The saying that ‘the age produces the man,’ is one that does not apply to D.H Lawrence. He did not belong to his age nor indeed to any age. He was a phenomenon that might appear in any age and be equally unexpected in each one. (The Critical Heritage 327)

There are a few writers and few works of fiction that seem to fascinate generations and generations of critics and readers. No matter how much has been said and written about them, it is never enough. The volume of criticism on them may be daunting, but each successive historical period offers refreshing points of view, thereby, contributing towards immortalizing the author and his works. Lawrence is one of these few writers in his sustained appeal and an ever growing readership. Lawrence is larger than his critics. This is a study of Lawrence. It begins at the beginning, i.e. the moment of his birth. David Herbert Richards Lawrence (1885 -1930) was born on 11th September, 1885 in a small house which is now 8a Victoria Street, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire. Nicknamed as “Bert” by his family, D.H. Lawrence was the fourth child of Arthur Lawrence (1846 -1924), a semi-literate coal-miner, and Lydia Beardsall (1851 -1910), a former school-teacher. At that time, Eastwood was a growing mining village of the Midlands. After her marriage to Arthur, Lydia started running a clothes shop in the vicinity. Soon, the continual pressure of the unhygienic working conditions in the coalmines belied couple’s hope of leading a cultured married life; it also started telling upon their married life. Home life for the Lawrence children became polarized between loyalty to their mother and a rather troubled love for their father. Besides, “Bert” was frail from birth. His companions bullied him as “mard-arsed”—soft — because he preferred the company of girls to that of boys and of books. Physical want and constant bickering between his parents plagued his childhood: “It was not a
promising background for a man who would make his life’s work writing about the fulfilled relationship of men and women, and the crucial relationship between human beings and the natural world.” (Worthen, Composite Biography)

D.H. Lawrence was studious and laborious since his childhood. By dint of hard work and intelligence, he won a scholarship to Nottingham High School in 1898. There, in the school, he distinguished himself with his dark suit of high collar and the books under his arm. He finished his school in the summer of 1901. In the early autumn that very year, he started working as a clerk at the Haywood, a surgical goods firm, in Nottingham. His elder brother, Ernest, who was working in London then, died of erysipelas. Just before Christmas, Lawrence also went down with double pneumonia. During illness, “he came back to a new and very significant kind of intimacy with his mother.”(Worthen) He also acquired during convalescence a new kind of awareness of the countryside around his home. This love for nature got further intensified during his visits along with his mother to the Chambers family at the Haggs Farm. There, at the Haggs, Lawrence found in Jessie Chambers (1887-1944) an intimate friend and a devout worshipper of his genius. Naturally, many of Lawrence’s subsequent novels and stories have some connection with Eastwood and its adjacent countryside and also the people he knew there.

After convalescence, Lawrence’s aptitude for mathematics got him another decent job doing the accounts for a local pork butcher. Soon, he became a primary school pupil -teacher in the British School in Eastwood. In the spring of 1905, Lawrence started writing poems. His first poems were “Guelder-Roses” and “Campions.” During this period, Lawrence and Jessie Chambers kept on meeting regularly. Their growing intimacy drew public displeasure, especially that of his mother and his sisters. Lawrence had to discontinue his friendship with Jessie. It hurt her horribly. In September 1906, Lawrence won the King’s Scholarship and started attending Nottingham University College as a student. There, at Nottingham, he found a new group of
friends, including Louie Burrows (1888 -1962). Lawrence also moved into new worlds of socialists and free — thinking companions. At Easter 1906, D.H. Lawrence began to write fiction — a novel then called *Laetitia*. His story, “A Prelude,” submitted by Jessie Chambers in the annual Nottinghamshire Guardian Competition, won the first prize worth three guineas. In this way, he began appearing in print. During his stay at the College, away from the conditioning impact of his home, he started discarding “his adolescent acceptance of the values of his mother and her world.”(Worthen) He came out of College with the best marks among his mates in 1908. After having acquired such moderate formal education, Lawrence joined the Davison Road Boy’s School at Croydon, Surrey, as Assistant Master on 12th October, 1908. This job brought him to London for four years from 1908 to 1912.

Croydon offered D.H. Lawrence a new landscape. He regularly visited London particularly to watch plays and operas. He explored art galleries and second-hand book-shops. He kept on writing regularly and sending all his manuscripts to Jessie Chambers for her suggestions and comments. In June, 1909, Jessie sent off several of his poems to Ford Maddox Hueffer (1873 - 1939), the then editor of the *English Review*. Hueffer not only published those poems but also arranged for the publication of Lawrence’s first novel, *The White Peacock* (earlier called *Laetitia*). During that year, Lawrence found another intimate friend in Helen Croke (1882 -1978), a fellow -teacher. He became closely involved with her; listened to and sympathized with her experiences. He started writing another novel, *The Saga of Siegmund*, based on the story of Helen’s experiences. Lawrence also befriended Agnes Holt and thought of an engagement to her. But he broke off from her when she resisted his attempts to make the relationship sexual. This sexual abstinence is reflected in all his novels, unless it is accompanied by the harmony of sexes. During Whitsun holidays, Lawrence renewed his affair with Jessie. But it also turned out to be desperately unsuccessful. In August, 1910, he resolved on a complete break with her. Just a fortnight later, his mother, Lydia Lawrence, collapsed from cancer. Within a month, Lawrence started writing an autobiographical
novel, *Paul Morel*. He also started to see more of his old friend Louie Burrows who was doing her best to care for Lawrence’s ailing mother. At the start of December, 1910, he proposed to Louie. She accepted his proposal at once. On 9th December, 1910, Lydia Lawrence died. The dejected Lawrence went back to his job at Croydon.

Lawrence’s maiden novel *The White Peacock* came out in January 1911. Lawrence, then, met Edward Garnett (1868-1937), his second mentor. Garnett advised him to extensively revise *The Saga of Siegmund*. Throughout the spring and early summer of 1911, Lawrence struggled with his third novel *Paul Morel*. He also continued writing poems and stories. He tried to renew his affair with Helen Corke. But she refused to sleep with him. Lawrence then, turned towards Alice Dax (1878 -1959), a married woman. In October, 1911, Lawrence sent the whole manuscript of *Paul Morel* to Jessie Chambers for the comments. In November, 1911, he again collapsed with pneumonia. Ada, his sister, went down o Corydon to nurse him. Helen and Jessie also paid him visits. Because of his near fatal illness, Lawrence gave up his teaching position at Croydon and decided to live entirely on the earning s from his writing. He also terminated his relationship with several women, all of whom appear in his early fiction and poetry Jessie Chambers, Helen Corke and Louie Burrows. He decided to leave for the continent.

On 3rd March, 1912, Lawrence called on Ernest Weekley (1865 -1959), Professor of Modern Languages at the University of Nottingham. Emma Maria Frieda Johanna Weekley (1879 -1956), the German wife of Ernest Weekley, and Lawrence found themselves strongly attracted towards each other. Her beauty, her directness, her foreignness, her spontaneity and her carelessness fascinated him. She, in turn, was deeply impressed by his background and the way it fed into his work as a writer. On 3rd May, 1912, Frieda eloped with Lawrence to Germany leaving her husband and three small children behind. On 5th August, 1912, they set off for Italy. This was the warm south they had been looking for. Lawrence began to work again on *Paul Morel* and incorporated Frieda’s suggestions in the final draft. It was published as *Sons and Lovers* in
1913 by Edward Garnett. Lawrence regarded him as both father and brother, and dedicated *Sons and Lovers* to him. Till then *The Saga of Siegmund* had also been published as *The Trespasser* in 1912. Garnett helped Lawrence in getting his poems published as *Love Poems and Others*, (1913) Lawrence and Frieda lived in Italy for two years. During his stay in Italy, Lawrence wrote a few plays and poems as well. He started writing his fourth novel *The Sisters* (also called *The Wedding Ring*) which later turned out into two separate novels, *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920).

D.H. Lawrence and Frieda set out in 1914 for a visit to Germany and then back to England. Here, in England; they became acquainted with John Middleton Murry (1889-1957) and Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923). The four became intimate friends. Murry introduced the Lawrences to another literary patron, Edward Marsh (1872-1923) who, in turn, introduced them to Lady Cynthia Asquith (1887-1960), the daughter-in-law of the British Prime Minister. Lawrence and Frieda married in a South London registry office on 14th July, 1914 after she won divorce from Weekley. Thus, the two-year exile of the Lawrences was at an end. The relationship between Lawrence and Frieda remained tempestuous yet mutually satisfying. It proved critical to his creative writing as well. Though, Lawrence was apt at establishing an intimate relationship with anyone he met, his “only deep and abiding human relationship was with his wife.” (Huxley, *Oliver Tree* 224) During 1914, Lawrence wrote *Study of Thomas Hardy* that gave him a new understanding of abiding human relationships which became a major theme in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. Edward Garnett introduced the Lawrences to Lady Ottoline Morrell (1873-1938), a great hostess for artists. Dining with her brought Lawrence in contact with E.M. Forster (1889-1970) and Bertrand Russell (1872-1970). He also met young painters like Mark Gertler and Dorothy Brett.

Soon the war broke out in 1914. The Lawrences publicly denounced the war. They became the target of government’s displeasure and people’s sneer. The autumn of 1915 turned out to be a sequence of failures and disasters for D.H. Lawrence. *The Signature*, a magazine started by him, failed to pave its
way. The public me Εtings denouncing the war turned out to be a complete failure. *The Rainbow* was published but soon persecuted for its explicit sexuality. His increasingly poor health was further exacerbated by the harsh English climate and the psychological pressures caused by the suspicious attitude of people regarding Frieda’s German nationality and Lawrence’s outspoken opposition to the war. Besides, Lawrence was almost penniless because the press was unwilling to publish him. Lawrence and Frieda went down the Cornwall. They liked Cornwall: the rocks, the sea, the sense of being almost out of England. The Murrys also joined them at their cottage in Cornwall. They thought of migrating to America and establishing there a colony of like-minded individuals. But it could not materialize because of the worsening war-situation and differences between the Murrys and the Lawrence. There, in Cornwall, Lawrence created *Women in Love* out of the material left over from *The Sisters*. But it met with summary rejection on the part of the press. Besides, it led to an end of his precious friendship with Ottoline Morrell who detected in the character of Hermione a portrait of herself.

In the beginning of 1917, the Lawrences were served with a military exclusion order, forbidding them to reside in Cornwall. They were financially penniless. Lawrence’s agent, Pinker, helped him out with a loan. Lawrence’s sister, Ada, assisted him by renting him a house at Middleton-by-Wirksworth. On 11th September, 1917, his 33rd birthday, Lawrence was called by authorities for a medical examination. He was classed as Grade 3, conscripted for light non-military duties. The decision maddened him: “from this day, I take a new line. I’ve done with society and humanity….Henceforth, it is for me, my own life, and I live.” (Boulton, *Letters* 228) However, he was never actually called up for the service. In February, 1919, he went down with influenza for six weeks. At last it was in November, 1919 that the Lawrences were able to get out of England and sail for the continent. In this way, the War years brought Lawrence to a deliberate self-exile which lasted, in one way or the other, for the rest of his life.
During his sojourn, D.H. Lawrence stayed in Turin for a couple of nights with a diplomat, Sir Walter Becker (1855 -1927), who would later find a lengthy recreation of his house and the conversation there in *Aaron’s Rod*. In Florence, Lawrence met Norman Douglas (1868 -1952) and Maurice Magnus (1876-1920). He also had a brief affair with Rosalind Baynes. Some of the writings about Connie in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* drew on Baynes’ background and her appearance. From Florence, Lawrence and Frieda headed for the wildest part of the Abruzzi Mountains. This extraordinary journey finds its fictional recreation in *The Lost Girl*. From there, the Lawrences escaped back over the mountains to Capri. There, they met Earl Brewster (1878 –1957) and Ascham Brewster (1878 -1945). In the meantime, Lawrence also completed *Aaron’s Rod* that centers round the perennial theme of marriage and relationship. Frieda and Lawrence sailed for Ceylon on 26th February, 1922. But soon after arriving in Ceylon, Lawrence picked up a stomach bug and remained sick during his whole stay in Ceylon. In May, 1922, they moved on to Australia. There Lawrence met the Australian novelist, Mollie Skinner (1878-1955). She provided him the manuscript of her unfinished novel. The following year, Lawrence transformed it into *The Boy in the Bush*. In Australia, Lawrence wrote another novel, *Kangaroo* — declaring that “the marriage exists in continual flux, between the possibilities of love, of lordship, of companionship.” (Worthen n. page)

On 11th August, 1922, Frieda’s forty third birthdays; the Lawrences sailed for America Mabel Dodge Sterne (1879 –1962) brought them to Taos, New Mexico. It was a new world where Lawrence experienced for the first time an old-world religion in the Red Indians. In March, 1923, the Lawrences moved to Chapala. Here, beside the lake, D.H. Lawrence wrote *The Plumed Serpent* as he had written *Sons and Lovers* besides the Lago di Garda, *The Rainbow* beside the sea in Fiascherino, *Woman in Love* high above the sea in Cornwall, *The Lost Girl* overlooking the sea in Taormina and *Kangaroo* beside the sea in Sydney.
In 1923, Lawrence and Frieda decided to sail back to Europe. But just before the boat left, they quarreled fiercely with each other. Frieda alone went to England and then to Germany. Lawrence traversed America and finally went back to Mexico. On 21st November, 1923, he went back to England and reunited with Frieda, on 5th March, 1924, they again sailed back to the ranch in Mexico. They rebuilt the ranch with their own hands and called it first Labo and later Kiowa. In August, 1924, Lawrence suffered a bronchial haemorrhage, the first real onset of the tuberculosis which dominated the final five years of his life. In the autumn of 1924, Arthur, Lawrence’s father, died back in England. His death revived the old pains Lawrence had suffered after his mother’s tragic death long back in the autumn of 1910. In February 1925, Lawrence was almost dead with a fatal mishmash of typhoid, malaria and influenza. In September 1925, the Lawrences came back to Europe. Their American adventure finally was over.

Lawrence and Frieda returned from America first to Germany and then to Italy. In February 1926, Lawrence suffered another bronchial haemorrhage. In July that year, they visited England. Lawrence went to see his family in Lincolnshire. This visit brought him immense pleasure. In October 1926, they returned to Italy. Lawrence started writing *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* there. His new occupation that winter was painting. On 11th July 1927, he suffered his third severe fit of illness and then a series of bronchial haemorrhage. That very year the Lawrences visited Austria and Switzerland. Lawrence’s increasing illness could not stop him from traveling and writing extensively. His pride and independence hated their subjugation at the hands of illness. He used to say, “The great thing is to have the courage of life. Have the courage to live, and live well.” (Boulton, *Letters Vol. V 545*) His writing of three versions of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* in the winter of 1927 -28 was almost miraculous. Lawrence managed somehow to exhibit his paintings in London. But they were also impounded for indecency and immorality. He then arranged for the private printing and distribution of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* when publisher refused to accept it. But it was also confiscated and persecuted in the court on the familiar
charge of spreading pornography and obscenity. However, Lawrence could not be cowed down even with such merciless persecution. In 1929, he reiterated his essential philosophy of life, of being and of interpersonal relationships. He again summarily rejected the prevailing idea of deceptive individualism and mechanical connections “my individualism is really an illusion. I am part of the great whole... What we want is to destroy our false, inorganic connections...and re-establish the living organic connections, with the cosmos, the sun and the earth, with mankind and nation and family.” (Kalvins, Writing on Revelations 149)

During 1929, Lawrence’s illness acquired incurable dimensions. His doctor advised him to stop writing and travelling and get admitted to a hospital. But Lawrence ignored the doctor’s advice. He said: “Work is the best and certain numbness, a merciful numbness. It was too dreadful a blow — and it was wrong.” (Boulton and Sagar, Letters Vol. VII 634) Though Frieda was not a good nurse, yet she could in the most extraordinary way revive and arouse Lawrence when he was really ill and depressed. Ultimately, he was admitted into a sanatorium near Venice in southern France on 6th February 1930 against his wishes. On 1st March 1930, Lawrence dragged himself from the nursing home to Villa Robermound in Venice. He had lived on his own terms and now would die also on his own terms. Lawrence died on 2nd March 1930 in the evening. He was buried in Venice. Five years later, Frieda arranged for the cremation of his remains and transported them to Kiowa ranch. Today, his remains lie interred there in the small chapel that Frieda adapted to hold them. She also decorated the chapel with Lawrence’s personal symbol the rising phoenix. Really, Lawrence “never accepted defeat. He proved to be fort comme la mort, strong as death — or even strong as life. He lived and died as a real man.” (Nehls, Biography 161)

The creative range of D.H. Lawrence’s genius was very large. He not only wrote bulky novels but also dramas, short stories, poems, essays, literary reviews, travel books, essays. His reputation as a novelist rests on his novels like The White Peacock, The Trespasser, Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow,
Women in Love, The Lost Girl, Aaron’s Rod, Kangaroo, The Plumed Serpent and three versions of Lady Chatterley’s Lover. He wrote seven novellas of which The Captain’s Doll, The Virgin and the Gipsy, The Woman Who Rode Away, The Fox and The Man Who Died are well appreciated for their compactness. He also wrote ten plays (eight completed and two unfinished) including A Collier’s Friday Night, The Daughter-in-Law and The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd. Two of his plays were staged during his lifetime. He compiled eleven complete volumes of poetry in his lifetime out of which Love Poems and Others (1913), Look! We Have Come Through! (1917) and Birds, Beasts and Flowers (1923) are more popular. Among his non-fiction writings, Apocalypse, Fantasia of the Unconscious, Mornings in Mexico, Twilight in Italy, Sea and Sardinia, Sketches of Etruscan Places, Studies in Classical American Literature and Study of Thomas Hardy are noteworthy. Most of his essays are compiled in Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D.H. Lawrence and Phoenix II: Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works by D.H. Lawrence. One is definitely surprised to note that despite being so deeply preoccupied with imaginative writing, Lawrence could find time enough to write so many letters to so many acquaintances that editors had to compile these letters in seven bulky volumes. Almost every critic has found Lawrence engaging in one way or the other. Consequently, he has won their approval for every genre of his choice. For instance, critics like F.R. Leavis, Mark Spilka, Harry T. Moore, etc. hail him as one of the great novelists. F.R. Leavis also hails him as “an incomparable literary critic.” (Leavis, Novelist 16) While Con Coronoeos and Trudi Tate point out of the inimitable psychoanalytical depth of Lawrence’s short stories, Helen Sword stresses the uniqueness of his poetry defying every classification. Similarly, John Worthen draws attention to the dramatic talent of Lawrence that is enough to put him at par with the best of the modern dramatists. Jeffrey Meyers recommends his letters as “the greatest in English since [John] Keats and [Lord] Byron.” The same critic loves Lawrence’s travel books because these “shift the centre of interest from the external world to the self” He also finds in his paintings “a form of delight that
words can never give.” *The Lost Girl* brought Lawrence the maiden official recognition in the form of the James Tait Black Prize of Edinburgh University. Some of his novels such as *Sons and Lovers, Women in Love, Lady Chatterley’s Lover, The Fox,* etc. have been adapted for films. *The Fox* has also been adapted as a play. Besides, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* has been released as a sound recording.

In spite of the general mist of controversy that frequently enveloped his life and work, Lawrence has enjoyed a fair degree of popularity among critics both as a man and as a writer. That is why; the trend of his biographical studies is still as much in vogue as it was immediately after his death. During the very first decade after his death, i.e. the 1930s, there appeared nearly a dozen impassioned biographies of D.H. Lawrence. Notable among these are John Middleton Murry’s *Son of Woman: The Study of D.H. Lawrence* (1931), Catherine Carswell’s *The Savage Pilgrimage: A Narrative of D.H. Lawrence* (1932), Frederick Carter’s *D.H. Lawrence and the Body Mystical* (1932) Jessie Chamber’s *D.H. Lawrence: A Personal Record* (1935) and William York Tindall’s *D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow* (1939) However, the biographers of this decade are sharply polarized in their opinions of Lawrence as a man. He is either presented as a mother-dominated, sex-crucified man or as the late – – Romantic genius and the life — affirming hero struggling against the flawed upbringing at the personal level and the spiritual depravity of society at large. The 1940s were comparatively a period of lull in the Lawrence criticism. However, the 1950s witnessed more spirited biographies of Lawrence. Notable among them are Richard Aldington’s *The Portrait of a Genius, But …* (1950), Harry T Moore’s *The Intelligent Heart: The Story of D.H. Lawrence* (1954) and Edward Nehls *D.H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography* (1957-59) in three volumes. These biographers tend to idealize the otherwise truly human Lawrence. The glamour of Lawrence as a man continued to sway the imagination of critics during the seventh and eighth decades of the previous century. During these decades appeared Emile Delavenay’s *D.H. Lawrence: L’ Homme et la Genese de son ouvre… 1885-1919* (1969), Paul Delany’s *D.H.
Lawrence’s Nightmare (1979), Keith Sagar’s The Art of D.H. Lawrence (1980) and D.H. Lawrence: Life into Art (1985), John Worthen’s D.H. Lawrence: A Literary Life (1989), Jeffrey Meyer’s D.H. Lawrence: A Biography (1990), Yoshio Inoue’s Hyoden D.H. Lawrence (1992-94) in Japanese and Brenda Maddox’s D.H. Lawrence: The Story of a Marriage (1994). Many of these biographies try as usual either to idolize or demonize Lawrence at the cost of the colorful diversities associated with him and his life. However, the three-volume Cambridge biography (1991-98) of Lawrence — D.H. Lawrence: The Early years, 1885-1912, D.H. Lawrence: Triumph to Exile, 1912-1922 and D.H. Lawrence: Dying Game, 1922-1930 — is like a rejuvenating puff of fresh breeze. It is till date the most comprehensive and also the most delicately worked-out life-history of Lawrence. John Worthen, Mark Kinkead-Weekes and David Ellis — the three biographers of the respective volumes — present a Lawrence who wrote out of himself wasting nothing; who was deeply influenced by his mother’s self-reserve and control; whose voracious readings refined his taste and sensibility; whose brutally honest analysis of himself and others scared many; who was determined to be true to his feelings whatever may the cost be; whose primitivism, futuristic vision and iconoclastic views of human personality and relationships earned him disproportionate notoriety, whose poverty and self-exile coupled with lack of stability and contentment in married life with Frieda made him sometimes irritated; whose non-stop travelling from England to Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Ceylon, Australia, the U.S.A., Mexico and France further enriched his already “teeming vision of life.” (Eggert, 157) In short, these biographers finally present an amiable Lawrence bestowed with high spirits, inimitable sense of fun and humor, love of charades, enjoying such tedious tasks as house-cleaning, cooking, the long spells of ranch-repairing and having passionate love for children especially the poor ones whom he offered to teach whenever he found the opportunity. What emerges from these Cambridge volumes is:

A Lawrence who is, at one level, an ordinary man with a range of problems, suffering, depressed and solipsistic, but also wickedly
joyous, outward — looking and fearless in the most intellectually ambitious ways...Dethroned from his position as the Lawrence—the—prophet of the 1950s and 1960s, distanced from the furies of 1930s disputation and returned to the period of his own life so convincingly, this Lawrence emerges as far more impressive when we recognize the conditions of his own personal history — when we appreciate how limitations transformed into stimulants, how he wrote from his life and how he lived in his writing.

(Eggert 170)

Lawrence was primarily an artist. He knew that art alone reveals the truth about the real world. Lawrence wanted art to deal with life in its totality. For him nothing was more important than “life” and life to him meant the reality of living creatures. It could, however, be best understood by man making imagination come to terms with the reality of what it means to be the “whole man alive.” The greatness of the novelist lay in his ability to deal with the “whole man alive.” Lawrence who had profound concern for wholeness was pained to see the disintegration and devitalization that had set in man’s life. He believed that modern western civilization is sick mainly because of man's preoccupation with materialism and a handful of ideas which govern his life on the phenomenal plane, ideas of possessing, amassing and divesting others of freedom, even of life itself. This has resulted in an imbalance between the life of instinct and intellect and relation with his circumambient universe. This division in man's self has destroyed his vital life. This has created deadening which has alienated man from life-giving forces. Lawrence was chiefly concerned with this problem and has dealt with it exhaustively in almost all his works.

For Lawrence art and life were inseparable. He believed that art is “the medium through which man expresses his deep and real feelings.” (P 11 224) That is why he declared: “My motto is art for my sake.”(CL 171) In a way art is utterly dependent on the artist's vision of life, even if the artist is at first not conscious of it. Lawrence believed in art which was guided by “instinct and
intuition.” (SE 302) Art for Lawrence was something “spontaneous and flexible as flame,” not restricted by artificial form, (P 221) because form is “impersonal like logic,” which is the outcome not of “artistic conscience but of certain attitude to life.” (SLC 113) To Lawrence, “as to Shakespeare and Keats, his writings did come as naturally as the leaves of a tree and it is distinctive as theirs.” (Leavis, Poetry to Prophecy 121) There is no doubt that Lawrence has “the rhythm of a living thing.” (SLC 265)

Lawrence distinction between the moral and the didactic is a point of crucial importance in his aesthetics. Didactic pronouncements of all kinds, according to him, are really immoral because they are mental abstractions. Lawrence's aesthetic is moral aesthetic indeed, and yet it will not do to describe him simply as a moralist — mainly for two reasons. First he is quiet against didacticism in literature — particularly in the novel. Shaw, for example, is dismissed by him as “a pamphleteer rather than an artist.” (CL 877) Secondly, what he understands by morality in art has nothing to do with the, mental — idealistic concept with all its emphasis as on “Thou shalt not.” His morality is a morality which envisages a radical change in the consciousness of man and enlarges the boundaries of our consciousness. It is with reference to these fundamental truths that Lawrence’s moral concern ought to be studied.

Lawrence's moral concern for life is revealed in what he says about the material of art. “It is the way our sympathy flows and recoils that really determines our lives. And here lies the vast importance of the novel, properly handled. It can inform and lead to new places the flow of our sympathetic consciousness and it can lead our sympathy to recoil from the things gone dead.” (LCL 368) Lawrence believed that the tendency towards fixity and definition is death for the novel. Lawrence affirmed that philosophy, religion, science, all is busy nailing things down to get a stable equilibrium. But the novel is the highest example of interrelatedness that man has discovered. He warns us that “if we try to nail anything down in the novel, either it kills the
novel or the novel gets up and walks away with the nail.’’(P 528) Lawrence was not prepared to subdue his art to any metaphysics “He acknowledged that he wrote because he wanted man and woman to alter.”(SLC 14)

Explaining his views on the function of art and morality Lawrence wrote: “the essential function of art is moral, a passionate implicit morality, not didactic.” He believed in a morality which “changes the blood rather the mind… the mind follows later in the wake.”(SCAL 160) His dictum about the essential function of art becomes clear when we see the close correspondence between his views on art and morality. Art, Lawrence believed, displays “the living conjunction” between “the self and its context”(SM 117) whereas “the essence of morality” for him is “the basic desire to preserve the perfect correspondence between the self and the object,”(FU 226) the business of art is “to reveal the relation between man and circumambient universe” (P 527) and morality is “that delicate, changing balance” between man and the circumambient universe which accompanies this relatedness but the relation between things keep changing from time to time. Art, which reveals these changing relations is for ever new, and a new relationship also means a new morality.

Morality in the novel is the “trembling instability of balance,” but “when novelist puts his thumb in the scale, to pull down the balance to his own predilection, that is immorality.’’(P 526) That is what a didactic novelist precisely does. He is untrue to his creative inspiration and forces the novel to convey the lesson on which he wilfully imposes his will. Didactic pronouncements were immoral for Lawrence because they are mental abstractions tending to present the relative as the absolute. It is important to bear in mind that morality for Lawrence was not a set of rules or moral prescriptions. On the contrary, he considered morality based on ideals as “unmitigated evil.”(FU 79) He believed that true morality is only “an instinctive adjustment which the soul makes in every circumstance, adjusting
one thing to another livingly, delicately, sensitively.’(FU 80) Anything that damages this delicate adjustment and impairs the deeper flow of life is sinful and immoral. That is a reason he admired Whitman’s morality which was “a morality of the soul living for life.”(SCAL 181)

For Lawrence “there is only one sin in life and that is the sin against life” which is the “inner emptiness and boredom of the spirit.”(P 745) Nothing for him was more important than life, which was nothing but a matter of living. And “life with a capital ‘L’ is only man alive.”(SLC 104) In his essay “Why the Novel Matters,” Lawrence wrote; “Now I absolutely flatly deny that I am a soul, or a body, or a mind, or an intelligence or any of rest of these bits of me, the whole is greater than part.”(SLC 104) It is for this reason that he was a novelist. And being a novelist, Lawrence considered himself self superior to the saint, the scientist, the philosopher and the fact that they are all great masters of different bits of man alive, but never get the “whole hog.”(SLC 105) Living for Lawrence was not mere existence, not just doing certain things as part of the routine but living fully in the flesh as well as in the spirit “Life for him mean something that has the fourth dimensional quality.”(P 540) He had a “profound reverence for life,” for life’s “deepest urges” as “the motive power” Real living was the only truth for Lawrence, but the real problem is “how can we most deeply live?”(CL 133) Lawrence found novel the appropriate medium for “exploring the largest question of man and his relation to the created universe” and he realized that “any such exploration must begin with a voyage inward as a search for self.”(Cushman, Lawrence at Work 13) Only the novel can explore the hidden areas of life which lie “underground like roots in the dark.”(P 418)

“Every work of art adheres to some system of morality but if it is really a work of art, it must contain the essential criticism on the morality to which it adheres.”(Kermode, Lawrence 6) The degree to which the system of morality is submitted to criticism within the work of art makes the lasting value and satisfaction of that work. Such is the case with Lawrence. From the very
beginning his fiction has come in far severest moral strictures. F.R. Leavis rightly describes the history of Lawrence’s reputation as a “shameful history of misrepresentation and abuse.” (Lawrence: *Novelist* 319) There seems to be a misreading of his moral position. The present thesis is an attempt to correct the imbalance in reading his novels, particularly with reference to his seminal essay “Morality and the Novel.” In this essay Lawrence repeatedly emphasized a new man -woman relationship because he considered this relationship as a nucleus to all other relationships. In E.M Forester's *A Passage to India*, Mrs. Moore says regarding the relationships that “though people are important the relation between them are not,” (Forster 147) but in Lawrence it is the opposite. Here the characters in themselves are not important nor the events but the relationships of the characters to each other. For Lawrence, we can say, though people are not important, relations between them are. For him it is the relation itself which is the central clue to life, not the man, nor the woman, nor the children that result from the relationship, as a contingency. What Lawrence searches for in his novels is a new kind of morality the centre of which lies in re-evaluating men -women relationships. While most studies focus on this central relationship, studies both old and new, there is still a gap between what we understand by morals and what he intends them to be. Lawrence thought that it would be wrong to base a system of ethics upon theological principles, although the common man evaluates moral action in terms of supernatural reward and punishment. Lawrence set aside these basics of morals, in order to enable man to become radically moral by accepting mutual limitations. He also did not have faith in such categorical imperatives of duties, responsibilities or obligations. In fact, these imperatives are in reality only the old theological commandments in disguise. Lawrence searched for the moral premises in the depth of the unconscious rather than in human consciousness. Lawrence conceived of man’s body as a kind of flame which is like a “candle flame.” And the consciousness, he explains, is just the light that is shed on area around.
To him, this bright light seemed to falsify what was “the immediate apprehended reality — the darkness of mystery.” (HL XIV). Mental consciousness is like the “blinding light” under the “arc lamp.” Most people are interested only in the illuminated area and ignore the outer “vast darkness”( R 488) which remains unrevealed. This “unrevealed” darkness is one’s real self which cannot be known by the mind. The unknown, unrevealed dark self within can be known in “direct experience” (PU 225) by transcending the conscious self. Our unconscious is our true self which is “pristine” and not in any way “ideal.” Thus, his “unconscious” is not the same thing as Freud’s unconscious. It is “the spontaneous origin” from which it “behoves us to live,” (PU 212) the will to live. It is our real self “prior to any mentality.” (PU 212)

As he writes in Women in Love:

Man struggles with his unborn needs of fulfillment…Any man of real individuality tries to know and understand, what is happening, even in himself, as he goes along… It is the passionate struggle into conscious-being. (WL 10)

By “passionate struggle into conscious being” Lawrence meant the emergence from some partial or mechanical state of being into organic wholeness. However, at no point in his exploration of consciousness did Lawrence assume an individual in a vacuum. Consciousness was to him not solely a phenomenon of individuality but — a phenomenon of individuality with an interpenetrating context. On nothing did he insist more than upon contact and interaction as conditions necessary to the development of individuality itself. The highest goal for every man is the goal of pure individual being. But it is a goal one cannot reach by rupture of all ties. Life appeared to him a continual urge toward the recurring disequilibrium not only within the individual but also between him and his surroundings.

Lawrence’s moral concern in relationships, as we have known from his essay “Morality and the Novel” centers round equitable relation of sexes,
leading to an “infinity of relations” with the whole circumambient universe: first with each other, through love; then with other men and women, through friendship and creative labor, and finally even with birds and flowers etc. As Lawrence wrote in *Psychoanalysis and Unconscious* that the whole life is one long, blind effort at an established polarity with the outer universe, human and non-human; and the whole of modern life is a shrieking failure. It is our own fault. The present thesis attempts to underscore that though as human beings we spoil relationships with others, beginning with man -woman relationship as a nucleus to our relationship with the circumambient universe, because we have inflated egos, we must also know that we do not live in vacuum. The world is inhabited by other egos that inhabit us. That is why Lawrence says that in any new relationship an adjustment means also a fight, for each party inevitably must seek his own in the other and be denied. This is a significant statement in the sense that our subjective ego needs an anti-thesis, the non-ego. This results either in fight to death or in sacrifice which is far away from Lawrence’s vision of “star-equilibrium.” The total surrender of one person to the other destroys the self, the otherness of the other person. Lawrence, however, wants the third principle which results neither in a fight nor in a sacrifice but arrives at a mutual limitation. But this needs courage above all things. However, we need courage to accept others, as others also need courage to accept us as a separate being, a kind of separate relatedness. Still as Lawrence prescribes, we need discipline not to exceed oneself any more than one can help. Perhaps it is exactly what Lawrence wants to achieve for all interpersonal relations whether it be man -woman, man-man, woman -woman, man -animal or man-nature relationships. The extended analysis of George-Cyril, Gerald-Birkin, Lilly-Aaron, and Ramon-Cipriano relationship shows Lawrence’s passionate exploration of the possibilities of relationships. However, the man -woman relationship occupies the central place in his novels. As he writes:
The great relationship, for humanity will always be relation between man and woman. The relationship between man and man, woman and woman, parent and child, will always be a subsidiary. And the relation between man and woman will change forever and will forever be the new central clue to human life. (P 531)

D.H Lawrence took the concept of relationships and made it the central postulate of his philosophy of human life. He exposed the harm caused by the prevalent formulas about love, friendship, marriage and sex which are different manifestations of term relationship. Lawrence recognizes the supreme value of love. In his words, “love is no more than a stream of clear and unmuddled subtle desire which flows from person to person, creature to creature, thing to thing. The moment this stream of delicate but potent desire dries up, the love has dried up and the joy of life has dried up.”(Pll 452) He further affirms, love as a relationship between things that live, holding them together in a sort of unison. A uniting together of the diverse cosmos into a oneness. Love is a great emotion, but it is an absurdity to say that men and women must love. Because no emotions is supreme or exclusively worth living, for all emotions go to achieve a living relationship between a being and the other being or creature or thing he becomes purely related to. As for the bond of love, better to put off when it galls, you can’t put a stamp on the relation between man and woman. Modern mechanical civilization with its mechanistic aid of ideas has perverted man. Love which was a vital flow has become an idea conceived in the head. It is no longer “a progression towards the goal” (P 152) of spontaneous fullness of being. Love, Lawrence contends, is not an “absolute.” (P 152) Love is no doubt “an eternal part” of life, of human relationships; it needs not to be treated as if it is an absolute, “a whole.” Then, it becomes a “disease, a vast strangling octopus.”(K 361) In the modern age, love has only become a “love-will” which
is used to seek power over the other partner. Lawrence has made it clear more than once that:

The moment the mind interferes with love, or the will fixes on it, or the personality assumes it as an attribute, or the ego takes possession of it, it is not love any more, it’s just a mess. \( (CP \ 473) \)

He wanted us to break the vicious circle of love and will so that we can live spontaneously responding to the “promptings” of our great unconscious self. For example in *Aaron’s Rod* Aaron feels forced to love whereas he wants to have a bit of free room round him to lose himself. He tells Josephine: “I feel if I go back home now, I shall be forced to love or care or something… she’s made up her mind. She loves me and she’s not going to let me off.”\( (AR \ 83) \) This bullying of love violates the sanctity of the sacred emotion. It amounts to sin beyond redemption. All emotions including love and hate, rage and tenderness etc. go to the adjusting of the oscillating unestablished balance between two beings. Life is so made that opposites sway to a trembling centre of balance. Suffice to say that equilibrium is never quite perfect. There is no such thing as an actual, a living norm. The norm is merely an abstraction, not a reality. We love too much, or impose our will too much, are too spiritual or too sensual. There is not and cannot be any actual norm for human conduct. All depends, first on the unknown inward need within the very nuclear centre of individual himself, and secondly on his circumstances. Some must be too spiritual, some must be too sensual. Some must be too sympathetic some must be too proud. There are all kinds of ways of being and there is no such thing as human perfection. No man can be anymore than just himself, in genuine living relation to his surroundings. Lawrence writes:

Pure morality is only an instinctive adjustment which the soul makes in every circumstance, adjusting one thing to another livingly, delicately ‘sensitivity.’ \( (FU \ 71) \)
Lawrence believes that the key to great self-realization is body’s natural wisdom of its immediate desires and aversion. The person who achieves subtle awareness of his unconscious sympathies would fulfill his individual self through profound, active relation with other individuals, with nature, and possibly with a recognized society. For Lawrence act of love involves the nourishing sacred flow of life between man and woman. That is why Lawrence believed that love is a religious experience, a communism of the blood which brings renewed vitality of being. But in contrast to all this “counterfeit love” proves destructive and exhaustive; it stems, says Lawrence from purely mental feelings, from white cold, nervous, poetic “personal” desire, which exhausts the life flow with its frictional insistence. So the chief moral criterion for love in Lawrence’s world or for any emotional experience is this: does it affirm or deny, renew or destroy the sacred life within us? For it must be made emphatically clear that Lawrence saw all human engagements, sexual or otherwise, in terms of their effect upon the individual’s vitality.

Lawrence believed that the clue to all living lies in “the vivid blood-relation between man and woman.”(PS 414) The sexual act according to the novelist is the most immediate contact, and the two beings meet at the level of the naked-beings unguarded, uninhibited, and unrestrained. During such moments, biological privileges or social prejudices collapse; each being is equal to other and meets at a leveled plain, but there is no mingling or fusing that may endanger the loss of either self. As D.H. Lawrence says:

The love between man and a woman when it is whole, it is the melting into pure communion and it is the friction of sheer sensuality both…I become my single self, inviolable and unique. The woman and I, we are the confusions of earths. Then in the fire of their extreme sensual love, in the friction of their intense, destructive flames, I am destroyed and reduced to her essential otherness. It is a destructive fire, the profane love. But it is the
only fire that will purify us into our own unique gem like separateness of being. (Quoted by Daleski, *Modern Fiction* 15)

Before Lawrence most of the writers preserved rigid silence in the subject of sex. Sexual morality was regarded as a matter of personal and social hygiene. Lawrence desired that man and woman should think on sex freely, completely, honestly and clearly. To him sexual relationship undoubtedly remained an important part of man-woman relationship. Throughout his career, he was heroically bold to write on sexual matters. Sex for Lawrence, is another term for life long relationship between being of opposite sexes. It is another name for the flow of natural feeling a genuine feeling between individual of opposite sexes. Lawrence emphasized the importance of balance between the sensual and spiritual love in the “Foreword” to *Women in Love*:

Let us hesitate no longer to announce that the sensual passions and mysteries are equally sacred with the spiritual mysteries and passions. Who would deny it anymore? The only thing unbearable is the degradation, the prostitution of the living mysteries in us. Let man only approach his own self with a deep respect…Lewdness is hateful because it impairs our integrity and our proud being. (*P II* 275)

Lawrence not only plead for an adjustment in consciousness to the “basic physical realities,” (*CL*111) but he also defends his use in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* of the four letter words on the ground that they are the natural and uninhibited expression of these realities. And if sex is not a primary fulfillment it is due to cultural failure in which we are nearly all involved, where sex goes into the mind. Sex becomes impure when it is directed from its primary function of mutual fulfillment to the instinct for procreation. It is decidedly not the motive behind sexual relation between man and woman. For him the experience of the participants in sex is always primary, and the child is a by-product. Lawrence does, however, seriously underrate the power of
parental feeling and desire for children; and he seems to have no concrete idea of the completion of a sex relation in children and the family. Though he spends a great deal of energy on the relations between parents and children, it is nearly always as its perversions and there is scarcely any instance in his novels of normal parental love. Since the central fact of human experience is the polarity between the sexes, the difference between man and woman is to be maintained and maintained as far as possible. As Lawrence states:

A sex union means bringing into connection, the dynamic poles of sex in man and woman... begetting of a child is less than the begetting of the man and woman, woman is begotten of man at the moment, into her greater self: and man is begotten of man. This is the main. (FU 40)

It is important to note that Lawrence, while relating the question of obscenity to the quality of modern consciousness, morality, and life, makes an attempt to detain it from the simple question of permissiveness. One of his basic premises is that sex appeal, or sex stimulus by itself is not objectionable. He is firmly opposed to the Puritan outlook which tends to regard sexes an evil and sex-appetite as something to be ashamed of, contending that sex is neither disastrous nor shameful if it’s current is allowed to flow freely without the interference of the mind or will. Sex is what one makes of it. Naturally therefore, the criterion of obscenity or pornography, is not whether a book “arouses sexual feeling,” (SLC 36) but whether these feeling are straightforward, natural and concurrent with the intuitive and creative imagination of the novelist. When sexual feelings are mentally stimulated, when sex becomes a thing of “underclothing excitement,” (SLC 54) when it is reduced to a thing of horror or by identifying it with the excremental functions of the body, when it is treated just another biological activity like eating or sleeping or when it is made cheap and commonplace the element of obscenity or pornography enters. As Lawrence writes:
Assert sex as the predominant fulfillment, and you got the collapse of living purpose in man… Assert purposiveness as the one supreme and pure activity of life, and you drift into barren sterility, like our business life of today, and our political life…And so you are. You have got to base your great purposive activity up on the intense sexual fulfillment of your individuals. That was how Egypt endured. But you have got to keep your sexual fulfillment even then subordinate, just subordinate to the great passion of purpose: subordinate by a hair’s breadth only: but still, by that hair’s breadth, subordinate. (P 155-56)

Perhaps all studies of Lawrence should begin with quotation, to counteract the popular distortions of his views. Lawrence was never in favor of love and sex which was personal. He was concerned with that which was non-human and impersonal in man. Modern men and women are living in bondage to their egos. They are mere “cabbages” (P 428) incapable of developing, for they cannot give up their conscious selves. One cannot achieve fullness of being by remaining imprisoned within one’s own self. Lawrence has consistently shown the failure of the “love mode” in which the lovers exercise their wills to gain power over the other. Such a love is more or less a battle of wills. Ursula and Skrebensky, Gerald and Gudrun, Aaro n and Lottie all fail to achieve fulfillment. They stick to their egos and exercise their love-will which proves disastrous. The possibility of fulfillment, according to Lawrence, remains in man’s submission to the “power urge.” (AR 347) The contact with the dark, impersonal power in one’s own being is the contact with the mysterious otherness. Spontaneity can be achieved by transcending one’s conscious self, and the assertive will and submitting to one’s deepest impulses on the physical level. As Paul felt with Clara “reason, soul, blood” carried in “a great sweep,” should make a man realize that he is not “with a mind, but a great instinct.”(SL 442) Clara could not share this experience with Paul because she could not transcend her conscious self. When man and woman abandon their
personal selves, and give themselves up to the “impersonal” and the “otherness” of each other, only then can they achieve fulfillment. This is a state which is “beyond love, beyond emotional relationship.” (WL 161) When the lovers “cast off everything,” cast off themselves even and “cease to be” so that which is perfectly themselves “can take place” in them (WL 163), they achieve that “spontaneous fullness of being.” This can only be achieved in contact with the other and not by “the mere rupture of all ties.” (FU 32) Only by bringing about death of their old selves can they be reborn like the Phoenix that rises out of the ashes as a new bird. Tom-Lydia, Ursula-Birkin, Ramon-Teresa, Kate-Cipriano, Connie and Mellors are able to achieve this state. It is a “mystic conjunction” (WL 168) which made Huxley calls Lawrence the “mystical materialist.” (HL XX) For Lawrence matter was as important as the spirit. The contact with the dark, unknown otherness can only be had on the physical level, through a polarized sexual communion. In this communion, each is a single being in togetherness. Lawrence explains in “The Reality of Peace” that “after the pain and death of our destruction in the old life comes the inward suggestion of fulfillment in the new.” (P 672)

Though marriage offers the only opportunity for profound self fulfillment, it paradoxically makes the severest attack upon one’s separate identity. All his novels represents an impressive and deciding artistic attempt on Lawrence’s part to set forth the conditions of manhood, womanhood, and marriage, as he felt and understand them in his own life. He believes that regeneration of society can only be accomplished by a new relation between individuals. Almost the only genuine relation modern life offers is the meeting and mingling, the cozy domesticities of ordinary married love. As Lawrence writes about Lottie in Aaron’s Rod that: “she was quite sure that the highest her man could ever know or ever reach, was to be perfectly enveloped in her all—beneficent love. This was her idea of marriage.” (AR 170) Lawrence disapproves this through Birkin as he says: “The old ideals are dead as nails.
nothing there. It seems to me that there remains only this perfect union with a 
woman — sort of ultimate marriage — and there isn’t anything else. ” (WL 64)
But this sort of marriage is not a matter of love, it is to be something beyond 
love — a balance of opposites, freedom together, or a democracy of touch. As 
F.R. Leavis states that: “Life is fulfilled in the individual or nowhere; but 
without a true marital relation, which is creative, more than the sense of 
producing children, there can be no ‘fulfilment’: that is the burden of 
Lawrence’s art.”(Lawrence: Novelist 121)

Lawrence called for balance or polarity, as if between two oppositely 
charged entities. The principle of balance or polarity in love is fundamental to 
sensual vitality, for it preserves the inner, individual intact. Through Bir
kin, Lawrence disavows the love -ideals that mask the violation of selves through 
“meeting and mingling,” and “merging,” and the clichéd patterns of “being in 
love.” The offense against life has been brought about by a failure to respect 
the complete and term inal individuality of persons — by a twisted desire to 
possess other persons. Lawrence saw this offense as a disease of modern life in 
all its manifestation, from sexual relationships to those broad social and 
political relationships. Is it necessary that man live at the expense of man? It 
became an obsession with Lawrence to find a category of understanding that 
would enable every living being to maintain separate togetherness to every 
other living being, starting from man -woman relationship as a nucleus to all 
other relationships.

The tragedy is that between the individual and the cosmos, there falls 
the deathly shadow of the ego or self assertion. Egoism is by nature limitless. It 
is a desire to preserve oneself, and to dominate others. Human beings are 
compelled not only to dominate others, but also to manipulate their own lives 
in accordance with an absolute that has little to do with their deeper and 
positive yearnings. The chief problem of modern men and women is to learn 
somehow to give up the egoistic will and enter into a pure and sympathetic
connection with things and persons around them. Lawrence regrets that most men are mere “cabbages” incapable of developing toward the “maximum of being.” (P 428-29) Humanity is only a mass of egos, bound together in a tribal will. Egoism manifests itself in many ways in the novels of Lawrence. He finds that it cannot be reformed by the influence of social constitutions. According to Lawrence, even egoism is all pervasive at all social levels and one should not be deluded by a false picture of romance and poetry. Lawrence finds that human life is but a struggle of egos and there is no purpose hiding the reality of human nature — the hypocrisy of society which seeks to cover it behind the etiquette and politeness. Lawrence’s fiction expresses sickness, distress, poverty, shame and all other thousand ills of life.

The question Lawrence seems to ask is: Can there be any room for morality in such a world? What motive is strong enough to defy the dictates of egoism which are buried so deep in human nature? Religion, of course, cannot be a guide to morality. This motive has to be found within human nature, not outside of it. It has to be found in compassion and in a sense, in giving up the assertion of the human will, not in mere sacrifice in religious terms as Miriam offers, because hers is not an act of sacrifice, as that of a mother for her children. It is rather masochism. Lawrence has shown that suicide, as in The Trespasser, as also in Women in Love, is an act of shuffling the cards and not the surrender of will or ego by Siegmund and Gerald. As we move to read more of Lawrence’s novels, beginning with The White Peacock, we increasingly encounter Lawrence’s moral concerns. Of course, there is no ascending ladder in this regard. Even in the best of his novels his characters are still short of the moral awareness; they continue to assert their need for love and sex. The aim of life is not self-assertion or self-preservation, but to be itself.

However, human will is not essentially a negative force. Lawrence is aware of the positive role “will” plays in the growth of self into creative spontaneous-being. Will is that power that enables us to “choose life when the
mind is attuned to the delicacy of adjusted understanding.” (P 670) Lawrence defines human will as a “certain faculty for self determination.” (PU 248) Every individual possesses the will right from the beginning of life. The will does not initially depend on mind:

Originally it is a purely spontaneous control factor of the living unconscious. It seems as if the will and the conscience were identical, in the pre-mental state. It seems as if the will were given as a great balancing faculty, the faculty whereby automatization is prevented in the evolving psyche. The spontaneous will at once reacts against the exaggeration of any one particular circuit of polarity… (PU 248)

But when the mind gets control of the will, it can assert its power over the self both consciously and unconsciously and destroy the “spontaneous life” (PU248) It is clear that the moment when will identifies itself with the mind, it plays the subversive role and the process of automatism sets in. Henceforth the human psyche proceeds according to some fixed scheme based upon certain fixed principles. It is here that the ideals or ideas start interfering in natural relations. Throughout his writings, Lawrence has used the term will in a derogatory sense. Normally all forms of will are bad for Lawrence: “ego-will” (CL 722), “will-to-power,” “will-to-love,” “will-to-procreate,” or a “will-to-anything else.” (P 64) As he looks at it they all operate against the “spontaneous soul” they obstruct the movement of unconscious. Lawrence believed that in modern age, man has “fallen into state of fixed, deadly will.” (FU 88) There is no spontaneous love left in the world. It is all will, the fatal love will. Lawrence affirmed that our idealism is the clue to our fixed will. Even love has become an ideal. Man works the love way falsely from the upper self and “works it to death.” (FU 123) The only way out of the “vicious circle” (FU 130) of idealism is to break the love ideal and turn away into the stillness and solitude of one’s own “soul” (FU 148) As Lawrence writes:
Take the love of a man and woman today, says Lawrence and you find conflict at the two opposing egos or individualities. It is nobody's fault; it is the inevitable result of trying to snatch an intensified individuality out of the mutual flame (of love) …And this ego, each hopes it will flourish like a salamander in the flame of love and passion which it may: but for the fact these two salamanders in the same flame and they fight till the flame goes out. Then they become gray cold lizards of the vulgar egos (PII 444)

Lawrence traces five stages of pure relatedness; the ego, or will, its negation by the non-ego, self limitations, relation and finally realization that no one possesses complete metaphysical reality. Lawrence created his own fictional contexts for the remedy or resolution of this clash of egos or wills. We have inflated egos but we must know that we do not live in vacuum. The world is inhabited by other egos and when these egos clash, there is a struggle, as our subjective ego needs its anti-thesis, the non-ego. The struggle can be averted only when we follow mutual limitations and self discipline. At this stage there is a mutual pull. And here one needs courage and discipline to establish balance or “star-equilibrium.” Here lies the resolution of the disharmonies that are likely to arise between two beings. Lawrence still believes that perfect love is not possible.

Perfect love is an absurdity. Perfect love I suppose means that a married man and woman never contradict one another and that both of them always feel the same thing at the same moment...It is a mistake and ends in disaster. (PII 453)

Undoubtedly, Lawrence’s concern is moral. He calls for a balance, internal as well as external, a kind of achieved harmony which would enable men and women to live spontaneously, out of fullness of their powers. Although the man’s and woman’s roles are complementary, opposition and
conflict between them is to be expected. For example, some figures rely on one or two elements of being, to the point where it distorts their affective life. One woman smother a man with excessive spirituality; another tries to reduce her lover to his mental essence, or a husband tries to dominate his wife through will or sensual love and so on. Always, in all his books, Lawrence has tried to show that relation between men and women, even between men and men, are actual, emotional and dynamic, and not ideal, not purely mental—spiritual and certainly not static.

Lawrence seems to suggest that all the old ideals—love, home, husband, wife, good and evil itself can have no vivid meaning, so long as men and women sin against life itself—the truly modern sin—a death-in-life and rip and tear at each other’s soul at every turn. And so he might add we must regenerate ourselves, we must think and feel with the whole of our being, we must resurrect the body, if we want to bring the great words back to life again. For great words never stand by themselves in Lawrence’s world, but always spring from living relationships and lead to individual fulfillment in this life. Lawrence believes that the regeneration of society can be accomplished by a new relation between individuals. Almost the only genuine relation that modern life offers is the “meeting and mingling,” the cozy domesticities of ordinary married love. But Lawrence rejects this, as it is a denial, a reduction of freedom and necessary human pride, and the only way is—a profound and permanent bond between a man and a woman which still leaves them separate and independent as persons, the achievement at the same time of freedom and relationship, freedom on personal level, profound relationship at deeper than—personal roots of being.

Lawrence transcends mere egoism; he perceives that life takes place in the individual, and that it is the business of love, marriage, religion and social endeavor to bring about fulfillment in the individual. Charles Rossman has rightly observed “judged by his own conscious intentions, he stands as the
proponent of delicately balanced reciprocity in male female relationship. He unceasingly attacks merging and fusion of man and woman — the western tradition dating from Plato’s Symposium which regards sexual relationship as the restored unity between broken halves of a whole.” (Lawrence: Review 255)

The central law of all organic life is that each organism is intrinsically isolate and single in itself. But the secondary law of life is that the individual can only be fulfilled through contact and communion with his fellow men and women. And, of course, the most vital contact of all occurs between a man and a woman, so long as it preserves the intrinsic “otherness” of each participant.

Birkin, in Women in Love, thus emerges as a mouthpiece of Lawrence, regarding the novelist’s morality of the love. As he writes:

Fusion, fusion, this horrible fusion of two beings which every woman and most men insisted on, was it not nauseous and horrible anyhow, whether it was a fusion of the spirit or of the emotional body? Why could they not remain individuals, limited by their own limits? Why this dreadful all comprehensiveness, thus hateful tyranny? Why not leave the other being free, why try to absorb, or melt, or merge? One might abandon oneself utterly to the moments, but not to any other being. (WL 353)