CHAPTER III

“Non-familial Relationships”

Lawrence, as already discussed in Chapter II, was set on a new endeavour for his age – to become a ‘man-and-woman’ in his life, and particularly in the expression of his ideas through his novels. He was exploring with great boldness the mode of relationships among human beings. As a dominating intellectual concept, he also devoted his critical essays, and monologues, to a large extent, to an elaboration of the theme, for Lawrence based all his theories on the complicated concept of duality. There is a tension set up throughout every aspect of life created by the opposites from which life is formed. This tension is at once the most constructive and destructive force – it is exciting and terrifying. The concept of duality fits well with eastern modes of thinking that became more popular in the later twentieth century after Lawrence’s death. One can imagine he might have fitted well with the sixties growth of travel and seeking of new cultures that took so many young people out to the east. But, unfortunately for him, it was still a conservative world he lived in and, as ever, he was the outsider.

Duality is quite easy to come to terms with: it is the theory that opposites do more than attract, they are firmly held together in eternal combustion; they repel, attract and at base are firmly linked. Lawrence saw the duality in everything; in being a human being, ‘For every man comprises male and female in his being … A woman likewise consists of male and female’ (STH, 93). His Study of Thomas Hardy explores the ideas, most fully and most comprehensibly. They turn up in every later
works such as the ‘Fantasia of the Unconscious’, but often his writing is too bitty and rambling by that stage.

Sex, says Lawrence that is only a definite indication of the great male and female duality and unity. He further states,

There is female apart from Woman, as we know, and male apart from Man … part of the great twin river each branch resistant to the other, eternally running each to meet the other … until eternity there shall be this separateness, this interaction of man upon woman, imperfection … Every impulse that stirs in life, every single impulse, is either male or female distinct … This is the complete movement; upon woman, woman within man. This is the desire, the achieving of which, frictionless, is impossible. … (STH, 55)

He repeats the variations on the theme over and over, until one has to understand. It is the very root of Lawrentian theory of the force that constantly pulls men and women together and forces them apart. In Study of Thomas Hardy, he opines,

… it is as if life were a double cycle, of man and woman, facing opposite ways travelling opposite ways, revolving upon each other … reaching forward with outstretched hand, and neither able to move till their ands have grasped each other … each travelling in his separate cycle. (Ibid. 61)

These words could combine as the refrain for all Lawrence’s writings on what he himself has described as the relationships between man and woman. Where Lawrence himself learned these theories is unknown. Edward Carpenter has said that Rousseau is often used as Lawrence’s precursor, as he too treated in similar vein the
deep seated conflict between natural and cosmic man; man in touch with the
instinctive, with the pristine nakedness of nature and the artificial state of civilization.

Individuals cannot find fulfillment of the Self in the man-woman relationship
and turn to ‘substitute’ lovers for fulfillment. Lawrence feels that the spontaneous
response between man and woman is of primary importance, but that it should be
complemented by the response of man to man. In an article “The State of Funk”
published in 1929, he writes:

… But our civilization, with the horrible fear and funk and repression
and bullying has almost destroyed the natural flow of common
sympathy between men and men, men and women. And it is this that I
want to restore into life: just the natural warm flow of common
sympathy between man and man, man and woman. (Moore, 66)

Lawrence has a deep longing to restore a communion between man and man. He
feels that this communion is necessary for the ‘health and happiness’ of the man-
woman relationship.

As for as critics are concerned, though their analysis of the various writings,
even when they are emphasizing the full-length novels, have tended to avoid any
detailed discussion of D. H. Lawrence’s second novel *The Trespasser*. Graham
Hough, who devotes one hundred and ninety-five pages to a discussion of the full-
length novels, handles *The Trespasser* in approximately in one page. His treatment of
*The Trespasser* is:

Lawrence’s second novel, The Trespasser, need not detain us long. In
the first place it is not entirely his own, but a revision of some work by
Helen Corke, the friend of his London school-teaching days. … I
suspect that it has been strongly influenced by George Moore’s *Evelyn Innes*; and Moore’s brand of worldly aestheticism sits very ill on Lawrence. The story of Siegmund and Helena and their frustrated love-affair is not substantially different from a hundred other such situations in fiction. (50)

Anthony Beal in his *Writers and Critics* series book, D.H. Lawrence goes into much more details concerning *The Trespasser*. However, it appears that this author is more concerned with a recapitulation of the story and the nature descriptions than with any examination of the motivations of the characters. However, it also should be considered that the *Writers and Critics* book series has the avowed purpose of serving as a guide to authors’ works for readers and any discussion of Laurentian ‘philosophy’ or a psychological interpretation of the characters would have been beyond the scope of the book. Treatments of *The Trespasser* by other critics follow a similar pattern.

Notwithstanding such treatment, *The Trespasser* contains one of the most interesting and memorable themes that D.H. Lawrence knitted. The theme of this novel is maintaining the warmth relationship or the contact or the lack of these and it is through the figure of Helena that this concept is most effectively reflected. There is no contact or really making a proper relationship between the two chief characters of the novel.

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

This was one of the crises of his life. For years he had suppressed his soul, in a kind of mechanical despair doing his duty and enduring the rest. Then his soul had been softly enticed from its bondage. Now he was going to break free altogether, to have at least a few days purely for his own joy. This, to a man of his integrity, meant a breaking of bonds, a serving of blood-ties, a sort of new birth (TP, 15).

To this point in his life, Siegmund had been a life-denier. He had suppressed the real man in himself. His relationship with his wife Beatrice is dead. His life at home is filled with expressions of scorn. His escapade with Helena is meant to, at least temporarily; relieve him of this unhappy burden. It is meant as a reaffirmation of his manhood. As always with Lawrence, the characters of the novel do not go on any promiscuous adventure for its own sake. Instead, they go to achieve a wholeness or rebirth of themselves.

Helena is a self-possessed young woman, ‘so calm and full of her own assurance’ (TP, 3). It is she who initiates the whole idea of going away together. It is she who overruled his objections – for example; when he made known that he would not have the money to go. It is also she who is at the resort waiting for Siegmund to arrive. Helena is a different woman in comparing with other heroines of D.H. Lawrence. There is no coyness and no expected facade of coquettishness about her. There is no element of ich dien about her. Rather, she appears to be the sort of woman who is inclined to try to lead. She appears to be the modern woman type, the type that the novelist describes in:
With the two kinds of femininity go two kinds of confidence: there are women who are cocksure, and the women who are hensure. A really up-to-date woman is a cocksure woman. She doesn’t have a doubt nor a qualm. She is the modern type. Whereas the old-fashioned demure woman was as sure as a hen is sure, that is, without knowing anything about it. She went quietly and busily clucking around, laying the eggs and mothering the chickens in a kind of anxious dream that was full of sureness. But not mental sureness. (Lawrence, 46)

While Helena is so ‘self-assured’, Siegmund is somewhat ‘timid, tremulous, rather soft and submissive, easy in … his very henlike tremulousness’ (Ibid. 47).

However, on the first night of their illicit holiday, a flaw in their relationship emerges. Siegmund is intensely moved. ‘… he was a tense, vivid body of flesh, without a mind; his blood, alive and conscious, running toward her’ (TP, 30). Helena is moved in a different way.

Suddenly she strained madly to him, and drawing back her head, placer her lips on his, close, till at the mouth they seemed to melt and fuse together. … she was exhausted. She belonged to that class of ‘dreaming women’ with whom passion exhausts itself at the mouth. … The fire, in heavy flames, had poured through her to Siegmund, from Siegmund to her. … Her dream of Siegmund was more to her than Siegmund himself. (TP, 30-31)

Thus, Helena is made to symbolize the whole class of dreaming women. It is not so much her sexual coldness that destroys her relationship with Siegmund. It is her complete self-sufficiency. Helena calls Siegmund, Domine – ‘it was his old nickname
she used’ (TP, 121) and the implications surround such a name illustrate just what the woman’s vision of the man was. Helena does not need Siegmund as a man or a person but needs him as her dream, the ideal. However, Siegmund is a man and, like all men, he is no god. Helena submits to his passions but it

... was not his passion she wanted actually. But she desired that he should want her madly, and that he should have all – everything. It was a wonderful night for him. It restored in him the full ‘will to live’.

But she felt it destroyed her. Her soul seemed blasted. (TP, 56)

She could give Siegmund so much but she cannot give herself. Helena is afraid of the ‘brute’ in her lover.

What was all this? This was not comfort or love. He was not understanding or helping, only chaining her, hurting. She did not want his brute embrace – she was most utterly alone, gripped so in his arms.

If he could not save her from herself, he must leave her free to pant her heart out in free air. The secret thud, thud of his heart, the very self of that animal in him she feared and hated, repulsed her. (TP, 100)

Helena needs her dream, her dream of Siegmund. However, her dream of Siegmund is more than Siegmund himself. He destroys that dream when the need for confession grips him. He tells her of his courtship of Beatrice, his marriage and the death of that marriage. In relating his human frailties Siegmund thoroughly destroys Helena’s dream, the ideal that is so necessary to her. Even she is aware of the human love is not ideal and it is only temporary, she is disillusioned. The Siegmund of her dreams is gone.
Was that really Siegmund, that stooping thick-shouldered, indifferent man? Was that Siegmund who had seemed to radiate joy in his surroundings, the Siegmund whose coming had always changed the whole weather of her soul? Was that the Siegmund whose a panorama of passing God? She looked at him again. … She suffered an agony of disillusion. Was this the real Siegmund, and her own only a projection of her soul? (TP, 115)

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

Helena had rejected him. She gave herself to her fancies only. For some time she had confused Siegmund with her god. Yesterday she had cried to her ideal, and found only Siegmund. It was the smear in the side of his tortured self-respect. (TP, 119)

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

She had a peculiar, childish wistfulness at times and with this an intangible aloofness that pierced his heart. It seemed to him he should never know her. There was remoteness about her, an estrangement between her and all natural daily things, as if she were of an unknown race that never can tell its own story. This feeling always moved Siegmund’s pity to its deepest, leaving him poignantly helpless. This same foreignness, revealed in other ways, sometimes made him hate her. (TP, 131-132)
Helena’s aloofness from the natural world is again seen in Siegmund’s walk from Victoria to Waterloo.

He was glad Helena was not with him, for the streets would have irritated her with their coarse noise. She would stand for a long time to watch the rabbits pop and hobble along on the common at night; but the tearing along of the taxis and the charge of a great motor-bus was painful to her. ‘Discords’, she said, ‘after the trees and the sea.’ She liked – the glistening of the streets; it seemed a find alloy of gold laid down for pavement, such pavement as drew near to the pure gold streets of Heaven; but this noise could not be endured near any wonderland. (TP, 147)

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

Siegmund sat thinking of the after-death, which to him seemed so wonderfully comforting, full of rest, and reassurance, and renewal. He experienced no mystical ecstasies. He was sure of a wonderful kindness in death, a kindness which really reached right through life, though here he could not avail himself of it. Siegmund had always inwardly held faith that the heart of life beat kindly towards him. When he was cynical and sulky he knew that in reality it was only a waywardness of his. (TP, 186)
Thereupon, Siegmund ‘anged ’imself from the door ‘ooks’ (TP, 192). Even though Helena had sworn that she will not live one day after him, Siegmund is aware that she will be left behind.

… death was no way for her. She could not escape thus with him from this house of strangers which she called ‘life’. She had to go on alone, like a foreigner who cannot learn the strange language. … Yet she would not die, of that he was certain. (TP, 132)

The total lack of contact between Helena and Siegmund renders Siegmund’s suicide ironical. Helena feels that she would be able to sense if something happened to the man. Siegmund’s behaviour in order to demonstrate his final defeat, epitomized by his suicide, is a consequence of the transformation of his feelings into a negative sentiment, caused by the external repression of his instincts.

Siegmund can thus be considered a victim of the tyranny exerted by a moralizing society, which hides behind the mask of a modern civilization and aims at suppressing the individual’s creativity, making him a conformist and an undifferentiated being. All this takes a symbolic form in the novel, because, as one could argue, social repression is embodied in the figure of Helena, who, playing the role of a spiritual feminine other, becomes an obstacle to their love relationship and causes Siegmund’s destruction.

In Trespasser, Lawrence maintains that real emotions, which he refers to as ‘higher emotions,’ have been destroyed, since the individual forces himself to feel only those sentiments he is allowed to feel:

And by higher emotions we mean love in all its manifestations, from genuine desire to tender love, love of our fellow-men, and love of God:
we mean love, joy, delight, hope, true indignant anger, passionate 
sense of justice and injustice, truth and untruth, honour and dishonour, 
and real belief in anything: for belief is a profound emotion that has the 
mind’s connivance. All these things today, are more or less dead. We 
have in their place the loud and sentimental counterfeit of all such 
emotion. (TP, 312)

The false emotions, which Lawrence talks about, are mental emotions, those 
upon which reason has imposed its control, and that have been deprived of their 
vitality. In *The Novel and the Feelings*, the separation between logic and emotion is 
once more emphasized, and the latter is seen as the manifestation of the Dark Continent 
that human beings have within themselves without being conscious of it (205). 
However, it is from this hidden and repressed part of our soul that life springs, 
although man tends to hide this unknown side of his being. This attempt to suppress 
one’s source of vitality is due to man’s desire to tame himself, under the pressure of 
civilization, which imposes the denial of authentic feelings. All this leads man to 
insanity, since repression makes him degenerate like an enslaved animal. From the 
very beginning of his literary career, Lawrence showed signs of rebellion, or better, a 
reaction against a very repressive morality, which had been the basis of the education 
he had received as a boy. However, by the time he published *The Trespasser*, he was 
not completely free from the heavy inheritance of a post-Victorian society. A 
common feature of the early novels is, in fact, the ambivalent attitude the writer 
shows towards Victorian moralism. This is the result of a profoundly lacerated 
conscience, still divided between the respect for traditional ideals and an anxiety of 
renewal. Lawrence’s attack on morality is especially directed towards Christianity,
which, being accused of exerting a destructive power on the individuals’
consciousness is made responsible for a deformation of the instincts.

This definition suits Siegmund’s personality, as it is upon his great effort to
achieve a creative individuality, but he is unable to reach this ideal condition in the
end. As Daniel J. Schneider claims, in *The Trespasser*, Lawrence,

accepts the Nietzschean idea that the male fiercely desires to strive
‘beyond himself,’ to become a heroic soul, proud and brave in his
manhood, able to act independently against public opinion and
conventions. (56)

However, the plot, which has its epilogue in the protagonist’s suicide, shows, on the
contrary, the hero’s defeat, since ‘failure to follow this creative, purposive prompting
entails psychic destruction; the inability to resist conventional opinion results in
psychic death (Ibid. 56).

The repression of emotions is the result of a stiffened spirituality that
degenerates into mere asceticism; this implies the turning inwards of the instincts that
cannot find an outlet. In *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche defines this process
as the ‘internalization of man’:

Those fearful bulwarks with which the political organization protected
itself against the old feeling of freedom – punishment belongs among
these bulwarks – brought about that all those instincts of wild, free,
prowling man turned back against man himself. Hostility, cruelty, joy
in persecuting, in attacking, in change, in destruction – all this turned
against the possessors of such instincts: that is the origin of the ‘bad
conscience.’ (85)
Helena’s memories bother her but they will fade. They will fade and vanish just as the sunburn upon Helena’s arms begins to fade and will one day vanish. There is every indication that the self-assured girl will go on just as before. The beginnings of her affair with Byrne appear to indicate that this is so. Byrne is determined that he will not become another Siegmund. However, while walking together in wooded area, Byrne senses: ‘I might as well as exist, for all she is aware of me’ … (TP, 213). Helena wants rest and warmth but it is doubtful that she will ever possess it. It appears that Helena will continue to ‘make strangers of all the people … [she] meet(s)’ (TP, 118).

As a dreaming woman, Helena lives in the world of fantasy. Her mental ideal is everything to her. When she finds that this ideal cannot exist, she is disillusioned. With her disillusionment, she sheds aside all whom she comes into contact. For her, everything about love which seems to be her is permanent should be ideal. The great flaw of this character is repulsive nature toward the physical element in love.

The beating of the heart, of course, also epitomizes Siegmund’s emotional side, his interiority oppressed by the damaging feminine influence. The idea of women’s dangerous spirituality is a recurrent theme in Lawrence and has been emphasized by several scholars, notably Colin Milton, who asserts that the values natural to them and appropriate for them are quite opposite to the ascetic, anti-natural attitudes they do, in fact, display. The critic thus makes a comparison between two Lawrentian female characters: Helena is compared to Miriam, the protagonist of Sons and Lovers, because both of them aim at repressing the physical and emotional aspect of their respective lovers. This process, which is directed towards the suppression of the sexual urges, consists in instilling into men’s minds the belief that their sexuality
is something to be disdained, an impulse that has to be destroyed. This is what happens to Siegmund, who, deeply undermined by this external repression, breeds a sentiment of guilt, which is the symptom of modern man’s illness, the expression of his anxiety. This kind of feeling cannot arise from the soul of a healthy man; it rather develops within a sick body, weakened by repression and prone to reaction.

Helena and Miriam are thus included in a class of women, referred to as ‘‘dreaming women’ with whom passion exhausts itself in the mouth’ (TP, 30). This definition epitomizes Helena’s way of expressing her physical desire, as she does not really appreciate the sexual act. According to the definition that Hampson, Siegmund’s friend and Doppelganger, gives of them:

“The best sort of women – the most interesting – are the worst for us,”

[...] “By instinct they aim at suppressing the gross and animal in us. They are supersensitive-refined a bit beyond humanity. We, who are a little gross as need be, become their instruments. Life is grounded in them, like electricity in the earth, and we take from them the unrealised life, turn it into light or warmth or power for them. The ordinary woman is, alone, a great potential force, an accumulator, if you like, charged from the Source of life. In us her force becomes evident. (TP, 84)

The women belonging to this group are considered a menace to man. Helena aims at suppressing the instincts that dwell in Siegmund, as in every individual’s soul, thus becoming unconsciously guilty of her lover’s weakness. Compared with Siegmund’s personality, Helena appears to be more autonomous. She is ‘like the sea, self-sufficient and careless of the rest’ (TP, 43). On the contrary, he is dependent on her, who represents his source of life, from which he draws his energy:
She seemed to connect him with the beauty of things, as if she were the nerve through which he received intelligence of the sun and wind and sea, and of the moon and the darkness. Beauty she never felt herself, came to him through her. It is that makes love. He could always sympathize with the wistful little flowers, and trees lonely in their crowds, and wild, sad sea-birds. In these things he recognized the great yearning, the ache outwards towards something, with which he was ordinarily burdened. But with Helena, in this large sea-morning, he was whole and perfect as the day. (TP, 44)

In this passage, the pivotal role of the female in the relationship is clearly explained. She is the necessary vehicle for the male to reach fusion with the universe, the “nerve” which connects man with the rest of creation and engenders in him a sense of wholeness; however, Helena represents at the same time an obstacle to Siegmund’s individual growth.

Lawrence thinks of woman as a spiritual being who sublimates her own sexual instincts and transfers this physical repression onto man. In this novel, Helena’s complex psychology testifies to this, as she appears to be in love with Siegmund even if she feels an aversion towards sexuality. She is anchored in an idealized concept of love, thus she opposes resistance to the sexual reality of the body, deliberately preventing her from having any physical pleasure. Helena’s frigidity is connected with Siegmund’s destruction, according to the logic that associates death and annihilation with the perversion of impulses, by which we mean a changing of direction of instincts that, instead of proceeding on the path to fulfillment, deviate towards the destructive path of repression.
As has already been mentioned above, the main reason for the failure of the two lovers’ relationship is the unbalance in the living process of motion and stability, or of action and reaction. Stability and mechanicalness are not prerogatives of Helena's character only. These contrasting aspects, both physical and psychical, are also found in Siegmund, who, when he is in town, seems to be a static being, deprived of his vitality, like a steady point in the incessant motion of the world surrounding him. The man is experiencing a period of crisis in his life; for a long time he has suppressed his instincts, accomplishing his moral duties, and now, the day before reaching the holiday place with Helena, he is ready to free them. This is how Siegmund is introduced to the reader in chapter two:

This was one of the crises of his life. For years he had suppressed his soul, in a kind of mechanical despair, doing his duty and enduring the rest. Then his soul had been softly enticed from its bondage. Now he was going to break free altogether, to have at least a few days purely for his own joy. This, to a man of his integrity, meant a breaking of bonds, a severing of blood-ties, a sort of new birth. In the excitement of this last night his life passed out of his control, and he sat at the carriage-window, motionless, watching things move. (TP, 13-14)

Siegmund appears to be divided between a fluid and changeable universe in incessant becoming and a static reality dominated by a strict morality that dehumanizes and annihilates the individual. This results in a split in his being that strongly undermines his psychic integrity. This is a theme which recurs in Lawrence’s next novels, such as *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*: the effort of the human being to conquer his own individuality, which is achieved through the affirmation of his will to power. It is
clear that the protagonist shows a deep division within his psyche, oscillating between an instinct of subservience to traditional values and a feeling of power, or self-assertion. However, in this novel, the dialectical process of life and death is reversed, as the death wish that characterizes both Helena and Siegmund originates in their reactive attitudes, and, for this reason, is not directed towards a creative resurrection; it rather aims at the annihilation of the vital impulse in the individual. Hence, Siegmund, as a man of resentment, stands in antithesis to man as creator.

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

> But this is a work one can’t regard easily – I mean, at one’s ease. It is so much oneself, one’s naked self. I give myself away so much, and write what is my most palpitate, sensitive self, that I loathe the book, because it will betray me to a parcel of fools. … (Lawrence, 37)

The relationship between the sexes has always been a power relationship. As Millett points out, like many other power relations such as the ones between classes, races and castes the relationship between genders is a relation between the oppressors and the oppressed. In the case of gender relationships the oppressors are men and the oppressed are women. The roles that create femininity and masculinity are defined by
patriarchy, and the continuity of the imbalance in this power relationship is attained through a set of applications. Instead of eliminating women from society, the system systematically and politically reduces their status while ensuring men’s higher status.

While presenting his male and female characters and constructing the relationships the strategy that Lawrence applies in his novels, is very similar to the premises of Metaphysics of Presence. While men are portrayed as powerful, self-sufficient and independent, women are presented as weak and in need of the protection of men’s power. Moreover, although most of his women protagonists try to be independent and self-sufficient, they are in the end subordinated to male power. For this reason, Lawrence’s representations in his novels remain within the patriarchal metaphysics of presence which privileges men over women. As a result, his portrayal of modern woman who are in search of individual and independent identity in *The Lost Girl* is a political strategy to convey his male fantasy about the superiority of man.

Lawrence’s idea that there is a clear distinction between the sexes is not only expressed in his non-fiction but it is also advocated in his novels. The ‘organization of social reality’ is realized through this sexual division in Lawrence’s agenda and his literary works (Williams, 73). Although Lawrence believes that men and women ‘need one another’ and are complementary, he implies that whereas men can be and are all alone ahead of women, women have a subordinate nature. In his essay “Education of People”, he claims that two individuals may be intimately interdependent on one another, as man and wife. It is obvious that despite Lawrence’s call for an interdependent and complementary relationship between men and women, he saves individuality for men by calling them ‘man’ and dependence for women by
calling them ‘wife’. In the relationship while man can have a separate identity woman can only be subordinate to man’s being, which is a patriarchal stereotyping. Moreover, this is the ideal relationship and state of affairs between the sexes that Lawrence advocates, and the literary representation of this philosophy along with the possible social crisis in the case of the absence of this balance is demonstrated in his novel *The Lost Girl*.

It was in Lago di Cardia in Italy that Lawrence started writing *The Lost Girl* in November 1912, the same period he was working on *The Sisters*, the long novel which eventually was to split in two and become *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. *The Lost Girl* was abandoned, taken up again and finally completed after the Great War. The initial title of the novel had been *Elsa Culverwell*; Lawrence had used the setting of a Cullens family he knew at Eastwood, whose conditions resembled the conditions of Alvina’s family in *The Lost Girl*. Later, in February of 1913, Lawrence changed the title *Elsa Culverwell* to *The Insurrection of Mrs Houghton* moving towards a deeper exploration of the heroine’s relationship to her lover and trying as well to experiment with new forms: ‘an historical novel, a first- person narrative by the central character, a dialect play’ (Kinkead, 66).

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

‘The Bottoms’ succeeded to ‘Hell Row’. Hell Row was a block of thatched, bulging cottages that stood by the brookside of Greenhill Lane. There lived the colliers who worked in the little gin-pits two
fields away. … making queer mounds and little black places among the corn-fields and the meadows. (SL, 1)

*The Lost Girl* opens with the description of 1920’s Woodhouse, a small ‘mining townlet […] in the Midlands of England’ (*LG*, 11). The representation of Woodhouse in the 1920s is of a prosperous place with a well-structured social system. Lawrence, after three paragraphs, immediately shifts back to 1913, a period which he finds a time marked by a ‘dreary malady that of the old women’ (*LG*, 11). The opening of *The Lost Girl* appears to display only an awareness of the background that is accidentally present. In the opening of *Sons and Lovers*, it is unmistakably felt, resulting in the actual ‘living through’ the described environment.

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

> The heroine of this story is Alvina Houghton. If we leave her out of the first chapter of her own story it is because, during the first twenty-five years of her life, she really was left out of count, or so overshadowed as to be negligible. She and her mother were the phantom passengers in the ship of James Houghton’s fortunes. (*LG*, 20)

A different Lawrence now after the war experience, with changed, more radical views on sex and marriage, he created the portrait of a ‘terrifying’ Alvina, ‘the questing soul’ who ‘moves toward reunion with the dark half of humanity’ (*LG*, 521). Alvina, the young heroine of the novel, is eager to be transformed and liberated and this happens through the sexual relationship which Lawrence explores here as a return
to the deep human darkness of the psyche. Her willingness to undergo this experience turns Alvina into another sacred feminine figure: she becomes a woman who is not afraid to face and merge with the mysterious aspects of her feminine psyche. It is a confrontation that all Lawrencian women protagonists face until they discover their true womanhood. Alvina Houghton, like Lawrence, leaves the interminable sickness of England and is carried away to Italy, the land of light and the unconscious, the feminine place of *la bella figura*, where she discovers her true womanhood, new perspectives on life and a new maturity beyond anything she had been taught.

Lawrence begins the novel with a description of Manchester House, the place that lies at the centre of this sterile world where Alvina was brought up. The name carries clear echoes of Victorian ambition and commercial prosperity, the latter long gone, the former still lingering beyond reason. The proprietor is James Houghton, Alvina’s father, a man with ‘a taste for elegant conversation and elegant literature and elegant Christianity’ (*LG*, 2). His wildly optimistic and utterly impractical nature inevitably leads him to a series of disasters, as he experiments with a variety of enterprises: he speculates with a mine, a hotel and a music hall, all businesses that end in failure and at the end he dies bankrupt. But in his life, throughout his ambitious entrepreneurial career, Mr Houghton remains a patriarchal figure – very much like the Crèches in *Women in Love* – whose dreams and aspirations, strengths and weaknesses are those of the industrial society. He is also tainted with a fault all too common in his type: aspirations to aristocratic grace and elegance combined with the selfishness, obstinacy and downright heartlessness of the oppressor: ‘He was a tyrant to his shop girls. No French marquis in a Dickens novel could have been more elegant and refine and heartless.’ And ‘they submitted to him’ (*LG*, 4). His selfish and obstinate
character causes the degradation of his wife, who is a virtual prisoner in her husband’s palace of fear:

But the poor, secluded little woman must have climbed up with a heavy heart, to lie and face the gloomy Bastille of mahogany, the great cupboard opposite, or to turn wearily sideways to the great cheval mirror. (LG, 3)

After Alvina’s birth ‘his wife was left alone with her baby and the built-in furniture. She developed heart disease, as a result of nervous repression’ (LG, 4). Mrs Houghton thus provides Alvina, not only with another cause for sorrow, but also with the grim cautionary tale of a woman who languishes, wastes away and finally dies of misery and grief in the bleak environment of Manchester House. She is the victim of her husband’s corrupt, inhuman values, an alienated feminine figure, unable to help herself or others and can only add to the misery of that unhappy place and increase the loneliness of her young daughter, who finds a mother substitute in her governess, Miss Frost.

Miss Frost and Miss Pinnegar are the other important characters who are around Alvina, in the Houghton household. Lawrence provides clear and thorough portraits of them, carefully delineating their personalities as well as their functions: both are strong women, bastions of social convention, and Alvina feels a special devotion to each one. Miss Pinnegar has ‘pale grey eyes, and a padding step, and a soft voice, and almost purplish cheeks’ (LG, 12). She is a very competent woman, hard working, truthful, reliable and ever-present in Mr Houghton’s affairs. Miss Frost is
a vigorous young woman of about thirty years of age, with grey-white hair and gold rimmed spectacles. She was steering the poor domestic ship of Manchester house, illuminating its dark rooms with her own sure, radiant presence.’ (LG, 7)

These two women are depicted by Lawrence as two decent and likable female characters. Miss Frost in particular is a real protector, not only of young Alvina, but the whole Manchester House, a powerful and energetic vestal deity, an Hera, the ancient Greek protector of family, respected even by the rough colliers who regard her as a real lady ‘if ever there was one’ (LG, 11). But there is also another side to their benevolent steadying presence: Alastair Niven, for one, calls them the guardians of ‘the proper dullness’ (Niven 120). Alvina is seen to suffocate in this house of anemic hopes and seething fears. Although emotionally close to Miss Frost, who has stood by her like a true mother, she is also aware of the stifling limitations she imposes upon her, how her love and care ultimately serve to deny her life. She has the courage to wish her dead, symbolically speaking:

> Time for Miss Frost to die. She, Alvina, who loved her as no one else would ever love her, with that love which goes to the core of the universe, knew that it was time for her darling to be folded, oh, so gently and softly, into immortality. (LG, 36)

Miss Frost is the unquestioning guardian of a doomed world from which Alvina knows she must escape if she is ever to reclaim life. Even as the pressure to conform is maintained, the deformed moral principles of the world Miss Frost and Miss Pinnegar so bravely defend give Alvina ground to stand and the power to resist and
follow her heart, free of the need to justify herself to those who attempt to force their inadequate ideals, anxieties and sentiments on all and sundry.

Alvina’s appearance in Chapter II raises the possibility that Lawrence aims for once at the depiction of an angelic prototype:

a slim girl, rather distinguished in appearance, with a slender face …

She was ladylike ... In the street her walk had a delicate, lingering motion, her face looked still. (LG, 21)

This first impression of a conventional maiden is immediately disrupted by the revelation of features which reveal hidden, less conventional aspects of her character:

But there was an odd, derisive look at the back of her eyes, a look of old knowledge and deliberate derision. She herself was unconscious of it. But it was there. And this it was, perhaps, that scared away the young men. (LG, 21)

Then, not unnaturally, she has at least one masculine characteristic, revealing something that has to do with character rather than appearance: ‘And her voice had a curious bronze like resonance that acted straight on the nerves of her hearers’ (LG, 23).

These contradictory elements in her character reflect the complexity of her mental and psychological world which would attract people of a ‘different susceptibility,’ like the ‘darkie’ man who was Alvina’s first fiancée, and which provoke mixed emotions in the people surrounding her, even to the person closest to her. Miss Frost, who ‘reared and tended her lamb, her dove,’ is shocked to see ‘the lamb open a wolf’s mouth, to hear the dove utter the wild cackle of a daw, or a magpie, a strange sound of derision’ (LG, 21). Under the appearance of ‘the chaste Beatrice’ there is hidden ‘the roaring
lioness’ (*Phoenix II* 537), the aggressive female who needs to and shall break free of all imposed restrictions.

This inexplicable, inarticulate but not quite secret side of Alvina is inevitably the most interesting aspect of her personality. And it is this apparently contradictory depiction of hers that reveals an authorial intention. Of course Lawrence is not interested in delineating a hideous woman with an angelic profile – although in the first chapter the reader might be inclined to think so – but an independent woman, with great physical presence and energy, but also the inner resources to wrest control of her life and change it. Her aggressiveness, disliked and misunderstood by her surroundings, is an expression of the urge to feel and taste what life really is. Her female heart is the main means used by Lawrence to move the plot forward.

Alvina is full of spirit as well as heart, both of them in the right proportion to lead her to action and adventure. She may appear to act ‘like a man,’ that is, with independence of mind, determination and little apparent regard for the consequences, but the rejection of her social environment and its values is done on purely feminine terms. She knows she is unhappy as she is and senses with unmistakable clarity the misery ahead: ‘I can’t stay here all my life … I know I can’t. I can’t bear it. I simply can’t bear it. I am buried alive – simply buried alive’ (*LG*, 28). There is great anger in her words, but also a tremendous force, the will to live life fully, a will which for Lawrence is sacred. And this, the spontaneous force of ‘moving on,’ is what carries her away from all that her surroundings represent. In the beginning, Alvina often appears contrary, perverse, even deliberately flirting with evil. She cannot understand her attraction to her first tutor: ‘She was quite sure she did not love him. But out of a certain perversity, she wanted to go’ (*LG*, 25). She enjoys toying with men while
being very critical of them, and gets indignant with the rules that the dominant sense of social propriety imposes upon women.

Alvina is captured by Ciccio, a modern Italian outsider, and taken to his distant, mysterious land. In the novel, this journey functions as a metaphor for Alvina’s descent into the unknown depths of her psyche, which is the necessary condition for rebirth. She finds a new identity, or perhaps more precisely, she rediscovers her true one – her repressed self, which for all the signs of its presence had hitherto been unable to emerge in its positive fullness.

Without being the story of a metaphysical search for the self, the narrative of The Lost Girl faithfully reflects Lawrence’s dualistic philosophy, and examines closely his concept of the male-female opposition: ‘The masculine, active, conscious principle opposed to the feminine, passive, unconscious principle’ (Hough, 225). The two central characters in the novel, Ciccio and Alvina are two very different beings, from radically different cultural backgrounds and individual life experiences, brought together under unlikely circumstances beyond either’s design or conscious control.

The first impression readers are given of Ciccio is not really flattering. Superficially at least, he looks a rather low character. But beneath the unconvincing surface, he is a true fictional Lawrencian man. Like most of the exotic male characters in Lawrence, he is dark, dominant and blood-conscious. He represents the uncultivated, untamed, primitive and instinctual way of life. Alvina responds intuitively to this dark outsider – a positive sign.

Lawrence sees the sexual experience as a central one in human life and a necessary condition not just for healthy individual lives, but for healthy societies. And it is mostly based on the attraction between opposites, for difference between the two
sexes is essential, since their roles are fundamentally complementary. But Alvina’s relation with Ciccio also reflects this opposition in more literal terms. There is little rational reason to expect that this relationship will succeed. It is a relationship that depends on their also being social opposites and grows on this antitheses. Socially speaking, romantic love, based on socially constructed personality and fineness of feeling, is predictably regarded with suspicion. This is the point ‘where the new fiction parted company with the old’ (Kinkead, 575) namely *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, where the complexities of love between the two sexes is the central theme. Ciccio and Alvina meet in the cold English climate, and their relationship, though intense is also often antagonistic. Even the warm sensuality of the Mediterranean does not turn them into anything like typical romantic lovers. Ciccio and Alvina never live a romantic idyll – they do not want to. The sexual instinct that brings them together is raw and powerful, neither refined nor calculated. It is the primal, primitive nature of their attraction which makes the experience apocalyptic, disregarding all social differences and comes to mark Alvina’s entire life.

Alvina’s joining the troupe and her subsequent seduction by Ciccio with the full approval of Madame and her ‘Red Indians’ brings about a conflict within the girl which makes her more closely resemble the novelist’s other heroines than she had previously. With the beginning of her relationship as well as her affair with the Italian, the dilemma of yielding to her passions or obeying her will, following her instinct or being true to her background presents itself. However, she is a woman who possesses self-knowledge to a degree that the other heroines of Lawrence do not. She knows that Ciccio does not and will never have the qualities that will be
acceptable to her social standards and she is also well aware that her being physically attracted to him means a rejection of ‘respectability’ for her. To her, Ciccio is unreal.

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

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

There was no hope for Alvina in the ordinary. If help came, it would have to come from the extra-ordinary. Hence the extreme peril of her case. Hence the bitter fear and humiliation she felt as she drudged shabbily on in Manchester House, … Men can suck the heady juice of exalted self importance from the bitter weed of failure even as was James Houghton. But to a woman, failure is another matter. For her, it means failure to live, failure to establish her own life on the face of the earth. And this is humiliating, the ultimate humiliation. … Alvina had passed her twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, and even her twenty-ninth year. She was in her thirtieth. It ought to be a laughing matter. But it wasn’t (LG, 87).

Even so, Lawrence does not depict Alvina as a tormented character who has given up all and gained nothing by her final decision.
Life with the Natch-Kee-Tawaras is exciting after living in Manchester House but the group and the girl have such diversified outlooks on things that Alvina feels it necessary that she make one more attempt at the respectable life. Leaving the troupe, she takes a position as a midwife in a Lancaster hospital where, at first, being tired of the dingy theatrical boarding houses, she thoroughly enjoys the cleanliness and usefulness of hospital life.

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

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

He was a made man: and now he was really letting himself go, luxuriating in everything; above all, in Alvina, who poured tea gracefully from the old Georgian teapot, and smiled so pleasantly above Queen Anne tea-cups (LG, 268).

When he proposes, Alvina accepts although she knows that she will never marry him. When Cicio returns professing his love, Alvina, weighing her love for the Italian and the prospects of a dull life of ‘non-existence’ with Dr. Mitchell, marries the dancer and they make the long wartime journey to Italy.

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

Ciccio, the outsider, returns home and takes his place among his own people – and becomes once more a member of a greater community, one of many. But he cannot reconcile himself to the grimness and remoteness of the southland, inevitably perhaps, his poor house and surroundings disappoint him. He is blind to the beauty of the place, and Alvina cannot but perceive his indifference and interpret it correctly as the source of his unhappiness. Access to the mysterious appears to be a purely female privilege; it is the female only who has immediate access to the semiotic, who is aware of the subconscious undercurrents within the human psyche and is able to gain through them an understanding that can never be put in words or otherwise fully explained. Alvina’s response to this ancient, still half-savage, mystic place is specifically feminine. Her perception of this harsh world denotes a transfiguration within her, a spiritual and mental as well as sexual rebirth, and nature and the symbols contained in it reflect her profound transformation. She experiences the pleasure but also the fear, often rose by intimacy with nature and its secrets, and tries to discover her deep-seated, wounded self of instinct and the senses. Alvina becomes a sacred figure among the forests, exulted by the numinous spirit found in the Italian landscape. Her awakening is a purely natural one, not sexual, like Connie’s. Ciccio was an excuse for her to discover what pre-existed in her soul, as the sacred female impulse was always there waiting to be awakened.

Though Alvina lover her husband, she is indeed a ‘lost girl’. She is his woman and realizes that she will never become completely adjusted to his way of life. Although Ciccio has accepted her, she knows she can never be anything but
conspicuous against the background that Pescocalascio affords. Despite these things she is happy that she has escaped the fate of a sterile old maid living in a Manchester House and going through the mundane social rituals of a Woodhouse. There is no question that Lawrence meant the ‘Lost’ of the title to mean other than morally lost.

In a letter to Lady Cynthia Asquith in May, 1920, he wrote ‘I’ve actually finished my new novel, *The Lost Girl*: not morally lost, I assure you’ (Lawrence, 133).

The ‘lostness’ of the lost girl can be interpreted to signify the fact that she is completely ‘lost’ as far as her prior stature in life and the middle class respectability that she turned her back on are concerned. In a sense, she has abandoned herself to a middle road of life. She is aware that she cannot return to the old and yet she cannot adjust to the new. ‘She was cut off from everything she belonged to’ (*LG*, 324).

Graham Hough states that Alvina is ‘… in the position of a girl who has burnt her boats and abandoned herself to this kind of life’ (Hough, 115).

This novel seems to be unique among the novels of Lawrence because it is only here that the novelist is not, to a greater or lesser degree, emotionally involved. He is more the disinterested observer and reporter of events than he is in any of his other novels. However, in *The Lost Girl*, for the first time, the embryo of the feminine seeker for fulfillment is sketched, a shape that is going to be molded and remolded many times in far more passionate hands as, for example, in Lawrence’s treatment of the relationships of the characters of Kate Leslie in *The Plumed Serpent* and Connie Chatterley in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*.

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

He [D.H. Lawrence] denies life – I mean human life. His hero and heroine are non-human. They are animals on the prowl. The do not feel; they scarcely speak. They submit to the physical responses and the rest go veiled – blind – faceless. … (Nehls, 51)

Already before WWI one could notice a big change in the cultural life of Europe: after the decadent 1890’s people ventured into futuristic ideals of changing the world through new ways of living. One may connect this trend to the fact that more people gained their economic independence in the context of increasingly developing industrial society, among whom women were gaining more freedom from the millennia of social superstitions and sexual inequality. The concept of the New Woman from 1890’s developed itself even further in the beginning of the twentieth century, a period known for its gender crisis and disappearance of sexual difference: the destruction of the nineteenth century system of the separate sex spheres put into question the whole traditional system of masculinity and femininity. Women more persistently claimed their own rights and equality, which certainly frightened the men, who were for centuries assured of their own superiority and power.

Gender role change in the context of WWI was perhaps one of the most important consequences for the new philosophy of personal life, which touched as well upon marriage and sex: never before had women stayed so long at home alone without their husbands, sons and fathers, who never before died in such numbers at the machinery-ridden battlefields. Cornelia Schulze writes, ‘The war had emasculated men and empowered women, and the use of sexual metaphor for the description of
war experiences was widespread’ (38). One of the consequences of WWI was that women became more self-aware and self-assured. Men, crippled or struck down by the war, became even less masculine in light of women’s increasing ambiguity of their gender role. Thus, after the gender role change, men assumed that they had to assert somehow their masculinity to balance it with the potent modern femininity. That’s why in post-war years and the 1920’s ‘aggression, destructiveness and readiness to commit violent acts became the dominant characteristic of masculinity’ (ibid. 39). Despite this male hysteria of masculinity loss, the changes had their advantages in the context of relationships. Now both women and men entered the hetero-social world of communication, which enabled both sexes to mingle starting from school age. Psychology and sexology developed into more serious fields of sciences thanks to Freud and Ellis; people started to get more positive and more scientific information on sex, love, relationships and family life. The content of marriage or any love relationship was not anymore limited to the question of spiritual union, regard, respect and duty, but included emotional compatibility and sexual enjoyment as far more important conditions for a happy relationship. It was D. H. Lawrence, who, perhaps, was the greatest in projecting the traumas of post-WWI and the 1920’s into his novel Lady Chatterley’s Lover and recording the development and the psychological state of human relationships. It is obvious that one could understand that D. H Lawrence’s women and men see themselves facing the troubles of maintaining their relationships that have to embrace truly romantic ideals and sexual expression at once, their attention is turned more on each other than on the world outside. Especially, in Lady Chatterley’s Lover Lawrence focuses his eye on all aspects of particular love relationships and battling with its inconsistencies and
problems, hardly allowing himself to take a look outside the introversion of these relationships.

The novel is divided into three sections: the first seeks to register the nature and causes of psychic and social degradation; the second stages a series of non-familial relationship especially sexual encounters between Lady Chatterley and the gamekeeper, Mellors; and the third considers the viability of their existence as a couple. Lawrence created three different versions of the novel, using a range of characters and circumstances to articulate its different forms of individual and social dysfunction, but basic structure of degeneration, rebirth and consequent fragility remains intact throughout all of Lawrence’s re-writing. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* is also a novel about work; about the alienation of industrial labour, the desperate compensatory quality of intellectual work, the inescapability of physical toil, and the imaginative and ideological work of narrative fiction.

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

> My first wife typed out the manuscript for Lawrence, even though she was a bad typist and had no patience with English spelling – she was Belgian, you know. Then, she didn’t always appreciate the nuances of the language she was typing. Our friends were profoundly shocked when she tried out some of those four letter words in conversation. (Anonymous, 6)

In a letter replying to a complimentary cable, Lawrence wrote to say that *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*
… seems to have exploded like a bomb among most of my English friends, and they’re still suffering from shell-shock. But they’re coming round already; some few already feeling it was good for ‘em. Give them time. There are rumors of suppression in England, and rumors of bans in America. But I can’t help it. I’ve shot my shot, anyhow; shot an arrow into the air tee-de-dum! (Ibid. 33)

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

You mustn’t think I advocate perpetual sex. Far from it. … But I want, with Lady C., to make an adjustment in consciousness to the basic physical realities. (Moore, 265)

The story of Lady Chatterley’s Lover is at this time relatively well known and the plot is basically one that adheres rather closely to modern novel convention. Connie Chatterley, daughter of a Royal Academician, was raised with her sister in the cosmopolitan world of arts and politics. During the WWI, she meets and marries Clifford, heir to a baronetcy, who is more upper class than Connie – Connie being well-to-do intelligentsia while Clifford is aristocracy. After a short honeymoon, Clifford goes to war and comes home paralyzed and impotent. Making the best of the situation, he becomes a writer and achieves literary success and reputation rapidly. The couple is wealthy and has circles of reasonably intelligent friends. Connie devotedly looks after Clifford but gradually becomes oppressed by the ‘nothingness’ of her life. After one unsuccessful love affair with her husband’s friend Michaelis, she meets Clifford’s gamekeeper, Mellors. Eventually, they fall passionately in love. Their love produces a kind of sexual fulfillment which Connie had never before
obtained. The novel ends with Connie leaving her husband. She and Mellors plan a future life together on a farm in the English Midlands. So stated, the plot seems … almost vulgarly conventional. On this there are two things to be said. One is that the conventions have been established by Lawrence himself. Until his days, novels were commonly about approaches to marriage. Today, as a reviewer has recently remarked, they are commonly about marriage, and every marriage in the novel is a problematic one. The shift of emphasis is largely the result of Lawrence’s work. The second remark is that the peculiar quality of the book depends less on the bare situation that on the fullness, fidelity, and scrupulousness with which the situation is worked out. (Hough, 178)

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

Tender! Somewhere she was tender, tender with a tenderness of the growing hyacinths, something that has gone out of the celluloid women of today. But he would protect her with his heart of a little while. (LCL, 123)

Connie reveals her awareness of tenderness within the gamekeeper with

… “Shall I tell you what you have that other men don’t have” … “It’s the courage of your tenderness, that’s what it is: … ”. (LCL, 290)

It is tenderness that each possesses in relationship to the other.
In *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* the relationship of Constance and her husband Clifford is not presented at all as romantic, but perhaps the spouses deceive themselves by the mirage of false romantic notions of dignified spiritual marriage of two souls clinging to each other. It is evidence that one reads the first chapter of the novel that

Clifford was shy and nervous of all that other big world which consists of the vast hordes of the middle and lower classes, and foreigners …

He was, in some paralyzing way, conscious of his own defenselessness: though he had all the defences of privilege …

Therefore the peculiar soft assurance of a girl like Constance Reid fascinated him. She was so much more mistress of herself in that outer world of chaos, than he was master of himself. (*LCL*, 10)

This need for dependence, for someone’s helping hand in the hostile world that is what Clifford truly wants of marriage with Constance. So, Clifford looks at Constance as his salvation from his isolation and separateness from the world:

Too much death and horror. A man needed support and comfort.

A man needed to have an anchor in the safe world. A man needed a wife. (*LCL*, 12)

This fear of life and insecurity presents him as a childish man in need of a strong mother-like woman to take care of him, which Constance literally does in her wife duty, but also out of her own falsified desire for ‘this intimacy which was beyond sex and man’s satisfaction’ (*LCL*, 12).

Connie’s determination for spiritual union divorced from the life of the flesh and sex is explained earlier in the novel by her bad sexual experiences in Dresden
with German lovers: ‘But that is how men are! Ungrateful and never satisfied. When you don’t have them, they hate you because you won’t. And when you do have them, they hate you again, for some other reason’ (LCL, 9). She decides to resign from foolish misunderstandings of bodily functions, and instead settles with Clifford in favour of ‘the roused intimacy of these vivid and soul-enlightening discussions’ (LCL, 8).

Basically, that is all the Chatterleys’ marriage is originally made of, insecurity and ignorance. In time complications and problems arise, but they never face them, their marriage is taken for granted, each hiding his/her own fears and problems from each other and falsity of their personas maintain their artificial relationship.

One of the first complications of this relationship is that the insecure and damaged ego must be satisfied not only through proper attention and care, but also through its recognition, which can be achieved through the feeling of power. As a reaction to his fear of outer life, Clifford wants to control that life, to dominate it by all possible means, as if in compulsion to save himself from all dangers it represents. This compulsion becomes especially obvious if one takes into consideration his physical inability. That’s why he ardently turns first to a writing career and intellectual life and then to the management of the mines, which give him temporary reassurance and satisfaction.

Interesting in this context is Clifford’s attachment to the literature of Racine and Proust, excerpts of which he reads to his wife. It seems Racine appeals to him, because one gets all one wants out of Racine. Emotions that are ordered and given shape are more important than disorderly emotions. … The modern world has only vulgarized emotion by letting it loose. What we need is classic control (LCL, 25). This rigid functionalism becomes Clifford’s philosophy of life. Thus, he pursues to
preserve the form of their marriage despite its barren content in the same way as he strives for his self-preservation. Life is functional for him, so, thus, everything has its own function, deprived of deeper meaning. Such is his attitude to life, class, marriage and sex. It is most representative in the fact that he asks Connie to find a man to make a child for them, a heir to the Wragby estate. Since sex has a function of arousing sensations for impotent Clifford, it has nothing to do with immorality. But he prefers to shut his eyes on the possibilities of sexual relationships, because the real fact is that he wants an offspring to his family, a desire to preserve his own class, family and himself, a desire to pursue his own will.

Perhaps, Lawrence is at his greatest at representing this modern view of sex equating it with intellect:

> Since only the intellect is important sex is merely a side-show, simply a matter of excitement and sensations and whether you get your thrills from intellectual conversation, as Clifford does, or from sex, as some of his friends do, is really of no importance. (Burns, 104-105)

For Clifford’s friends, such as Tommy Dukes, sex and talk are synonyms: if readers can freely exchange ideas and thoughts with a person they find interesting, why not exchange emotions and sensations? For Lawrence it seems to be a big dilemma of his time, reducing sex to talk, excitement and thrill. Even though sex can be interpreted and performed in these ways too sometimes, it is not the whole nature of it, and that is what Connie and Mellors’s sexual relationship will come to counter-represent in the novel.

This interpretation of sexual life is quite harmful for the marriage of Clifford and Constance in their contempt for it in favour for intellectual connection. It is not
only Clifford’s fault here as Lawrence tries to represent, but Connie’s too, since she passively accepts all the ignorant knowledge on private matters of life without obviously expressing any dissatisfaction with it before her meeting Mellors. Her philosophy becomes stoicism, especially after the consummation of experimental sexual relations with Michaelis.

Connie and Michaelis’s sexual affair is a functional one, each of them getting what they want from each other: a thrill of sexual satisfaction, which becomes too self-indulgent and masturbatory:

But then she learnt soon to hold him, to keep him there inside her when his crisis was over. And there he was generous and curiously potent: he stayed firm inside her, given to her, while she was active, wildly, passionately active, coming to her own crisis. And as he felt the frenzy of her achieving her own orgiastic satisfaction from his hard, erect passivity, he had a curious sense of pride and satisfaction. (LCL, 29)

At this point of the story Connie still does not discover the connectedness of two human bodies, where there is give and take. Instead the bodies of Connie and Michaelis are used as tools to satisfy each other’s vital needs. It is not to say anything is wrong about masturbation or functional sex, both can be in some degree quite agreeable to people, but it is the fact that Connie learns nothing new from this relationship. She does not develop; sex becomes monotonous and machine-like. It is the fact that she loses all her hope in vitality and the positivism of sex life, when she discovers the side-effects of this consummation. And Lawrence here is very strong in his opinion that
masturbation excludes mutuality and the reciprocity to be found in sexual intercourse, the reaching out to another person, and thence to the rest of the natural world (Mac Leod, 122).

Lawrence caricatures Michaelis as a hopeless and almost incapable of giving a true sexual satisfaction to Connie beyond masturbation, Connie herself is rather regressing in her development after her consummation with Michaelis and gets disappointed in sexual life, finally resigning from it.

Even though Connie is presented to us in very modest colours as a rather simple woman craving for her small amount of satisfaction she cannot physically get from her own crippled husband, Michaelis, her temporary sexual lover, plays a very passive role that reminds the readers of the insecurity and fears of Clifford:

He was the trembling, excited sort of lover whose crisis soon came, and was finished. There was something curiously childlike and defenseless about his naked body: as children are naked … he seemed so doubly naked and like a child, of unfinished, tender flesh, and somehow, struggling helplessly. (LCL, 29)

Another woman in the novel is situated in a similar position as Constance, in her brief affair with Michaelis. It is Mellors’s wife Bertha, in her marital sexual activity told by Mellors himself in the most negative ways, which annoyed many feminists that tagged Lawrence a misogynist in the following decades of the twentieth century. Though Mellors’s telling of his marital sexual activities is extreme in misogyny, it is not the ground to blame the author for introducing the theme in representing the character’s emotional turmoil with his wife. Despite its often cited misogyny, the image of Bertha is very important in understanding the personal
relationship based on functional sex. The power and demand for sexual domination, and selfishness in the sexual act is what Bertha desires mostly in her newly-won female independence. What men of previous centuries did to women now becomes the activity of a woman like Bertha, to assert her own female will, and it is best done through the clitoral rape, which reduces Mellors to the same child-like state as Clifford’s and Michaelis’s, men unable to satisfy a woman, not because it is entirely their fault, but also because it is the fault of aggressive women like Mellors’s wife:

She had to work the thing herself, grind her own coffee. And it came back on her a raving necessity, she had to let herself go, and tear, tear, tear, as if she had no sensation in her except in the top of her beak, the very outside top tip, that rubbed and tore. (LCL, 202)

Wanting to get what one wants for one’s own fulfillment without respect and reverence for One’s partner is the ultimate tragedy of the personal relationship, and all of Lady Chatterley’s Lover’s characters are involved sooner or later in it, but this is precisely where Lawrence’s Critique of human relationships is aimed at. When Connie asks if Mellors was always right with his wife he discloses another problem of the relationship, mistrust, which becomes Mellors’s blocking line from connection with the world and people, from initiating a relationship with Constance, from promising any commitment and love to her whenever she asks for it. This is also a small hint to the reason why Bertha is so insatiable and violent in marital relations with him. We are not given fuller details of Bertha/Mellors’s marriage, but it is well-known that trust is one of the most vital conditions of the stable and peaceful relationship.
Perhaps, patience, desire to learn and to experience and openness to each other is even more vital than the art of love itself. Havelock Ellis, the leading sexologist of Lawrence’s day, treasures the value of sincerity in relationships and marriages, which can bring peace and understanding for the both parties:

Men and women in marriage are beginning to realize that we are passing out of the stage where marriage was founded on a fiction. They are facing the facts of jealousy for what they are really in the long run worth, and they are no longer terrified even at the bogey of adultery, when it can be viewed from the standpoint of two partners who are united in an erotic comradeship which nothing can destroy because it is based on the equality and independence of each in an attitude of mutual sincerity. (Ellis, 82)

*Lady Chatterley’s Lover* shows how many of its protagonists stumble through self-assertion and power struggle on their way to mutual understanding and equality, some of them never having the chance to experience them. Even the most sympathetic character of the novel, Constance, seems to have little enthusiasm in her endeavours to create the relationship based on sincerity and independence with her husband or Michaelis. It does not seem that Clifford and Constance make any of these efforts to better their relationship, neither Michaelis with Connie nor Mellors with Bertha seem to be completely sincere and open to each other.

These negative feelings inside the relationships can be partially explained in light of some meanings in Elaine Scarry’s book *The Body in Pain*, in which she claims that
a state of consciousness other than pain – such as hunger or desire – will, if deprived of its object, begin to approach the neighbourhood of pain …; conversely, when such a state is given an object, it is itself experienced as a pleasurable and self-eliminating physical occurrence. The interior states of physical hunger and psychological desire have nothing aversive, fearful, or unpleasant about them if the person experiencing them inhabits a world where food is bountiful and a companion is near. (48)

In this context, it seems to be important to maintain the relation of mutual sincerity in a relationship with truth to one’s own body and mind. As long as partners realize that something cannot be consummated, they prefer to hide it instead of telling to their beloveds in most cases, thus risking the dangers of starving themselves to the point of self-mutilating pain, being false to themselves and to their respective lovers. These relationships can lead to their self-destructions, as in the case of Clifford/Connie, Mellors/Bertha and Michaelis/Connie. Pain and falsity accompanies their unhappiness.

Clifford does not get the possibility to enjoy the sexual connection with his wife, so he turns his passion in a negative direction towards the glorification of spiritual union, death and doom, towards Proust-like mental observations and a functionalistic approach to living and being, all of this wearing out Constance to boredom and inability to enjoy life from her own standpoint. Thus, she turns to a clumsy self-gratifying affair with Michaelis and then to nothingness in life. She is deliberately directing herself towards the painful existence of meaninglessness instead of the new attempts and enthusiastic search for the other possibilities in life: ‘Love,
sex, all that sort of stuff, just water-ices. Lick it up and forget it. If you don’t hang on it in your mind, it’s nothing. Sex especially – nothing’ (*LCL*, 64). When it comes to Michaelis, strangely enough, his desire to possess Connie as his wife is not satisfied because of the reality of facts and, moreover, because Connie does not express any fancy of divorcing her husband for Michaelis’s sake.

The same, perhaps, happens to Mellors and his wife, unsatisfied or wrongly satisfied desire transforms into pain and total isolation from humanity, at least on the part of Mellors, as one knows his self-reserve and unwillingness to welcome any woman in his founded shrine of solitude, the Wragby wood. It is his long-yearned struggle for peace and independence that he tries to protect from invaders from the outer world, among whom Lady Chatterley becomes the closest one. He does fight his natural sympathy and impulses, which he feels for Connie, by projecting his past experiences on the screen of present life, resisting until the last moment, when he notices Connie’s tears:

> And he stood up, and stood away, moving to the other coop. For suddenly he was aware of the old flame shooting and leaping up in his loins, that he had hoped was quiescent forever. He fought against it, turning his back to her. But it leapt, and leapt downwards, circling in his knees. (*LCL*, 115)

The true relationship is that one which gives space for change and each partner’s personality, it is a relationship of toleration and sympathy, encouraging development and growth instead of blocking it through the self-assertive will. Thus, it is not personalities of man and woman are falling in love with or feeling attached to, but to their bodies and souls intertwined in the intricate pattern of our beings, which
live on a much deeper level than ego and “I”. This love or attachment is impersonal and comes naturally out of the unconscious being. Its basis is immediate bedrock connection between human beings regardless of personal interests and the mental translation of the instinctive feelings and emotions.

The only way to distinguish impersonal feeling from personal one is through sex, according to Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. The body plays an important role in human relationships, its senses and reactions caused by external life are the signals of its aliveness. Long before Connie engages in the life-refreshing relationship with Mellors, she realizes her body’s world, which was set apart from the world of the mind before. Through perceiving the silence and beauty of the wood’s natural world she engages in her body’s communication with it:

> She liked the inwardness of the remnant of forest, the unspeaking reticence of the old trees. They seemed a very power of silence, and yet, a vital presence. They too were waiting: obstinately, stoically waiting, and given a potency of silence. (*LCL*, 65)

She seems to find the similarity between her inner mood and the wood’s atmosphere and soon she discovers the vital connection, which she lacks at Wragby. Embracing the world of massive trees and fragile flowers serves as a prelude to her shocking discovery of the life of a solitary human in the midst of this natural beauty:

> Constance sat down with her back to young pine-tree that swayed against her with curious life, elastic and powerful rising up. The erect alive thing, with its top in the sun! And she watched the daffodils go sunny in a burst of sun, that was warm on her hands and lap. Even she caught the faint tarry scent of the flowers. And then, being so still and alone, she seemed to get into the current of her proper destiny. (*LCL*, 86)
It is very curious to mark the shift from Connie’s resignation to nothingness to the rediscovery of the world outside her own life. She feels this world and is presented as communicating with it, almost blurred with the wave-like, windy and protective wilderness. The starting point for her relationship with Mellors is her watching him washing himself in the wood.

No talk, no exchange of compliments, no gallantry, no promises, but just the view of the clumsy breeches slipping away over the pure, delicate white loins, the bones showing a little, and the sense of aloneness, of a creature purely alone … the warm white flame of a single life revealing itself in contours that one might touch: a body! (LCL, 66)

In the isolated life of Wragby this simple shock of connection turns out to be the only meaningful thing in Connie’s life, no matter how much she tries to pretend that it is unreasonable. However, the connection did not happen simultaneously, it is viewed only from Connie’s perspective. Mellors does not notice the lady watching him. Despite this, the episode has a magnetizing atmosphere, as if demonstrating that in the unconscious world one reacts and communicates in different modes, which does not necessarily involve directly looking at each other or talking. That’s why the connection to the plants and trees is equated with the human connection.

Connie and Mellors’s relationship develops in its smooth natural way without forcing the standards of courting and even without proper conversation. Connie visits the gamekeeper’s cottage almost every day to see the hens and new-born chicks, the only event that warms her heart. Her wifely duties at home have been overtaken by the service of Mrs. Bolton, who gradually becomes a much more fitting ‘wife’ to Clifford, because she has a peculiar combination of utter servitude and the persuasive
strength of the matron, so much admired by Clifford himself. Thus, Connie’s wifehood and existence at Wragby becomes even more meaningless, while the connection with the forest, the chicks and the gamekeeper grow closer and more intimate until the compassion for her miserable apartness and nothingness and understanding of her vulnerability drives Mellors to give her nothing, but a touch, the cornerstone of Lawrence’s ‘blood-marriage’. It is instinctive and arrives from unknown sources. Nothing is planned, speculated or thought ahead here, the desire to touch leads to the action of touch, which is sex in itself for Lawrence. Notice how much attention is paid to the feeling of touching the body during their first love-making in the hut:

Then she felt the soft, groping, helplessly desirous hand touching her body, feeling for the face. The hand stroked her face softly, softly, with infinite soothing and assurance, and at last there was the soft touch of a kiss on her cheek … Then she quivered as she felt his hand groping softly, yet with queer thwarted clumsiness, among her clothing …Then with a quiver of exquisite pleasure he touched her warm soft body, and touched her navel for a moment in a kiss. (LCL, 116)

One of the main conditions for the impersonal unconscious sexual relationship to happen is each partner’s ability to lose his and her own tendency to self-assertion and self-rationalizing. This happened to both Connie and Mellors before and during their first love-making because of its immediacy and spontaneity, so that some kind of strangeness is maintained between them. The next time they meet it seems Mellors is suspicious of his ladyship pursuing him, they finally have a talk about the dangerous affair they are involved in, at least as Mellors interprets it, about what people can find
out and what kind of dirty scandal will pour on Constance’s reputation. It is his testing her through his mental observation and posing questions, because he wants to protect himself from the possible threats that Lady Chatterley’s physical attachment can bring on him. But Connie is unafraid and she stands for what she thinks and feels, she comes to the wood again to see him, because she wants to without any explanation, and she does not care about the scandal and her own status of a rich married woman being stained.

Their second love-making is not so fluent and impersonal, because of this uncomfortable talk, in which Mellors tries to withhold his self from potential involvement with the hostile world he had resigned from. But Connie serves as a connecting point to that world, and she herself alienates by trying to prove to him that she is a free modern woman, who does not care for the conventionalities of society and gossip. It results in her willing separateness in sex with him this time, when she stays again passive, but a meticulous, ironic observer of the love-making scene:

That thrust of the buttocks, surely it was a little ridiculous! If you were a woman, and apart in all the business, surely that thrusting of the man’s buttocks was supremely ridiculous. Surely the man was intensely ridiculous in this posture and this act! (LCL, 126)

Lawrence does represent Connie and Mellors relationship as another marriage rather than an alternative to it and certainly not as a degrading adulterous affair. The difference from the actual marriages depicted in the novel is that, despite its illegality and lack of social recognition and integration, the sacred marriage of Connie and Mellors, started without any expectations and pragmatic observations, is founded in its entirety on their mutual physical and emotional consent, sincerity, eagerness to change and develop their connection.
Lawrence stresses the fact that human beings should be left in their natural aloneness, in other words they shouldn’t force themselves into conventional social life and relationships, but develop themselves on the way to togetherness. He discusses that this essential desire to be at the same time alone and learning to be together goes against the popular passion for the perfect relationships, which includes, among other things, total sublimation and absorption with each other, becoming what each of us expects us to be rather than being who we are and developing ourselves without external constraints and others’ pressures. Both man and woman need each other, they are social beings rather than isolated individuals, they live best in societies and communities, but the secret of peaceful and harmonious relationships is this reverence and respect for each individual’s integrity and development, which can only happen in the context of social life rather than the life of a hermit. This is part of Lawrence’s message in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, and, as we can see, those marriages and relationships, which have welcomed the medium of sexual expression, but which are founded on the relations of purely personal achievement and power struggle, end up in hatred and disillusionment and inevitably fail. D. H. Lawrence wrote in this context that no two persons can meet at more than a few points consciously. If two people can just be together fairly often, so that the presence of each is sort of balance to the other, that is the basis of a perfect relationship. There must be separateness as well.

Throughout his writing career, he had been concerned with the general theme of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* – the violation or fulfillment of individuality in relationships. Many times he handled this theme in the concrete terms presented within this novel. The fulfillment involves the crossing either of class or of cultural lines, and often of both, where violation results from resisting this crossing. The
pattern is of a woman in a relatively superior social situation drawn to an outsider – a man of lower social rank, or a foreigner. The woman then either resists her impulse or yields to it. The two choices are embodied in the situation into which Lawrence was born and in the situation into which he married. His mother resisted the impulse and his wife yielded to it. It was almost inevitable that it became a favourite situation for his fiction.