one (p. 486).

The very fact that Kate is seen as an intruder makes it clear that in the relation between the men there is no place for any woman, neither Teresa, nor Kate, nor anyone else. And this makes Kate rebel against her new self and against both men. Also, the fact that she has come to the men to make 'a sort of submission' does not imply the entire surrender of the woman to the men. In seeing Kate as an 'intruder' between Ramón and Cipriano, Lawrence is only asserting one thing: that he really does not know whether to make Kate stay and submit or to make her go away and free herself from the prison these two men represent in her life.

The way the narrative develops shows a stubborn persistence of Kate's conflict — to go or to stay (and this was the problem early in the novel too) — implying Lawrence's indecision. Because of this the language is full of ambiguity. The author, thus, makes Kate enter into a game in which the chief idea is to see how important she is to both men. She is forced to ask for confirmation more on Ramón's part whom she secretly loves, than on her husband's. Kate starts by using a negative statement: "'I don't really want to go away from you" (p.486 - My underlining), implying her indecision. Lawrence uses the pronoun 'you' but the reader does not know whether Kate is directing her speech to both men or whether she is only addressing Ramón (who is Kate's most likely addressee since she answers him and not her husband). And the answer she gets from Ramón does not reflect any confirmation or negation. It is simply a return of what Kate has previously said: "'I know you

don't'". Her reply to this does not indicate her own wish to decide, on the contrary, she keeps expecting the men to answer for her. Then her husband interferes in his hot, sensual, mesmeric voice: "'Yes, I want you! — Verdad! Verdad!' exclaimed Cipriano, in his low, secret, almost muttering voice" (ibid). Cipriano here plays a stupid clown because he takes Kate's questions and answers them only with the hot language of a passionate lover, blind to any other language than the one of the body. Kate says nothing to him because she in fact wants the answer to come from Ramón, not from Cipriano. Instead, she thinks (or Lawrence thinks for her):

*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.*

For she heard the hot, phallic passion in Cipriano's voice (ibid).

Notice the inversion of the statement 'For she heard the hot, phallic passion in Cipriano's voice' which should actually come before Kate's thought. This certainly implies that Kate in fact does not care for her husband. Is Lawrence teasing the readers with this game of words? It seems that Ramón has guessed that Kate wants the decision to come from his mouth, for he leaves it clear that it is Kate who must decide what she wants to do: "'You needn't commit yourself to us. Listen to your own best desire'". Kate's subsequent speech is only a challenge to Ramón: "'And if it tells me to go away?' she flashed defiant...". He does not answer but again returns to her her own decision: "'Then go! Oh, certainly go!'". Kate's response to this seems another trick (or perhaps she has become a puppet in Lawrence's hand): she starts crying! This implies her doubtful position: she has decided by herself and with Ramón's agreement. He has not committed himself in the decision. The fact that Kate has

started crying may be seen as a way she found to blame both men for her recently taken decision. Ramón is forced to leave the room because Cipriano seems to have perceived Kate's joke: "Then Cipriano's voice said, with a hot softness of persuasion: 'You are not his! He would not tell you'" (p.487). Ramón goes away and Kate suddenly stops crying. She has not any reason to cry anymore because Ramón is not present in the room. Her alternative is now to plead with her husband not to let her go away. The last page of the book is then transformed into a mess of language devices to imply Cipriano's mesmeric strength. He uses (and abuses) his snake-like voice to make Kate stay. It seems that in doing so he is putting Kate to sleep (perhaps the sense of Cipriano's mesmeric voice has the same connotation of Henry's soft, manipulative voice when he was hunting March): "Then came his soft-tongued Indian speech, as if all his mouth were soft, saying in Spanish, but with the 'r' sound almost lost... [his voice] sounded so soft, so soft-tongued, of the soft, wet, hot blood, that she shivered a little" (ibid - My underlining). The use of so many alliterations allows us to see Cipriano as a snake mesmerizing his prey. Kate is the prey, of course. However, in her first speech as well as in her last, Kate uses negative statements which positively express her continuous doubt. The point is perhaps that here Lawrence's indecisiveness may represent a double standard: he wants her to stay, but he does not want to commit himself in the decision and, in letting her speak, he wants her to decide to stay. When Kate says "'You won't let me go!'" she does not imply she has already taken the decision. The discussion will go on indefinitely. But, in this novel, the very fact of the two men together at the end of the story marks Lawrence's thumb in the scale pressing heavily on

the masculine side. Also, another idea must be presented to defend Kate: Lawrence, even wishing to make her submit, has put into her mind the thought that she could fool both men and because of this Lawrence has not attained his purpose of putting the woman at the feet of men. If he lets her have this thought he implies that Kate is still spiritually strong and not the passive female he has tried to make her appear. However, Kate's character is inferior to Ursula's because Kate is seen as strong mostly in her mind, whereas Ursula defends her points of view even though she knows she is going to fight her husband off. Kate is strong internally, but Lawrence makes her weaker in terms of making her depend on the two men. Ursula has never been a puppet in Lawrence's hands but it seems that Kate is.

Among these three fictions the one which seems more 'balanced' in terms of the couples is Women in Love because Ursula and Birkin, as I already pointed out, up to the end of the novel, are still defending their different points of view. The other two stories may be seen as theory and practice: Henry wants to dominate March, but he cannot, thus Cipriano dominates Kate (at least sexually). But the idea of a perfect communion between man and woman is still absent. It is as if Lawrence could not portray this and the more he tried, the less he could even convince himself of his intentions.

Lawrence's endings seem always a problem. What is really the sense of his endings? To answer this question one must examine the intention of any ending. The end of a story may be intended to teach a moral lesson. This possibility I discard because Lawrence himself said that this is immoral. His stories end almost always in an ambiguous way due to the author's conflict between intention vs feeling. What does this prove? His

incoherence? Or could it be that he did not want to impose his personal opinion? I believe that the question implies far more than this simple assumption. The second possibility may be that Lawrence's conflicting impulses in deciding the way to end his books may have led him to decide for ambiguity. For instance, in The Trespasser, we have the ending in a dialogue and, although we may take it as implying a repetition of Helena's past now with a new Siegmund in Cecyl Byrne, we see that the ending provokes in the reader a feeling of ambiguity: is the 'fatal female' going to submit? After all, she has taken off her hat with pins (such an attitude was not taken in Siegmund's time). On the other hand, we still feel that she has the last word since she is the one who says what she wants in her future: affection, rest and warmth. The man with her only acquiesces and says 'all right'. Even so, the ambiguity is still present. In the case of the two novels which end in Lawrence's voice, Sons and Lovers and The Rainbow, we see the ambiguity in terms of the too-optimistic view the author puts in his characters' mouths. Their past has been a terrible experience with, most of the time, negative outcomes. The 'positive' ending sounds false, imposed and arbitrary. The author's imposition of a 'happy-ending' does not convince.

The other stories analysed in the course of this dissertation mark a different path taken by the author's attempt to define the endings of his novels. Some critics (Moore, for example) point out that Lawrence has struggled a lot to define the endings of Women in Love, "The Fox" and The Plumed Serpent. I will take the example of Women in Love because of its importance in Lawrence's career as a writer. Moore (1981) points out that Lawrence wrote at least two endings for this novel, besides the definitive one:



Ursula, in a rejected fragment of epilogue, goes to Italy (apparently with Birkin) after Gerald's death in the Alpine sequence with which the book ends; in this fragment, Ursula a year later receives a letter from Gudrun who has left Loerke and has borne Gerald a posthumous son... Still another rejected ending was a comparatively 'happy' one, with correspondences to Lawrence's later (1919) play, Touch and Go. In this attempt to end the novel, Lawrence didn't kill Gerald, but sent him back to England, Gudrun following. Loerke offers to marry her, although she is with child by Gerald, who himself now considers marriage... (p. 341).

I do think that the rejection of these endings only serves to prove that Lawrence did not really want to impose an idea. By finishing the book with the characters involved in a debate he simply divided the conflict between them. On the one hand, one may see that Lawrence is too honest to simply impose his view. He preferred perhaps to leave the reader with a sense of multiple and ambiguous possibilities. The reader then is given 'alternatives'. Thus, Lawrence has not chosen one single alternative, but rather presents alternatives and in them a feeling of tension and conflict.

On the other hand, one may take Lawrence as incoherent and confused because he does not know how to end his stories. I believe that his fondness for open-endings means that the author does not have made-up conclusions. It is a truism that modern literature does not teach one how he must behave. I think that Lawrence is in fact avoiding simple solutions to complex problems — it is not easy to discover answers which can instantly solve problems related to emotional relationships, especially if they refer to a division in the self (soul and body conflict), or if they relate to making a choice between man and woman, and man and man. Some of the endings of Lawrence's stories may be seen as 'good endings' since they create multiple possibilities. The

reader should then make up his own mind. That is why several critics view the endings of Women in Love, "The Fox" and The Plumed Serpent as implying Ursula's submission to Birkin, Henry's domination over March and Kate having decided to stay in Mexico (see Millet, for instance). Personally, I disagree with such views. Birkin has not dominated Ursula, March and Henry are still undecided, and Kate has not decided to stay. The open ending has this fantastic advantage. People may interpret it according to their own convictions.

It has been my intention to show through this dissertation the pattern of conflict as related to Lawrence's fiction. This pattern has been fully examined in terms of showing that through Sons and Lovers Lawrence creates prototypes which are extended to other stories. Mrs Morel represents the woman associated with the sky, the soulful woman, stronger than the man. This man is Mr Morel, the example of the dark male related exclusively with the blood. He is the sensual male who, because of his connection with the earth, is shown as weaker and is defeated by the soul in the stronger woman. These prototypes are found in other stories with some degree of difference. Lawrence's early phase shows them in the following way: the soulful women are always victorious and their main representatives belong to Sons and Lovers, The Trespasser and The Rainbow. The characters who show traits associated to Mrs Morel are Helena, the 'dreaming woman' and, particularly Anna and Ursula Brangwen. The case of Anna is especially different from her daughter since she only replaces her husband in the home. She is victorious in the sense that she defeats the weak male in her husband and transforms him into a mere sexual object. Ursula, on the other hand, is victorious in the sense that she defeats the male because he does not have

a personality to compete with hers. She wants more than sexual fulfilment. Her battle is shown in terms of her attempt to conquer her independence in the world. The male characters in these two novels do not in fact represent the dark male linked to the earth as did Walter Morel. Siegmund, Will and Skrebensky are weaker males due to their nervous, incoherent, dependent personalities. Therefore, Lawrence's first phase shows women who are stronger, independent and soulful (except perhaps for Ursula who is not to be defined as a truly soulful heroine). In the second phase, the soulful woman is seen especially in Women in Love in the character of Hermione Roddice. However, this woman is no longer victorious. She is in fact the most criticized because in her use of the mind she is a parasite, not a creative person. Neither Gudrun nor Ursula Brangwen can be considered as soulful. They are more accurately seen as modern women in quest. In fact they differ in their quests because Gudrun is more negatively independent in the sense that she is somehow corrupt; whereas Ursula is a more balanced woman since she does not seem to be corrupt, although she has within herself traits of personality connected with both corruption and creation. In "The Fox", also, there is not any really soulful woman. Banford and March are characters who have divided selves since they represent at first feminine and masculine sides of personality. But both women are independent since they live alone in a farm without any man to help or to control them till Henry arrives there and disturbs their life. The dark male in these two works is not clearly present. In Women in Love he is absent since the male characters are people who use their minds. Birkin cannot in the least represent the prototype of the dark male. He is too intellectual. Gerald, on the other hand, is connected not with

the earth but with ice-destruction. His feelings are not creative. They would rather destroy. Henry in "The Fox" is the one who most approximates the dark lover because he is almost exclusively a man of body, who smells like an animal and who is emotionally dependent on an older woman. Thus, Lawrence's second phase shows the decay of the soulful woman and the ascendance of the dark male, although it is counterbalanced by the woman's still powerful and questioning mind. In Lawrence's third phase represented by The Plumed Serpent there is a complete reversal of the woman's importance as the strongest element in the relation. Here, the dark male replaces her and has his most important function: to defeat the soulful woman. Cipriano is the Pan-god, the dark lover, the potent 'macho', who defeats Kate mainly in terms of her sexuality. The soulful woman is seen as denying her previous assertive and independent self to submit and be sacrificed to the power of her dark lover. However, this phase is one of Lawrence's most controversial since his male hero is seen in inferior terms. He is the executioner, the sadist and he cannot be placed as the real and superior being who is seen in the character of Ramón, the soulful man. The heroine is also in a doubtful position since Kate questions her two selves: it is a conflict between the old independent self and the new submissive self. There is no real 'ascendance' of the male, as there was for the woman in Lawrence's early phase. But, in fact, in all these stories there is a progressive shift of sympathy from mother to father, especially in the case of The Plumed Serpent because the dark male is not overtly criticized except in the unconscious of the author who still puts him as an inferior being, as I have just said.

Critics generally agree that Lawrence's second phase is

the one which shows the most successful element of balance in the relations between the sexes. My idea, however, is different. I could not find this period of 'successful' balance in any of the stories I have been analysing. On the contrary, strictly speaking, in Lawrence's novels there is no balance (in the sense of permanently achieved harmony), but in all periods there is the struggle of conflicting impulses, especially related to the split between soul and body. In Lawrence's stories there is polarized flux, but not balance as something rational and serene. It is a kind of 'modern' balance achieved only in the full awareness of conflict. Whatever the degrees of artistic success in the various novels and stories as "The Fox", the author never solves the existential problems, the split of mind and body that he grew up with. While the treatment of conflict goes through various phases, it always returns to the same problems raised by Sons and Lovers.

Lawrence in his works is consciously describing a "modern love" syndrome, and showing its genesis, especially in Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow and Women in Love. Love for him means struggle, conflict, it is something entirely problematic. In fact the idea of modern psyche for him means bisexuality. The psyche of the characters are marked by polarized flux. We have seen this in the way the characters go from one extreme to the other: as for example, Paul Morel's love life with Miriam (the soul) and Clara (the body). Also in Birkin who goes from Ursula to Gerald and vice versa. It is as if the mind (or the body) were always changing its course: from negative to positive poles. March is 'masculine' before Henry comes to her life and then becomes 'feminine'. This is seen in the novels and stories through the pattern of X-shaped plots in which characters exchange roles in

relation to dominance and submission and this includes not only 'masculine' women who become feminine, like March, but 'feminine' men, like Henry or the little, soft voiced Cipriano, who prove their masculinity. In the case of Cipriano, for example, he proves his 'masculinity' by killing people who do not agree with the Quetzalcoatl religion or in his sexual sadism with Kate. Also the pattern of X-shaped plots can be said to be the result of Lawrence's desire to 'remarry' his parents in fiction. This 'remarriage' represents the author's wish to redeem his father because he gives him the upper hand — the blood conscious male who becomes 'superior' to the mind-conscious woman.

Apart from this, Lawrence also attempts to create a new kind of relationship which may replace the man-to-woman relation. This new relation begins in Women in Love through the frustrated Blutbrüderschaft between Gerald and Birkin and is fully developed in the period of the leadership novels. At first bloodbrotherhood is seen as additional to marriage but in Lawrence's leadership phase it becomes the alternative to marriage. The Plumed Serpent is where this relation seems more successful because Ramón and Cipriano are still together by the end of the novel in a clear reference to the author's predilection for the relation between men. The woman is seen as an intruder and she no longer is the most important partner for the man. However, this period in which the friendship between men replaces the relation between man and woman is still a period of conflict because bloodbrotherhood is something related to the darkness. In daylight these men are still married to women and this seems to imply that the author is not really convinced that man and man form the ideal pair. That seems why the author is divided in himself when he has to end his books. The open-endings of his

stories show his internal conflict in terms of the fierce battle between his conscious intention and his unconscious feelings. Feelings always contradict the author's intention. This is perhaps a clear sign of the author's artistic honesty and because of this the conflict of the characters is never fully solved. And although the author sometimes tries to press his thumb in the scale to favor his intentions, he does not achieve it because his feelings are stronger and, therefore, there is always ambiguity in the way he finishes his stories.

As for the theme of 'star-polarity' or balance in the whole opus of the author, I believe that it does not exist. It is more a question of who in the relation has sufficient strength to fight off the partner who wants to dominate. The so-called union of body and soul could not be reconciled or united by Lawrence. He simply could not do it in any of his stories. Here, I repeat, perhaps the most 'balanced' relation seems to be Birkin and Ursula's, but we know that Birkin is a chauvinist and Ursula may succumb at his feet, although she protests against this side of her lover's theory. In the whole opus there is not really a balanced 'marriage' between the two halves of the self. Daleski and Sagar, for instance, think that in The Rainbow and Women in Love, specifically, there is a successful presentation of balance between the couples. But there is not. Balance between the characters implies balance between conflicting impulses (male vs female, body vs soul) in the author. This is not really reconciled. In the novels of the leadership phase, the search for balance is replaced by the search for power, for dominance. It may be useful here to quote from Mark Schorer's essay "On Lady Chatterley's Lover"<sup>3</sup> where Schorer discusses the distinction

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<sup>3</sup>Modern British Fiction (New York, 1961).

between power and potency as defined by the psychologist Erich Fromm:

The word 'power' has a two fold meaning. One is the possession of power over somebody, the ability to dominate him; the other meaning is the possession of power to do something, to be able, to be potent. The latter meaning has nothing to do with domination; it expresses mastery in a sense of ability. If we speak of powerlessness we have this meaning in mind; we do not think of a person who is not able to dominate others, but of a person who is not able to do what he wants. Thus power can mean one of two things, *domination* or *potency*. Far from being identical, these two qualities are mutually exclusive. Impotence, using the term not only with regard to the sexual sphere but to all spheres of human potentialities, results in the sadistic striving for domination; to the extent to which an individual is potent, that is, able to realize his potentialities on the basis of freedom and integrity of his self, he does not need to dominate and is lacking the lust for power. Power, in the sense of domination is the perversion of sexual love (p.306).

And as this above quotation implies, the search for domination (in the case of The Plumed Serpent) is not at all connected with equilibrium, harmony between the sexes. It is the perversion of sexual love. This is entirely true in the case of Cipriano and Kate. The mutual respect is replaced by sexual savagery, dominance of the male over the female; the transformation of sexuality into a relation of sado-masochism. It has nothing to do with the meeting of the body and soul, the 'two in one'. The perverse male swallows the female. And even in Lawrence's last novel, Lady Chatterley, the idea is still the separation of body and soul. And as Connie has rejected Clifford's mind to be the worshipper of Mellors' body, and vice versa, we may say that the only salvation for the human being (for Lawrence) is in blood consciousness, not in mind consciousness. Lady Chatterley represents the surrender of the mind. Lawrence, therefore, could never be able to put in practice what he believed to be the most



perfect union in human beings — the union of male and female in terms of a successful marriage between body and soul.

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