CHAPTER 2

CYCLIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN PAUL MOREL:

' Sons and Lovers '
Paul Morel, the protagonist in *Sons and Lovers* seems to have a cyclic consciousness. Just like the change of seasons in Nature observes a pattern, Paul's consciousness also follows a pattern. George H. Ford in 'The "S" Curve: Persephone to Plato' comments on the structure of the novel thus:

It is evident that the structuring of this novel is skillfully devised towards one end, the revelation of "the long and half secret process" (as Lawrence calls it in his essay on Franklin) of a son's development away from his parents. The organization consists of a sequence of interlocking triangles such as mother-father-son; mother-elder son-girl; mother-son-spiritual girl; mother-son-physical girl.

The novel also shows that madness and battle in Paul is a cyclic process. For example, we come across a reference to his nature according to the change of seasons: "Spring was the worst time. He was changeable, and intense and cruel." Again in 'The Test on Miriam' it begins like this: "With spring came again the old madness and battle". Paul at a later stage realizes that his life has been a circle:

It was like a circle where life turned back on itself, and got no further. She bore him, loved him, kept 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.\(^2\)

Phallic consciousness is one phase he achieves with his sexual relationship with Clara. But she takes it as passion and craves for it, as a result he goes back to his initial stage of internalizing mother's consciousness. Paul at the last phase breaks from the doom of cyclic web and moves quickly to the city's golden phosphorescence. This has happened quite in accordance with his belief:

It's not religious to be religious ...
I reckon a crow is religious when it sails
cross the sky. But it only does it
because it feels itself carried to where
it is going, not because it thinks it is
being eternal.  

Paul's evolution as a phallic hero is revealed
through various phases. For a better understanding of
the first phase, the background of the family in which
he is born is important. The opening sentence of the
novel "'The Bottoms' succeeded to 'Hell Row'." brings
into focus that the central characters of this novel
belong to an age of transition. Getrude Coppard,
"a puritan" and "intellectual" who belongs to an old
burgher family meets Walter Morel, the gay, life-loving
miner at a Christmas dance. She finds him "so full of
colour and animation, his voice ran so easily into comic
grotesque, he was so ready and so pleasant with everybody
... soft, non-intellectual, warm, a kind of gambolling."
She realizes that her nature and interests are different
from his. She has a "curious and receptive mind", loves
"ideas" and is interested in an argument on religion or
philosophy or politics with some educated man. For

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3 Ibid., P.307.
Walter Morel, Getrude is an experience. He feels melted away before her. She is a thing of mystery and fascination, a lady for him. Getrude finds in him a good dancer and feels that it is natural and joyous in him to dance. Her inherited puritanism and dislike for sensuous pleasures do not come as an obstacle at this stage. She responds to Walter like a woman who has phallic consciousness:

the dusky, golden softness of this man's sensuous flame of life, that flowed off his flesh like the flame from a candle, not baffled and gripped into incandescence by thought and spirit as her life was, seemed to her something wonderful, beyond her.  

His presence radiates a warmth in her as if she has drunk wine. He in turn forgets everything in her beautiful smiling. He is a man who is directed by his instincts. "Not knowing what he was doing - he often did the right thing by instinct". He speaks to her about the life of a miner: "You live like th' mice, an' you pop out at night to see what's going on." What is Morel's everyday life experience is a new realization, "a new tract of life" for her. Her attempts to talk something seriously with him, after their marriage, are meted with failure. She

4 Ibid., P.18.
finds him deferentially, but without understanding. It has frustrated her efforts for a finer intimacy and she has flashes of fear:

When Gertrude sees the life of the miner as 'noble', her 'mental consciousness' is already interpreting in categories it can understand and accept, experiences which are essentially alien to it. But Gertrude never fully understands the nature of the conflict in her own soul and so can never achieve integrity. She is attracted to the dark world which Morel represents; for something in herself is part of it. But the mental consciousness or the cultured self with which she identifies will not accept the other for what it is and so... sins against the only self she is prepared to recognize. 5

The second phase of Gertrude Morel's disillusion comes when she discovers that her husband has told her lies about paying for their household furniture, and about owning the house in which they live. Gamini Salgado observes that the financial strain is a

constant feature of the early married life of the Morel and argues that there is connection between the economic and psychological aspects of the story.

It is partly the economic deprivation perpetually confronting her which forces Mrs. Morel to seek her fulfilment in the over-possessiveness towards her sons which eventually brings about Paul's emotional disfigurement.6

The finding of the bills of the household furniture unpaid makes her rigid with bitterness and indignation and her mind crystallize hard as rock towards Morel. Her belief in him as a teetotaller has also been broken. Her own bitterness and disillusion is hardest for her to bear and her soul feels dreary and lonely. She despises her husband and turns her love to her first born child. Morel, apparently begins to neglect her. But what he actually feels at this development is incomprehensible: "What he felt just at the minute, that was all to him. He could not abide by anything. There was nothing at the back of all his show." She tries to make him undertake his responsibilities, fulfil his obligations and make him moral, religious. But Morel remains indifferent with

his purely sensuous nature. The final break occurs when she comes downstairs one Sunday morning to discover that he has shorn off the beautiful golden curls from their son's head. Mrs. Morel cries aloud which upsets the miner. They seem to share a common understanding that is the "act had caused something momentous to take place in her soul." Once she subsides her passion towards Morel, her mind gives way to "religious instinct" - the high moral sense which she has inherited from generations of puritans. She has made it a point to torture him for his sins. What Morel "might be" and what he "ought to be" are the questions before her. So by attempting to change him, she has destroyed him. "So, in seeking to make him nobler than he could be, she destroyed him. She injured and hurt and scarred herself, but she lost none of her worth. She also had the children." Aiden Barns points out that "life in Morel household is dominated by the conflict between the spiritual idealism of Gertrude and what she sees as the brutality of the life which her husband embodies." 7

George H. Ford finds that the classical version of Persephone and Plato provides Lawence a pattern on which is structured Walter Morel-Gertrude relationship. The myth tells the story of a dark man emerging from the

7 Ibid., P.36.
cavern in the earth who persuades a fair princess to be carried off to the underworld where she reigns as his queen. But after a few months, she yearns to return to the land of light where there are white-walled temples, and books, and learned priests. Finally, the dark king has to give in and allow her and their children to return to the land above the underground darkness. The same pattern, we find, is followed in Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow, The Lost Girl and The Virgin and the Gipsy:

In the novels, the woman is Gertrude Coppard and the man Walter Morel, or Anna Lenskey and Will Brangwen, or Alvina Houghton and an Italian named Cicio, or Kate Leslie and Cipriano, a Mexican general or the virgin Yvette, a clergyman's daughter, and a gipsy who is finally discovered to be named Joe Boswell ... 8

Gertrude is presented as drawn to Morel who is inferior to her class in society. The consciousness of Gertrude is presented throughout in the first chapter, but we rarely come to know about the consciousness of Morel. He may have a consciousness, but it is a "dark" one, to use a Lawrentian term. He behaves according to his instincts and intuition. So it is wise to think that his phallic consciousness is unconscious or he is simply

8 "The "S" Curve : Persephone to Pluto.", P.66.
phallic. All her efforts to make him conscious is futile. He remains as an animal who cannot be tamed. Gertrude cannot make him conscious, but her words and deeds can only shock him and make him miserable for sometime. He regains his balance when he is at work or with his bosom friends. But there are only few occasions Gertrude looses her grip on consciousness.

During wakes time, Morel goes with Jerry for a walk across the fields of Nottingham. At Gertrude's presence, Morel subdues his spontaneity and feels afraid to be jubilant. While coming back, the thought about her afflicts him with a "bad conscience." Gertrude finds fault with him for coming home tipsy. He pushes her out into the cold night and locks the door against her. Her inflamed soul receives a shock to see the great white light of the moon that falls cold on her. At first she looses her consciousness except her consciousness in the child. After sometime, she looses that too: "After a time the child, too melted with her in the mixing-pot of moonlight, and she rested with the hills and lilies and houses, all swum together in a kind of swoon." It is the strong scent of phlox that invigorates her. With an effort, she manages to get inside the house, but her mind "continued snapping and jetting sparks ..." Gamini Salgado sees an antithesis in the terms that are so
confidently used to differentiate Morel who is "warm, non-intellectual", as opposed to Gertrude Morel who is "cold and intellectual." He says that these terms are altogether too crude for the attitudes to life embodied in the characters. The warmth is as much in the woman who "smiled faintly to see her face all smeared with the yellow dust of lilies", as in the sleeping drunkard. Thus does the fullness of a gifted novelist's presentation of reality constantly slip the noose of fixed analytical categories - even his own.\(^9\)

When Morel gets up at dawn to prepare his own breakfast, the novelist observes that "he preferred to keep the blinds down and the candle lit even when it was daylight." In this novel Morel is associated with "darkness" and Gertrude Morel with "light". George H. Ford comments on it:

> The terms are intended to signify contrasting kinds of experience (unconscious or conscious); contrasting ways of acquiring knowledge (through the senses or through reason); contrasting concepts of social structure (Static and traditional as in a primitive tribe or dynamic and progressive in an expanding urban society) ...\(^10\)

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In the first phase of the evolution of Paul's cyclic consciousness, we find that Mrs. Morel notices a peculiar knitting of the baby's brows and a peculiar heaviness of its eyes as if it were trying to understand something that is pain. She feels a burden in her heart, when she looks at her child's dark, brooding pupils. Mrs. Kirk also observes the same thing: "He looks as if he was thinking about something - quite sorrowful." When Mrs. Morel continues to look at her baby, she has a feeling of guilt conscience. The child's heavy, steady looks are as if it has realized something that has stunned some point of its soul. It seems to draw her innermost thoughts out of her. With her husband, she could not share her consciousness, as we have already observed, he is unconscious about everything and is merely functionary. But with her child, she feels obliged as it seems to share her consciousness. Here onwards, Mrs. Morel, taking this belief for granted, transmits her consciousness to her child. The basis of this belief is based on a strong feeling:

She felt as if the naval 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 ... 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. It's 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? ... ¹¹

Sheila Macleod says that it is quite true to the mother and child that Mrs. Morel is Paul's first love. It is with her he has his first physical relationship and his first intimacy. It is she who defines the domestic situation to him and his comprehension in this regard is limited to one person, that is Mrs. Morel. He sees the world as she sees it for a period of time. Accordingly, he treats people with contempt to whoever she is displeased with. She respects his capabilities, his effectiveness, integrity and ultimately what he is, is much influenced by her. Communication between mother and infant is instant and intuitive, founded in love, but also in fear and pain. So Sheila Macleod concludes that Paul has indeed been listening to his parents, and he continues to do so throughout his childhood.

¹¹ Sons and Lovers. PP. 50-51.
At this stage, there is a deadlock of passion between Mr. and Mrs. Morel. There are "many stages in the ebbing of her love for him, but it was always ebbing." After the birth of her third child, Paul, herself no longer set towards him. She has learnt to consider him "not feeling him so much part of herself, but merely part of her circumstance." But the curious fact is that neither Mr. Morel nor Mrs. Morel could break the bond of their relationship.

One part of her said, it would be a relief to see the last of him; another part fretted because of keeping the children; and inside her, as yet, she could not quite let him go. At the bottom, she knew very well he could not go.

Casting Mr. Morel off, Mrs. Morel achieves half regretfully and turns for love and life to the children. Morel's soul in its "blind way" tries to reach out hers only to find that it has gone. "He felt a sort of emptiness, almost like a vacuum in his soul." Mrs. Morel, though she casts off Morel for William, perhaps does not share her consciousness with him. In fact, William is in many respects like his father. For example, like his father he is fond of dancing, and, we are specifically told that "he danced - inspite of his mother."

12 Ibid., P.59.
But young Paul is presented as being conscious of what his mother feels. He can understand the fretting of his mother and remains restless. "His soul seemed always attentive to her." The family shifts from the bottoms to a house on the brow of the hill. In front of the house, there is a huge old ash tree. The shrieking sound of the tree when the west wind sweeps, is musical to Morel and demoniacal to Paul. The booming shouts of his father, sharp replies of his mother, bang, bang of his father's fist on the table, the piercing medley of shrieks and cries from the great, widespread ash tree, all contribute to a "feeling of horror, a kind of bristling in the darkness, and a sense of blood." The discord in the family resulting in fear consciousness is associated with the fury of Nature. Just like the huge oak tree is merely an instrument in the brute force of the wind, Mr. Morel too is an instrument to some unknown force:

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?  

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13 Ibid., P.78.
As a boy, Paul has a fervent private religion. His prayer is "Make him stop drinking"; "Lord, let my father die"; "Let him not be killed at pit." Here, Mrs. Morel, transmits her consciousness to him:

The sense of his sitting in all his pit-dirt, drinking, after a long day's work, not coming home and eating and washing, but sitting, getting drunk, on an empty stomach ... From her the feeling was transmitted to the children.\(^{14}\)

Paul is subject to brochites and one day he falls to a kind of doze. In his semi-conscious sleep, he is aware of the fact that his mother is ironing. The clatter of the iron on the iron stand, faint thud, thud of the ironing-board rouses him to consciousness. He observes his mother and seems to acquire a consciousness that is beyond his age and his bearing as son. His incapacity to make up for her makes him feel, impotent:

Her still face, with the mouth closed tight from suffering and disillusion and self-denial, and her nose, the smallest bit on oneside, and her blue eyes so young, quick and warm, made his heart contract with love. When she was quiet, so,

\(^{14}\) Ibid., P.79.
she looked brave and rich with life, but as
if she had been done out of her rights. 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. 15

Paul's failure to identify the men who are return­ing from the pit, in their dirt makes him feel tortured. His ridiculous hypersensitiveness makes her heart feel
with ache. When she leaves by train to attend Morel, who
is admitted into a hospital at Nottinghamshire, his
heart aches for her that she is "thrust forward again
into pain and trouble. "She in turn feels that her son's
heart is bearing a part of her burden and supporting her.
When she comes back, she feels that he is "coming to
share her burden."

Though Mrs. Morel is attentive to Morel, who is
afflicted with injuries, she feels that she is blank and
indifferent to him and his suffering. Paul patiently
listens to her utteraness as a part of sharing her
troubles and to lighten it. This sharing of consciousness
later develops to be mental consciousness in Paul and
turns disastrous. It reaches its height when the novelist

15 Ibid., P.85.
says that Mrs. Morel has "shared almost everything with him without knowing." Sheila Macleod points out that there is an unconscious process at work in Paul, that is, internalizing mother's consciousness as well as father's:

Paul does not know what is causing his depression, but it is of course his mother's pain. He not only shares his mother's pain, but internalizes it as his own. And she in turn internalizes what has become his pain as her own again ...

Paul Morel feels towards his mother a kind of mother-love, that is, a love which is protective, tender, fierce and possessive, a love which contains both fear and pain. As a boy he possesses the emotions of a mature, but anxiety-ridden woman. But the young Paul is also internalizing his father's pain, his bewilderment and resentment.16

Paul "launches into life" under Mrs. Morel's guidance and control. He looks in the papers for advertisements, according to her advice. He finds himself as a "prisoner of industrialism." Gamini Salgado takes

this as an example of unacceptable authorial comment. He says "Paul, we are powerfully aware, is certainly a prisoner, but not of industrialism." It is clear that Paul is a prisoner of mental consciousness. He goes to attend an interview with his mother. The very idea that he will be exposed to strangers brings unreasonable suffering to him. But Mrs. Morel is "gay like a sweet-heart" and they walk down station street feeling the "excitement of lovers having an adventure."

William and Paul working at London and Nottinghom respectively, which are two great centres of industry will be of much satisfaction to Mrs. Morel. She believes that they will work according to her wish. Paul enjoys his job in the factory and once he is back at home, narrates everything to his mother. Paul's narration does the same like Mrs. Morel's: "His life-story, like an Arabian Nights, was told night after night to his mother. It was almost as if it were her own life." But there are suggestions, Paul entering into the second phase of his cyclic consciousness. The novelist says "But Paul liked the girls best" a situation which his mother can play no direct part or Paul could not share his consciousness to her. As he has launched into life, "We can see already signs that he is ready to move out of the narrow haven of his mother's clinging love."

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18 Ibid., P.22.
With the passage of time Morel's nature undergoes a change. Father for children is "some ugly irritant to their souls. His manners in the house were the same as he used among the colliers down pit." He seems to take a kind of satisfaction in disgusting them at a time of their adolescence when they are irritably sensitive. Mrs. Morel and Paul are drawn closer:

Everything he did was for her. She waited for his coming home in the evening, and then she unburdened herself of all she had pondered, or of all that had occurred to her during the day. He sat and listened with his earnestness. The two shared lives.19

As we have already observed, Mrs. Morel never shares her consciousness with William. But the transference of her feelings from the eldest to the second son has come gradually. There is a period of suspense and anxiety when William's dead body is expected to be brought in. Paul looks out of the window and finds the ash tree standing "monstrous and black in front of the wide darkness." William's death has resulted in a severe blow to Mrs. Morel's consciousness. "Mrs. Morel could not be persuaded, after this, to talk and take her old bright interest in life. She remained shut off." Paul grieves at

19 Sons and Lovers, P.144.
her change, but he could not help it. Later he falls ill
affected by pneumonia. She thinks that it could have
been avoided, had she watched the living and not the dead.
From the time of this realization, the transference of
her feelings to Paul is complete. "Mrs. Morel's life now
rooted itself in Paul." But Paul has to shoulder a
greater responsibility. Sheila Macleod observes: "From
now on Paul has to bear the burden of his mother's
concern and ambition not only for the Paul-he-is but
also for the William-who-might-have-been." 20

In the second part of the novel, we enter into the
second phase of Paul's cyclic consciousness. He is
attracted to Miriam, a romantic girl. He feels strong
attraction and strong repulsion to her. Miriam tries to
share her consciousness to him which he instinctively
resists. But the battle continues for a long time till
both loose the game. Mrs. Morel, for the first time
realizes that his mind is not as receptive as in the past.
Here it is to be noted that:

In becoming Miriam's lover, he is killing his
mother's son (or growing up) and also his
mother's fantasy lover. And he cannot go on
doing so: it would be tantamount to suicide.
Not only suicide, but a double suicide:

death of Paul and the death of the internalized mother; the death of the bond.  

Miriam is mystical; she resembles a woman with a treasure religion inside her. Religion matters much to her life: "Christ and God made one great figure, which she loved tremulously and passionately ... That was life to her." Paul finds in Miriam a dream aspect that underlay in her nature:

Miriam seemed as in some dreamy tale, a maiden in bondage, her spirit dreaming in a land far away and magical. And her discoloured, old blue frock and broken boots seemed like the romantic rags of King Cophetua's beggar-maid.

Mrs. Leivers exalts everything - even a bit of house work to the plane of religious trust. She is a believer of the doctrine of "the other check." She is cut off from ordinary life by her religious intensity which made the world for her either a nunnery garden or a paradise, where sin and knowledge are not, or else an ugly cruel thing. The Leivers and Mrs. Morel are the forces that help Paul's evolution as an artist. The Leivers "kindled him

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21 Ibid., P.39.
22 Sons and Lovers, PP. 180-81.
and made him glow to his work", and his mother makes him "determined, patient, dogged, unwearied." Artistic creation in Paul is an unconscious process. Consciousness reaches him only when he is stimulated. But insight and deeper vision he gains only from Miriam and life force from his mother: "From his mother he drew the life-warmth, the strength to produce; Miriam urged this warmth into intensity like a white light."

Paul observes that Miriam is "always sad" and that even her joy "is like a flame coming off of sadness", and the novelist adds that "All the life of Miriam's body was in her eyes, which were usually dark as a dark church, but could flame with light like a conflagration. Her face scarcely ever altered from its look of brooding." She has a quasi-religious experience when she looks at the flowers with Paul. Here the scene is presented as a symptom of unsuccessfully sublimated physical love: "She was pale and expectant with wonder, her lips were parted, and her dark eyes lay open to him. His looks seemed to travel down into her. Her soul quivered. It was the communion she wanted ... "Miriam after her meeting with Paul walks slowly "feeling her soul satisfied with the holiness of the night." At this stage, Mrs. Morel realizes Miriam as her rival and fears that she tries to possess Paul's soul. But actually Miriam and Mrs. Morel compete to keep Paul's soul in bondage. What Mrs. Morel observes
about Miriam, is applicable to herself also: "She is one of those who will want to suck a man's soul till he had none of his own left... and he is just such a baby as to let himself be absorbed. She will never let him become a man; she never will."

Paul and Miriam show immaturity in their love. He thinks that he is too sane for sentimentality and she thinks of herself as lofty. Rightly the novelist observes: "psychical ripeness was much behind even the physical." The Willey Farm atmosphere where there is "the continual business of birth and begetting" also serves indirectly to make her exceedingly sensitive. Paul realizes that their relationship goes on in an "utterly blanched and chaste fashion"; "she was more hypersensitive to the matter, and her blood was chastened almost to disgust of the faintest suggestion of such intercourse."

The flaw in Miriam-Paul relationship begins with Miriam recognizing that he has a "lesser self." He is indifferent to her in the presence of others and it hurts her:

He had not seemed to belong to her among all those others; he was different then - not her Paul, who understood the slightest quiver of her innermost soul, but something else
speaking another language than hers. How it hurt her, and deadened her very perceptions. Only when he came right back to her, leaving his other, his lesser self, as she thought, would she feel alive again.  

Miriam finds in Paul "a rare potentiality" and "loneliness" when he works steadily, patiently, and a little hopelessly on an umbrella. But when she learns that his mother is in his mind behind such an activity, she feels his words like a blade that has gone through her. She has been mistaken in her confirmation of her vision about him. But it is a period of fluctuations in their love. Later Paul talks to her fretfully regarding love. She keeps in her mind his words as "one of the letters of the law." She has vivid and unforgettable dreams of him and its recurrance serves as a development to a more subtle psychological stage. While at church, her soul comes into a glow and expands to prayer besides him: "All his latent mysticism quivered into life. She was drawn to him. He was a prayer along with her." Miriam's awareness about herself, that she loves Paul is a torture for her, a matter of shame, something disgraceful. She is full of "twisted feeling" and she experiences "a coil of torture", her "whole soul coiled into knots of shame." In her

23 Ibid., PP. 204-5.
prayer, she falls into raptures of self-sacrifice, identifying herself with Christ who sacrificed himself for others.

Paul realizes that their intimacy is abstract, a matter of the soul, a struggle into consciousness and platonic. He was a fool says the novelist, "who did not know what was happening to himself. "Miriam's physical advancements causes a violent conflict in him. With her he is always on the high plane of abstraction, "the natural fire of love was transmitted into a fine stream of thought." He feels that in order to cope with her consciousness first he has to be abstract: "His consciousness seemed to split." He protests to confine his feeling towards her as "love" as she puts it. Paul hates her craving for making everything part of herself. When she bends and breathes a flower, he hates the exposure about the action, so intimate.

One evening, while they walk together, Paul notices an enormous orange moon that is staring at them from the rim of the sand hills. This beautiful scene tells that "his blood seemed to burst into flame, and he could scarcely breathe ... His heart beat heavily, the muscles of his arm contracted." He looks at her and finds that she is brooding. The sight has made her "deeply moved and religious." But he feels impotent to her feeling and she is troubled:
His blood was concentrated like a flame in his chest. But he could not get across to her. There were flashes in his blood. But somehow she ignored them. She was expecting some religious state in him. Still yearning she was half aware of his passion, and gazed at him, troubled.24

The thought about sexual contact is a matter of shame for Paul and Miriam. It is a factor that mounts tension in their relationship and prompts them to keep apart:

When she shrank in her convulsed, coiled torture from the thought of such a thing, he had winced to the depths of his soul. And this 'purity' prevented even their first love - kiss. It was as if she could scarcely stand the shock of physical love, even a passionate kiss, and then he was too shrinking and sensitive to give it.25

Paul develops a habitual knitting of the brows of his forehead when he is with Miriam. In his mind, she

24 Ibid., P.220.
25 Ibid., P.221.
is associated somehow with the qualities of some witch or priestess and not like a reveller. Laughter in her lacks spontaneity and it hurts her. She is spiritual and that makes her a crouching, brooding figure. Paul laments, "Oh, you make me knit the brows of my very soul and cogitate." He would have kissed her, if he could do that in abstract purity. Her touch makes his blood raise to a "wave of flame." But she lacks the blood knowledge: "She did not seem to realize him in all this. He might have been an object. She never realized the male he was." Paul begins to question the orthodox creed. He becomes wild and hurts her feelings till she almosts loses her consciousness: "with an intellect like a knife, the man she loved examined her religion in which she lived and moved and had their being ... He bled her beliefs till she almost lost consciousness." Mrs. Morel is convinced of her earlier fear on Miriam when she utters:

She exults - she exults as she carries him off from me ... She's not like an ordinary woman, who can leave me my share in him. She wants to 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.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., P.237.
Here we find that Paul swings from one extreme to
the other. Each woman wants to possess him, but he has
grown not to submit to anybody. Miriam makes him feel
uncertain of himself, insecure, an indefinite thing.
He feels that something draws his soul towards her. But
the moment he is with her, he turns cruel. At the same
time, "he wanted to give her passion and tenderness,
and he could not." When he finds himself to blame for
their failure in their relationship, he also sees that
she is also deficient.

He finds pleasure in talking about his painting to
Miriam. The intensity of this process is unknown to her.
"All his passion, all his wild blood, went into this
intercourse with her, when he talked and conceived his
work." She is assigned to write her French composition
everyday. She writes in her book a sort of diary of her
inner life. He reads it and ignores her soul because he
is impotent to her love: "His own love was at fault,
not hers." He has to say curtly to his mother that the topics
he discusses with Miriam cannot be discussed with her.
Thus Paul denies to share his consciousness with his
mother. Secondly, he states that "You're old, Mother,
and we're young." These declarations are too much for
Mrs. Morel to bear. She bursts out, "And I've never - you
know, Paul - I've never had a husband - not really - -".
And after a quarrel with his father, Paul is insistant in his demand that his mother should sleep in his sister's bed, not with his father. Alfred Kazin in "Sons, Lovers and Mothers" observes:

the struggle in Sons and Lovers is not between love of the mother and the love of a young woman: It is the hero's struggle to keep the mother as his special strength, never to lose her, not to offend or even vex her by showing too much partiality to other women.  

Miriam is almost sure that she will fail to win over Paul. There is no mutual trust in their relationship. She is entrapped in a tragic situation:

She saw tragedy, sorrow, and sacrifice ahead. And in sacrifice she was proud, in renunciation she was strong, for she did not trust herself to support everyday life. She was prepared for the big things and the deep things, like tragedy.


28 Sons and Lovers, P.265.
She has a feeling of self-sacrifice in relation with Paul. He has the same feeling in relation with his mother. So for him, it is a question of showing allegiance to first love or second love. His mother "loved him first; he loved her first." Paul dislikes the way in which Miriam fondles daffodils. He watches her crouching, sipping the flowers with fervid kisses. It is clear that what Mrs. Morel had thought about Miriam has already been transmitted to Paul. He asks Miriam to keep restraint:

You wheedle the soul out of things ... You've always begging for things to love you ... You don't want to love your eternal and abnormal craving is to be loved. You aren't positive, you're negative. You absorb, absorb, as if you must fill yourself up with love, because you've got a shortage somewhere. 29

He thinks that it is better for them to break their relationship. Because "we only realize where we are. It's no good ..." It is a static relationship from which he wants a change: "it neither stops there, nor gets anywhere else." He thinks that he is at fault or impotent. He admits, "It's all I'm capable of - it's a flaw in my make up. The thing over balances to one

29 Ibid., P.268.
side - I hate a toppling balance. Let us have done."
Miriam also thinks that she is deficient. She may not have what he wants. Paul's failure in achieving a meaningful relationship with Miriam is partly due to the defined relationship at the first phase. He cannot easily break it and free himself. His mother is still the strongest tie in his life, she is "the pivot and pole of his life, from which he could not escape."

There is a strong and imperious feeling that urges Paul's new young life to something which makes him mad with restlessness. Mrs. Morel feels jealous thinking that Miriam is the source behind it and fears that she will be left to nothing: "She saw this, and wished bitterly that Miriam had been a woman who could take this new life of his, and leave her the roots." Miriam calculates that Paul's inclination to his mother will be only a momentary one and he will come back to her as she keeps "the keys to his soul." When he discusses the sermon with her, he realizes that she is "the threshing floor on which he threshed out all his beliefs." It is because of her that he realizes where he has gone wrong. But she has gone a step further in realization: "What he realized, she realized. She felt he could not do without her." There is always a ground for strife between
him and her. She wants to convince him that his chief need in life is herself: "If she could prove it, both to herself and to him, the rest might go; she could simply trust to the future." It is as a part of her scheme that Paul is asked to come to Willey Farm to meet Clara Dawes. She believes that there is in him "desires for higher things, and desires for lower, and the desire for the higher would conquer."

Paul is obsessed with Mrs. Morel's deteriorating health and her old age. When he takes her to Lincoln, he says, "Why can't a man have a young mother? What is the old for?" He thinks that his position would have been better if he were born as her eldest son. He bursts out, "What are you old for?", he said, mad with his impotence.

In the third phase of Paul's cyclic consciousness Clara Dawes dominates in his life. He feels detached towards Miriam and attached to Clara. There develops a "triangle of antagonism between Paul and Clara and Miriam." With Clara, he takes on a smart, wordly, mocking tone. Miriam watches him sporting with Clara on the hay heaps. She considers it as his unfaithfulness to himself especially to the "real, deep Paul Morel." He is in danger of becoming frivolous and throwing away his soul for "this flippant traffic of triviality with Clara."
Paul's discussion on his belief with Miriam reveals that he is pagan in belief. He says that to be religious is not religious. One has to do according to one's feelings which drives one to do so. God doesn't have knowledge about himself: "I don't believe God knows such a lot about Himself ... God doesn't know things, He is things. And I'm sure He is not soulful."

Miriam holds the opposite view that one should be religious at everything. God's presence can be seen and experienced in everything. Paul's tragedy is that he could not practice his own belief. He thinks about his own actions, feels ashamed, repentent, and now hating her and then going back to the previous situation. The novelist remarks "Those were the ever-recurring conditions" in Paul's life.

Miriam is Paul's conscience, but he realizes that he could not contain it. She holds the "best of him", but he could not stay because she has no control over the "rest of him." Her submission to her fate makes her sad, pensive and a worshipper. Paul's one half grieves for her and the other half hates her. He is drawn close to Clara and he finds himself at the other extreme. There comes "that thickening and quickening of his blood, that peculiar concentration in the breast, as if something were alive there, a new self or a new centre of
Mrs. Morel feels deficient to Paul's need. Out of this feeling comes her wish that if Paul had fallen in love with one of the girls in a better station of life, his life would have been different. She thinks of a way that would provide him ease of soul and physical comfort. But his need is a dark one. He continues to keep the contact with Miriam at the same time he wants to break free from her: "This indecision seemed to bleed him of his energy." He cannot accept his mother's suggestion to marry a lady because his class consciousness prohibits to take a girl who is socially superior to him. He protests: "You mean easy, mother" he cried. "That's a woman's whole doctrine for life - ease of soul and physical comfort. And I do despise it." He cannot consider his life situation as a "divine discontent" as Mrs. Morel puts it, instead he gives importance to fulness of life whether it is happy or not. With all her motherly affection she cries that he "ought to be happy." But at present his life is "Battle - battle - and suffer." What he believes is, in life one can't insist to be happy, but one has to go ahead with whatever life offers. She seems to fight for "his very life against his own will to die." "To be happy" and "to live" are the issues which
they seem to differ. She concludes that Miriam is the force that has killed his joy and as a result his life is like a slow suicide: "At this rate she knew he would not live. He had that poignant carelessness about himself, his own suffering, his own life, which is a form of a slow suicide."

Paul's attachment with Clara is always marked with his infatuation to her physical charm. Quite contrary to his relationship with Miriam and Mrs. Morel, he never feels his attachment as a sacrifice. It is a stage of passion for which he gives free expression to it. The description about Clara's physical charm given from time to time reveals that Paul cannot resist his passion to Clara. Paul in his first meeting with Clara notices the nape of her white neck, and the fine hair lifted from it. He also notices how her breasts swelled inside her blouse, and how her shoulders are curved handsomely under the thin muslin at the top of her arm, her large and well kept arms. When Clara bends to breathe the scent of flowers, her neck gives him a sharp pang, "such a beautiful thing, yet not proud of itself." He notices "her breasts swung slightly in her blouse. The arching curve of her back was beautiful and strong; she wore no stays." At Clara's house, he notices her at work:
Her arms were creamy and full of life beside the white lace; her large, well kept hands worked with a balanced movement ... He saw the arch of her neck from the shoulder, as she bent her head; he saw the coil of dun hair; he watched her moving, gleaming arms.  

At Jordans, he "watches her strong throat or neck, upon which the blonde hair grew low and fluffy. There was a fine down, almost invisible, upon the skin of her face and arms, and when once he had perceived it, he saw it always." The absence of her aesthetic sense makes him angry, but her features piqued him. Again at the castle, he takes note of her large hands quite in matching with her large limbs. He feels that "she is wanting somebody to take her hands - for all she is contemptuous of us." He receives the birthday present of Clara which was sent by post. He is intensely moved and filled with the warmth of hers. He has a vision of hers which evokes the feeling of a real contact: "In the glow he could almost feel her as if she were present - her arms, her shoulders, her bosom, see them, feel them, almost contain them."

30 Ibid., P.318.
Paul's insistence on "simple friendship" shows that he lacks wholeness of feeling. He is unable to assimilate the various factors. Instead, he strives to know how one factor is different from another. Sex is a complicated matter for him. It is, he feels, a sort of detached thing that does not belong to a woman. This complexity is discernible with regard to his relation with Clara and Miriam:

He loved Miriam with his soul. He grew warm at the thought of Clara, he battled with her, he knew the curves of her breast and shoulders as if they had been moulded inside him; and yet he did not positively desire her. He would have denied it forever. 31

So instead of binding himself to a woman, he continues his unsteady contacts with Miriam and Clara. He feels that he is bound to marry Miriam and so he writes letters to her at the same time approaches Clara whenever he can. Miriam feels sure that the best in him will finally triumph. She sees that his attachment to Clara is shallow and temporal. He will come back to her, she hopes, cured of lesser things which other woman could give him. Paul confesses to Clara that he dislikes Miriam's nature of drawing his soul from his body and

31 Ibid., P.337.
she wants a "soul union". Clara contradicts him saying that his assumption is mistaken, instead she wants him.

Paul and Miriam equally share a predicament - they could not break their virginity. There is a "physical bondage" between them. He is bound up inside himself. Clara's approaches for physical contact also makes him shrink from her. He feels that strong desire for her is batting with stronger shyness and virginity. He will go for marriage only if he could feel strong in the joy of it. To get into a marriage he dislikes will be a "sacrifice", a "degrading", "would undo all his life, make it nullity." Gamini Salgado observes that there are indications of Paul's growing maturity at this stage. They are:

- his capacity to look critically at himself.
- His diagnosis in himself of "overstrong virginity", his shrinking from physical contact (when he is honest enough to see in himself as well as in Miriam) and his growing awareness of his mother's hold over him ("he could not have faced his mother", unless he married the right woman) are all aspects of his experience and temperament ...

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Paul himself sees his uncertainty and instability as part of a general condition rather than as an individual predicament. He finds in Clara, physical charm and in Miriam, spiritual. If Miriam is spiritual, he can't expect and ask from her the physical. The conditions he has in his mind to fulfil her expectations are gentleness, tenderness, breathing with her an atmosphere of reverie and religious dreams. If he realizes that his fate is to suffer the misery of celibacy, he finds in her "an eternal maidenhood." He tells to Miriam that he wants to marry "a woman" and express his love towards her, but there is "something short" with him. He is a "spiritual cripple." It is her spirituality that has curtailed him. He asks her frankly: "Don't you think we have been too fierce in our what they call purity? Don't you think that to be so much afraid and averse is a sort of dirtiness?"

At her presence, he sits there "sacrificed to her purity, which felt more like nullity." When they exchange kisses, they feel that they are closer. But Paul has learnt his bent of mind and its processes when he says, "Some sort of perversity in our souls ... makes as not want, get away from, the very thing we want. We have to fight against that." He wants sex which she hesitates to give. He is so insistant on sex part, but for her it is not "all-important." She thinks of him like a common man
seeking his satisfaction. She remembers what Paul has told that possession is a "great moment in life. All strong emotions concentrated there." If it is something divine, she is willing to submit herself religiously to this sacrifice. Aiden Burns comments on the conflict in Paul regarding his sex relationship with Miriam:

Paul seeks the obliteration of his personality in passion and there is in his attitude the Romantic alliance between sex and death; a fascination with corruption which seeks release from the real world. It produces the same resentment against reality as the dualism of either Gertrude or Miriam. For Paul, on the one hand, wants to affirm the supreme importance of the body - thus insisting on a dimension of reality and life which Miriam denies - but at the same time he is seeking through the dissolution of his personality in sexual experience an escape from reality.  

Miriam's love to Paul is a personal one and his love to her is an impersonal one. They are in eternal conflict: "Her dark eyes, full of love, earnest and searching, made him turn away." and "His eyes, full of

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the dark, impersonal fire of desire, did not belong to her." Her eyes make him aware of a sense of responsibility, which make him a deliberate, reflective creature. But he has a "great hunger and impersonality of passion." So from the "Swoon of passion" he is taken back to "the littleness of personal relationship." His eyes with "full of dark, impersonal fire of desire" is strange one for her. In the thick plantation of fir trees and pines, Miriam feels afraid of darkness. But he says "I like the darkness ... I wish it were thicker - good, thick darkness." He seems to be almost unaware of her as a person, but she ceases to be a woman. He takes her in his arms. For her it is a sacrifice and feels horror because this "thick-voiced, oblivious man was a stranger to her." The sexual union between the lovers mark "the nadir rather than the zenith of their relationship."34 Paul realizes that she has not been with him all the time, her soul keeps a part as it in horror. Here it is to be noted that :

For Lawrence, the sex experience is the most potent solution for dissolving the structures of mental consciousness, but Miriam will insulate herself from its effects by calling sexual love self-sacrifice and attempting to

experience it as such. As a result the
description of their sexual encounter in
terms of religious sacrifice is truly
ghastly. 35

As Paul lays on the dead pine leaves, he feels as if nothing mattered. He has an experience similar to that of death: "he felt as if nothing mattered, as if his living were smeared away into the beyond, near and quiet lovable. This strange, gentle reaching—out to death was new to him."

To be achieves a special meaning to Paul because, "life seemed a shadow, day a white shadow; night, and death and stillness, and inaction, this seemed like being" and "not-to-be" for him means "to be alive, to be urgent and insistent" and the greatest thing one can achieve in life is "melt out into the darkness and sway there, identified with the great Being." On the level of physical experience, it comes as a sort of stillness. Paul's evolution as a dark character and as a phallic conscious one is hinted at this stage. He feels that "the fir trees are like the presence on the darkness: each only a presence." Miriam feels afraid of the mystic in him. He speaks about his great wish: "To be rid of our individuality, which is our will, which is our

effort - to live effortless, a kind of conscious sleep - that is very beautiful, I think; that is our after-life-our immortality." For Miriam it is the question of "the personality which she seeks to maintain, Paul strives to destroy; for, to him, it is nothing, but a construct of the will ..."36

At Woodlinton, Miriam looks at him full of love, but his eyes are "very dark, very bright." When they are back in their cottage, he sees only her beauty and is blind with it. She has the most beautiful body he has ever imagined. He feels that he wants her, but seeing her pleading movement, withdraws:

She lay as if she had given herself up to sacrifice: there was her body for him; but the look at the back of her eyes like a creature awaiting immolation, arrested him, and all his blood fell back. 37

She lies as it to be sacrificed and he has to sacrifice her. He wishes to be "sexless or dead." He shuts his eyes and blood beats back again. As he rides back home, he feels that "he was finally initiated. He was a youth no longer." But he experiences a dull pain in his soul and the thought of death and afterlife seem so sweet and

36 Ibid., P.41.

37 Sons and Lovers, PP. 353-54.
consoling. He spends a week with Miriam. He wilfully has to put her out of count and act from the brute strength of his own feelings. So he could not have sex often and afterwards there is a sense of failure and death. His sense of failure leads him to sadness, detachment and to a consciousness that it is of no good. He thinks: "It was useless trying: it would never be a success between them." He has developed "a perpetual little knitting of his brows" in this peculiar situation. But with Clara, "his brows cleared, and he was gay again."

Paul comes to meet Miriam again as pre-planned. He sees her brown-skinned arms beneath her sleeves and feel that they are pitiful and resigned arms which give pain and feels cruel to her. She is pained at his inconsistency. Her efforts to make him consistent are of no result. She breaks out: "I have said you were only fourteen - you are only four. ...'You are only four,' she repeated in her anger." He has placed her in a difficult situation which she finds embarrassing. She says that their relation has "been one long battle between us - you fighting away from me." He in turn is shocked to hear her condemnation: "All these years she had treated him as if he were a hero, and thought of him secretly as an infant, a foolish child." To her mind comes, his fascination and weaknesses, his littleness, meanness and
folly. She has been as if hypnotized by him and she is in bondage. His mere movement stirs her. She concludes that the present strife and detachment to her is due to the new influence - Clara.

Paul's discussion on marriage with Miriam reveals that he is instinctively against marriage. He says that marriage is not altogether a question of understanding, but it is a question of living. One must have "the real flame of feeling through another person." He takes his mother as a confirmation to this belief. She "looks as if she'd had everything that was necessary for her living and developing. There's not a tiny bit of feeling of sterility about her." He acknowledges his father as the real source of this flame of life. Though the various stages of this evolution of thought is not mentioned in the novel, it is clear that Paul's cyclic consciousness provides him enough opportunities to evaluate and find the right one. He says to Miriam, "And with my father, at first, I'm sure she had the real thing." He makes an attempt to explain what he means by real flame of life. It is "something big and intense that changes you when you really come together with somebody else. It almost seems to fertilize your soul and make it that you can go on and mature." In spite of the estrangement in the relation between his father and mother
Paul can see that she is grateful to her husband: "Yes; and at the bottom she feels grateful to him for giving it her, even now, though they are miles apart." But Miriam takes it only as a "sort of baptism of fire in passion." She is inclined to permit him to "go and have his fill - something big and intense." She believes that Clara could satisfy "a need in him, and leave him free for herself to possess."

Once he breaks with Miriam, he goes to meet Clara. He finds in and through Clara, the union of physical and emotional fulfilment which he was unable to achieve with Miriam. The recurrent meetings of Paul and Clara indicate that their attraction is physical at the initial stage. For instance, on one occasion he calls her the "Queen of Sheba" and suggests that he would design a new dress for her. He takes hold of her and draws the stuff of her blouse tighter. His whole body quivers with the sensation of touching her. At the castle, when they meet, he catches her suddenly in his arms and kisses her. At Wilford Churchyard Grove, while she stands on the top of the stile, he holds both his hands to her and she leaps and her breasts come against his and he covers her face with kisses. When they walk along the slippery steep red path, Paul is fascinated by charm of her body: "He was watching her throat below the ear, where the flush was fusing into the honey white, and her mouth that pouted disconsolate."
She stirred against him and she walked, and his body was like a taut string." When they are half-way up the big colonade of elms, they have moments of passion:

She turned to him with a splendid movement. Her mouth was offered him, and her throat; her eyes were half shut; her breast was tilted as if it asked for him. He flashed with a small laugh, shut his eyes, and met her in a long, whole kiss. Her mouth fused with his; their bodies were sealed and annealed. It was some minutes before they withdrew...

The rivers brink at the bottom provides them with a suitable atmosphere for physical intimacy. There he "sinks his mouth on her throat, where he felt her heavy pulse beat under his lips. Everything was perfectly still. There was nothing in the afternoon, but themselves." From there, they go to Clifton village. He feels that he is madly in love with her: "every movement she made, every crease in her garments, sent a hot flash through him and seemed adorable." She dislikes Miriam's intervention on the day of her arrival at Paul's house. Paul's excuse of mere words with Miriam, makes Clara laugh at him. The way he reacts is a confirmation of his love to Clara:

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38 Ibid., P.376.
He suddenly caught her in his arms, stretched forward, and put his mouth on her face in a kiss of rage. She turned frantically to avoid him. He held her fast. Hard and relentless his mouth came for her. Her breasts hurt against the wall of his chest. Helpless, she went loose in his arms, and he kissed her, and kissed her. 39

At the Theatre Royal, he is delighted to watch her arms, neck and bare breast. The firmness and softness of her body is an experience when he looks at her. Her charm keeps his blood "sweeping up in a great white-hot waves that killed his consciousness momentarily." At Clara's house, when Mrs. Radford retires to sleep they have fulfillment of their passion:

His eyes were dark, very deep, and very quiet. It was as if her beauty and his taking it hurt him, made him sorrowful... She gave herself. He held her fast. It was a moment intense almost to agony. She stood letting him adore her and tremble with joy of her. It healed her hurt pride. It healed her; it made her glad. It made her feel erect and proud again. Her pride had been wounded inside her. She had been cheapened. Now she radiated with joy and pride again. It was her restoration and recognition. 40

39 Ibid., P.398.
40 Ibid., P.398.
Clara, in her initial stage of her contact with Paul confesses that in nearly all her life she has been asleep and her husband Dawes has been unable to wake her, or get her. In fact he bullies her and finally, betrays her. But her contact with Paul, she admits, restores her to the position of pride and recognition.

Though Paul and Baxter Dawes are confirmed enemies, Paul feels that there is a bond between them. After the verbal battle that takes place at Punch Bowl between them, he suffers humiliation and fears that his mother will not like it. He makes up his mind not to keep a good deal of his sexual life a secret from his mother. In the first phase of Paul's cyclic consciousness, if it has been a question of shared consciousness, in the last phase it is a question of consciousness that cannot be shared:

There was now a good deal of his life of which necessarily he could not speak to his mother. He had a life apart from her - his sexual life. The rest she still kept. But he felt he had to conceal something from her, and it irked him. There was a 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 ... At this period, unknowingly, he resisted his mother's influence.\textsuperscript{41}

Paul's awareness that he is fated to suffer a cyclic consciousness in his contact with women is a torture to him. What he wishes is strength to break this cyclic web and go forward with his own life and love another woman. He discloses to his mother the fall of Mr. Jordan and the trial of Dawes. To his mother's anxiety he replies, "things work out of themselves." He has the least care regarding Clara's opinion. He loves her when he sees her just as a "woman" and dislikes when she talks and criticizes. He cannot confine his relationship to a woman in marriage: "but to give myself to them in marriage I couldn't. I couldn't belong to them. They seem to want me, and I can't ever give it them." And if ever it is possible to find the "right woman" as Mrs. Morel puts it, he knows that he will never succeed while she is alive. His awareness that in him all experience is cyclic tires him: "The feeling that things were going in a circle made him mad." At Jordans, while at work,

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., PP.419-20.
Clara's existence is not a matter to him. But she has a physical sense of his person in the same building. She dislikes his directions in the official manner. She yearns for his love and physical contact:

She wanted to touch his chest. She knew exactly how his breast was shapen under the waistcoat, and she wanted to touch it. It maddened her to hear his mechanical voice giving orders about the work. She wanted to break through the sham of it, smash the trivial coating of business which covered him with hardness, get at the man again; but she was afraid, and before she could feel one touch of his warmth he was gone, and she ached again.42

One evening, while they walk down by the canal, Clara suspects that he is troubled of something. She listens to his whistling softly and persistently to himself. From the tone of this instinctive act, she knows that he will not stay with her. He says that his future is uncertain. She takes him in her arms and he is miserable. He begins to say something, but she could not bear to listen to it. She doesn't want to know what ails him; instead she tries to soothe him into

42 Ibid., PP.427-28.
forgetfulness. Her warmth, consolation and love work well. He forgets his struggle. But for Paul, she ceases to be "a woman, warm, something he loved and almost worshipped, there in the dark." She realizes that the need in him is "bigger" which she cannot comprehend:

The naked hunger and inevitability of his loving her, something strong and blind and ruthless in its primitiveness, made the hour almost terrible to her. She knew how stark and alone he was, and she felt it was great that he came to her; and she took him simply because his need was bigger either 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.43

Paul, when comes back to consciousness, wonders what is near his eyes, curving and strong with life in the dark and the voice. He realizes that it is the grass, the peewit is calling and the warmth of Clara's breathing is heaving. He has a phallic vision in her eyes. She is only an instrument of the dark forces. In their meeting, they have become one with grass-stems, the peewit and the wheel of the stars:

43 Ibid., P.430.
He lifted his head, and looked into her eyes. They were dark and shining and strange, life wild at the source staring into his life, stranger to him, yet meeting him; and he put his face down on her throat, afraid, What was she? A strong, strange, wild life, that breathed with his in the darkness through this hour. It was all so much bigger than themselves that he was hushed. They had met, and included, in their meeting the thrust of the manifold grass-stems, the cry of the peewit, the wheel of the stars.44

Their experience is very similar to that of Adam and Eve, who have lost the innocence of Paradise, but come to realize "the magnificence of the power which drove them out of Paradise and across the great night and the great day of humanity." Paul and Clara realize their own nothingness and "the tremendous living flood which carried them always." Phallic consciousness in them leads to a realization of the unknown which is:

So great a magnificent power could overwhelm them, identify them altogether with itself, so that they knew they were only grains in the tremendous heave that lifted every

44 Ibid., P.430.
grass-blade its little height, and every tree, and living thing... 45

While Paul's phallic vision is complete, Clara achieves only a partial fulfilment. She knows it as a great experience and wants to remain in that experience: "They had known, but she could not keep the moment. She wanted it again; she wanted something permanent. She had not realized fully." This partial vision of phallic consciousness makes her desire for it again, but she could not describe it or demand it: "She had been there, but she had not gripped the - the something - she knew not what - which she was mad to have." If Paul has ascended from passion to phallic consciousness in his relationship with Clara, she has ascened from passion to partial fulfilment of phallic consciousness and descented to passion. He comes to know "the baptism of fire in passion, and it left him at rest" and Clara serves as a medium for it. They cease their personality and become mere agents of an unknown force: "It was as if they had been blind agents of a great force." This feeling, which we identify as phallic consciousness, strengthens in the mind of Paul:

He felt more and more that his experience had been impersonal, and not Clara. He loved her. There was a big tenderness, as after a strong emotion they had known together; but it was not she who could keep his soul steady. He had wanted her to be something she could not be. 46

After this incident, Clara is mad with desire for Paul. She is full of unrestrained passion. He feels irritated because the office hours are not meant for fulfilling their passion. It makes a wide gulf between him and her. In Spring, they go together to the seaside, take rooms at a little cottage near Theddlethorpe and live as man and wife. Here Paul's evolution as a dark character is emphasized by the novelist. At the seaside Clara notices his dark eyes: "He was watching her with dark eyes which she loved and could not understand."

He continues to watch her and fails to answer the questions raised by his own consciousness:

What is she, after all? ... Here's the seacoast morning, big and permanent and beautiful; there is she, fretting, always unsatisfied, and temporary as a bubble of foam. What does she mean to me, after all?

46 Ibid., P.431.
She represents something, like a bubble of foam represents the sea. But what is she? It's not her I care for.  

After their swim, while they dry themselves, he looks at her "bright shoulders, her breasts that swayed and made him frightened as she rubbed them." Then he thinks of her as "magnificent, bigger than the morning and the sea." Paul's association with darkness is again emphasized when it is said that he can love her during night time only: "Love-making stifles me in the daytime." Clara's inability to contain Paul might have led her to another realization that she never belongs to Baxter, but she firmly believes that Baxter belongs to her. She says that she belongs to Paul, but has no intention to divorce Baxter. With Baxter, she has a surety which she fails to find in her relationship with Paul. Paul has given her confirmation, eased her of her mistrust and she has gained herself. Their contacts have helped each other grow, but now their missions are different: "Together they had received the baptism of life, each through the other; but now the missions were separate." Keith Sagar observes that:

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47 Ibid., P.435.
Sexual union with Clara is not at all a merging of identities. It is through the very strangeness of the woman that Paul gains access to the darkness which is both the unknown forces and purposes deep within himself ...

Though Clara is the agent through which Paul has the baptism of fire, he does not have knowledge about her. She asks him about the worth of "the sex part" in their relationship and "the act of loving." He believes that sex and love are "the culmination of everything." She has a feeling that she could not gain him, but he is taking her just for his sole gain only. In contrast with Paul, she has all of Baxter. Her relationship with Paul is something indefinable: "It's something; and sometimes you have carried me away - right away - I know - and - I reverence you for it - but •••" When Paul starts love making, the strong emotion carries away his reason, soul and blood. He looses the little criticism, the little sensation, the thought as if they are taken away in a great sweep. In short, he turns to be an instrument - a part of the whole universe:

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He became, not a man with a mind, but a
great instinct. His hands were like
creatures, living; his limbs, his body,
were all life and consciousness, subject
to no will of his, but living in themselves.
Just as he was, so it seemed the vigorous,
wintry stars were strong also with life.
He and they struck with the same pulse of
fire, and the same joy of strength which
held the bracken - frond stiff near his
eyes held his own body firm. It was as if
he, and the stars, and the dark herbage, and
Clara were licked up in an immense tongue
of flame, which tore onwards. Everything
rushed along in living beside him; everything
was still, perfect in itself, along with him.
This wonderful stillness in each thing in
itself, while it was being borne along in
every ecstasy of living, seemed the highest
print of bliss. 49

In spite of Clara's knowledge about Paul's phallic
consciousness and her trust in his passion, some
mechanical efforts have spoilt their love or they had
splendid moments separately. Paul's fight with Baxter

49 Sons and Lovers. PP.442-43.
denotes the end of the third phase of his cyclic consciousness. After this incident, he fails to continue his relationship with Clara. His rejection of Miriam and Clara's rejection of Paul are all phases that show growth in Paul. Holderness comments on it:

Paul rejects the transcendent blossom of Miriam, leaving himself free to strive for connection, for a unification of life's contradictory realities. It is the relationship with Clara that draws Paul into connection with other things, beyond the individual... it is the sexual union with Clara that Paul discovers the possibility of a different kind of transcendence: a quality of experience which does not draw the individual away from the complex reality of life, but puts him into closer touch with it. 50

Paul turns to his mother at critical moments of his physical ailments. But after his recovery he realizes that his life is "unbalanced, as if it were going to pieces." Mrs. Morel is bedridden, and Paul seems to have a clear understanding with her. He tells Clara,

that his mother will never be better. She notices his agony and tries to soothe him:

Her breast was there, warm for him; her hands were in his hair. It was comforting and he held his arms round her. But he did not forget ... And she pressed him to her breast, rocked him, soothed him like a child.51

The news about Baxter's ill-health makes Paul and Clara guilty and she turns cold to Paul. She is morally frightened and so she wants restitution with Baxter. Paul feels that his life is being destroyed piece by piece within him. He cannot concentrate on his work. He stops to question and tries not to analyse. Instead he "submitted, and kept his eyes shut; let the thing go over him." Clara begins to dread him like death. He is so quiet, so strange and sinister. They go to the seaside in November, but he is obsessed with the thoughts about his mother. "He could not talk nor think. It was a comfort, however, to sit holding her hand. She was dissatisfied and miserable. He was not with her; she was nothing."

Though Paul has come back to the initial phase of his cyclic consciousness, we find that there is no

51 Sons and Lovers, P.458.
transmission of consciousness between mother and son.
He keeps the estrangement with Clara and his interview
with Baxter a secret. Gamini Salgado comments on the
climax of the story is worth noting. "Both the narrative
lines - the Clara - Paul - Baxter Dawes triangle and
the story of the relationship between Mrs. Morel and
her son, come to head simultaneously." Paul mixes
water in the milk so that it should not nourish Mr.
Morel. Finally, he takes all the morphia pills and
crushes them to powder to put them in her night milk
which takes her life away. Paul is left alone with a
feeling of tragic emptiness. Mrs. Morel's life have been
a struggle to push, her sons into the middle class. By
doing so, she pushes them into isolation, separation
and individuality. This process destroys William's life
and leaves Paul isolated:

When William and Paul are pushed out of the
community they find themselves alone and
without support, and always close to a kind
of death which seems to accompany such
isolation. The ultimate end of social mobility
through education and individual self-
-improvement is nothing, a tragic emptiness,
death.  

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and Fiction. P.147.
Paul meets Baxter and tells him to "fit" his "old home together again" with Clara. He says his relationship with women have been a failure: "They want me like mad, but they don't want to belong to me. And she belonged to you all the time." Paul, Baxter and Clara meet again at a lodging. Clara says that Paul has no stability, there is something evanescent, something shifting and false about him. But she finds Baxter more manly and stable. Paul is a man of moods and she has enjoyed him: "He was fine in his way, passionate, and able to give her drinks of pure life when he was in one mood ... and it seemed as if their three fates lay in his hands. She hated him for it."

Paul is a derelict at the last phase of the novel. His consciousness has been cyclic, and he has reached a stage where he cannot continue his life in the same pattern. Sounds, sights, sensations, all loose definition and significance for him. At home, he is in control of "some other consciousness." Out of his "semi-intoxicated trance" comes questions and answers. The exhortation to him is to "live." His life goes on unsteadily "always alone, his soul oscillated, first to the side of death, then to the side of life, doggedly."
Miriam meets Paul and proposes marriage with him. She thinks that marriage can at least help him to prevent him "wasting yourself and being a prey to other woman - like - like Clara." But he does not yield to her absorbing and sacrificial love. Holderness sees Paul's rejection of mother-love and Miriam's love, as a change to reality:

He rejects the stupefying power of mother-love and the isolated, purified, transcendent relationship with Miriam. As a man, Paul will try to incorporate into his life some sense of wholeness of completeness, totality of life and experience. To achieve this necessarily involves the rejection of Miriam ... Paul rejects Miriam because Miriam is inadequate to his emotional needs; he cannot rest content with a relationship which seeks to draw him into an abstract, rarefied, transcendent realm of experience ... 54

Miriam feels that she cannot give him what he actually desires: "Her impotence before him, before the strong demand of some unknown thing in him, was her extremity." Paul is not inclined to a life confining herself to marriage. He asks, "And without marriage we can do

54 Ibid., P.156.
nothing? ... No, I think not." She is resolute in her stand and thinks of him:

He had no religion; it was all for the moment's attraction that he cared, nothing else, nothing deeper. Well, she would wait and see how it turned out with him. When he had had enough he would give in and come to her.  

He feels that the last hold in life is gone. He experiences that there is no "Time", but only "Space." Though his mother has been departed, "gone abroad into the night", he thinks that he is still with her. Whether to choose life or death seems to be the problem he confronts. He can give himself neither to death nor to his mother's consciousness. So he turns towards the direction of the town:

Turning sharply, he walked toward the city's golden phosphorescence. His fists were shut, his mouth set fast. He could not take that direction to the darkness, to follow her. He walked towards the faintly humming, glowing town quickly.  

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55 *Sons and Lovers*, P.509.

56 Ibid., P.511.
What the city would offer is unknown to him, but he feels that will be different from the cyclic consciousness of his life. It will be perhaps the beginning of a new circle of experience denoting growth:

Man cannot live by 'life' alone. And so Sons and Lovers ends with Paul facing the awful doom of isolation in its poignant form, yet determined to resist it ... From this limit of experience, Paul walks back back towards the town; back towards relationship, interdependence, social connection; back towards the community in which alone human life can have meaning and reality ... 57

Paul, the phallic conscious hero, in the last phase is a self-exile. He cannot confine himself to his own family, society, love or marriage because they form the mental consciousness. The growth to phallic consciousness is, as we have already seen, a slow progression which reaches its culmination when he moves quickly to the city stirred by unknown forces. Here Paul's evolution as a dark character and phallic conscious hero is complete. Keith Sagar comments: "The city's gold

phosphorescence" beckons, like the "dusky gold" of Morel's youthful flame of life, like the pollen and the half-moon, towards the unknownfull of richness and promise of life."^{58}

In *Sons and Lovers*, the novelist centres his interest on the growth and evolution of a phallic conscious character. In *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, which are to be discussed in the next chapters his interest is directed to characterize individuals who enter into new circles of existence and their struggle with their phallic consciousness.

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^{58} Keith Sagar. "*Sons and Lovers*, P.50.