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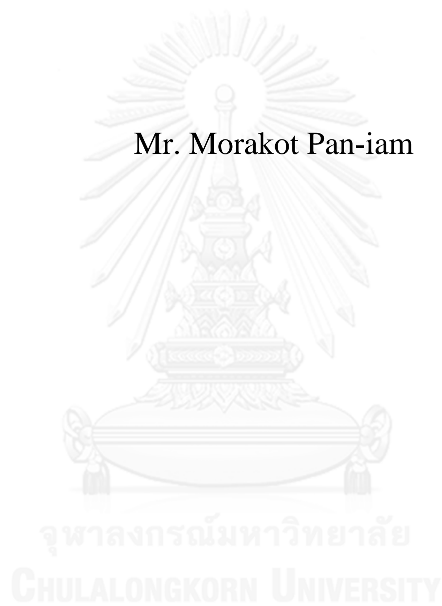
SEX, SEXUALITY, AND MODERNITY
IN THE LITERARY WORKS OF D. H. LAWRENCE

Mr. Morakot Pan-iam



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มรกต ปั้นเอี่ยม : เพศสัมพันธ์ เพศวิถี และ ความเป็นสมัยใหม่ในวรรณกรรมของดี เอช ลอว์เรนซ์ (SEX, SEXUALITY, AND MODERNITY IN THE LITERARY WORKS OF D. H. LAWRENCE) อ.ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์หลัก: คารินา โชติรวี, 131 หน้า.

เพศสัมพันธ์และเพศวิถีเป็นประเด็นที่นำเสนออย่างเด่นชัดในวรรณกรรม ของ ดี เอช ลอว์เรนซ์ (1885-1930) ได้แก่ *The Rainbow* (1915) *Women in Love* (1920) “England, My England” (1922) “The Blind Man” (1922) และ *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928) ภายใต้บริบททางสังคมและประวัติศาสตร์ในยุคปฏิวัติอุตสาหกรรมและสมัยสงครามโลกครั้งที่ 1 ทั้งสองเหตุการณ์นี้ถือได้ว่าเป็นปัจจัยเร่งให้เกิดการเปลี่ยนแปลงทางเพศ โดยที่ชายหญิงมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางเพศกันเปิดเผยมากขึ้นอย่างที่ไม่เคยปรากฏมาก่อน ในขณะที่ความเป็นสมัยใหม่ก่อให้เกิดเสรีภาพทางเพศ อีกนัยหนึ่ง เหตุการณ์เหล่านั้นยังถือเป็นภัยคุกคามต่อความสามารถทางเพศของมนุษย์อีกด้วย วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้มุ่งชี้ให้เห็นว่า งานประพันธ์ที่กล่าวถึงข้างต้นไม่ได้เพียงพูดถึงความสูญเสียและความบอบช้ำจากการเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างฉับพลันของสังคมสมัยใหม่ภายใต้แง่มุมทางทางเพศเท่านั้น แต่ยังได้นำเสนอประสบการณ์ในเรื่องเพศว่าเป็นกำลังผลักดันทางธรรมชาติที่ส่งผลให้เกิดการรวมเป็นหนึ่งและการเกิดใหม่ ตรงกันข้ามกับวัฒนธรรมการทำลายล้างของเทคโนโลยีและการอุตสาหกรรมในสังคมสมัยใหม่ที่ก้าวไปข้างหน้าอย่างไม่หยุดยั้งในช่วงต้นศตวรรษที่ 20 ซึ่งถือเป็นยุคที่มนุษย์ละทิ้งความมีชีวิตไปสู่ความไร้ชีวิตและจิตใจ

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ภาควิชา	ภาษาอังกฤษ	ลายมือชื่อนิสิต	....
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MORAKOT PAN-IAM: SEX, SEXUALITY, AND MODERNITY IN THE LITERARY WORKS OF D. H. LAWRENCE. ADVISOR: ASST. PROF. CARINA CHOTIRAWE, Ph.D., 131 pp.

Sex and sexuality are aspects graphically addressed in the literary writings of D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930), namely *The Rainbow* (1915), *Women in Love* (1920), "England, My England" (1922), "The Blind Man" (1922), and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) with profound adjacent exploration of the social and historical contexts of the Industrial Revolution and the First World War. Arguably, these two incidents catalysed a sexual transformation in the way in which men and women engaged more openly in sexual activities of uncommon nature. While traces of modernity induced such sexual emancipation, paradoxically they also endangered human sexual competence. This thesis argues that not only do the mentioned novels and short stories encode a sense of loss and trauma from the abrupt changes of society in sexual terms, the texts also present sexual experience as an integrating and regenerating organic force countering the inexorable march of technological and industrial modernity in the early years of twentieth century, which emphasises a sudden departure from the human to the mechanical.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

One could say that never had the issue of human sexuality been graphically addressed with such frankness and openness in the English history of literary tradition than it was in the literature of the early twentieth century. While any open discussion of sexuality was largely discouraged during the Victorian era, numerous writers in the early twentieth century such as Modernists like James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, and T. S. Eliot began to explicitly pay more heed to the physical, psychological and cultural significance of the subject to the very existence of human race in their criticism of modernity. Focused on the similar topic, all these literary figures differed tremendously, however, from one another in their representations and their treatment of the aforesaid subject. Eliot, for instance, often presents sexual experience as a metaphor for physical and spiritual decadence with a strong sense of anxiety, abjection and ennui. Sexual relations in his works especially in *The Waste Land* (1922) are often of an impersonal, corrupt and contagious nature in correspondence to the sterility, futility and emptiness of human existence in the post-war modern world. Lawrence, on the other hand, stands alone in his explicit celebration of sex and sexuality against the mechanical and dehumanised world of technological progress and warfare. Aside from their different treatments of sexual experience, these writers with their unprecedented audacity against the traditional current of the Victorians and social commitment to their own contemporary world brought the cultural conception and literary practice of sex and sexuality under a new

scrutinising light. In order to understand the position of sexuality and its significance in the early twentieth century, it is best, therefore, to begin by locating the place of sex in the preceding age of the Victorian period.

The Victorian period is largely accepted as an age of contradictions. On the one hand, the nineteenth century witnessed a rapid growth in cities and urbanisation. Technological and industrial advancements propelled the country into accelerating prosperity. London became, as a result, the largest industrial city with over a million inhabitants more than the city could accommodate (Matthews 33). Unavoidably, it was, therefore, accompanied by the emergence of slum districts comprised of poor structured housing and unsanitary living condition. Poverty, crime, and other social problems inevitably followed. Massive social problems in terms of housing, health and sanitation became parts of the difficult and harsh life of the Londoners apart from the cruel condition of factory works and low wages.

Life in industrial Victorian Britain was notoriously brutal. Hard work and low wages doubled the hardship in the lives of factory workers. Moreover, working-class houses were built of poor materials and lacked proper sanitary facilities. These endlessly inhumane conditions of living led to the spread of a cholera epidemic in 1853 and other transmitted diseases among the working-class citizens. The situation remained dire despite the passing of several pieces of legislation, such as the Contagious Diseases Act in 1864 and the Public Health Act in 1875. It was not until 1890, almost the last decade of the Victorian Era, with the enactment of the Housing of the Working Classes Act that factory labourers were able to live a life with improved living conditions (Purchase 21).

Poor as they might have been, life would have been more tolerable had they been given freedom in their private sexual life. However, poverty did not just mean insufficient provision in family. The meager conditions of living in the Victorian period additionally prohibited sexual freedom of both the working class and the middle class. In other words, as the perceived sole purpose of sexuality was procreation, their sexual life was inevitably conditioned by their scanty income. Without effective contraception, Victorian society, accordingly, constructed a web of customs and taboos designed to constrict and restrict sexual activities of its citizens to reduce the accelerating birth rate. Such customs and taboos are prohibitions of extramarital sex, illegitimate birth, and the infamous idea of the "fallen women," which raised a communal sensibility about the idea of the fallen women, i. e. adulterers, prostitutes, or women who had ventured into the realm of sexual intimacy outside the holy nuptials. Thus, public anxiety about "fallen women", among other forms of taboos, placed much pressure on sexual expectations of the female Victorians.

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Furthermore, there was extensive reticence about sexuality in the Victorian society. Although it did not repress the sexual urge which is natural and basic in all human beings, the overt expression of sexual desire was constantly discouraged. The custom always called for sexual frisson and disgust toward explicit sexual acts whether it was in manner or speech, visual or written. Among the middle class, there arose what was later known as the middle-class sexuality. In *The Making of Victorian Sexuality*, Michael Mason discusses the question of personal respectability and social values in his investigation of the Victorian relationship with sex. Without inherited titles and estates to their names, middle-class people strove toward ways in which

their rank would gain the ideal respectability and social acceptability from the wider world like the upper class and the aristocrats. Sexuality was the realm in which they delved into in their working toward the idea. Accordingly, men and women of a certain age needed to conform to the constructed social norms, and, in their proposed marriage, the necessity to gain family's consent was highly demanded. Courtship and other forms of relational behavior were introduced to help young men and women to act accordingly. Naturally, any sexual misconduct such as premarital sex and pregnancy could remove the community's approval and shame them for life. By this set of morality and sexuality, the middle class could garner themselves the esteem of their peers and betters, while those from the lower social rank would likewise strive to reach the standard of middle-class sexual decency.

No matter how sexually repressive the Victorian society might have appeared to be, its citizens sometimes escaped such strict sexual codes of conduct through the aid of the industrialised environment despite its despicable and demanding ways of living. The Industrial Revolution which had begun in the period around 1760 to sometime between 1820 and 1840 was the first sign that Britain had entered into the age of modernity when it became the largest centre of industrial power and technological creativity. While the Industrial Revolution maimed human sensitivity and occupied their bodies and soul in the working of the machine, it, nonetheless, offered a new way of living especially that of sexual practice. In "Sex and the Industrial Revolution" Emma Griffin notes a modest transformation of sexual life in the industrial England among the working-class and the middle-class citizens. Interestingly, Griffin observes the weakening of the social customs and "the steady rise of illegitimacy during the Industrial Revolution." The rate of illegitimate children

soared up as a good number of young people in industrialised cities "were showing a far greater readiness to embark on penetrative sex even when their prospects for marriage were poor" (Griffin n. pag.). Earlier, money was the factor that had kept young people from engaging in penetrative sex. By the mid-nineteenth century, when industrialisation was at its strength, working people, especially female workers, were ensured of more wages. Industrial work, thus, opened up to an unprecedented opportunity for young women to embark on sexual intercourse with their partner and ensured on their financially independent single-mother life afterwards if the occasion arose. In Griffin's words, it "allowed her [the woman] to raise a child outside marriage and dispense with a male breadwinner altogether (n. pag.)."

What was thought to be a sluggish modest evolution of sexuality was further accelerated by the eruption of World War I (1914-1918). In *The Great War 1914-1918*, Ian F. W. Beckett notes from his research of Leon Trotsky and Arthur Marwick that "the Great War has become regarded as a great catalyst of change" (3). By the time World War I broke out, the long nineteenth century had already experienced two other important wars: the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the Boer Wars (1880-1881, 1899-1902). Unlike these wars, World War I caused far greater loss of casualties and properties, and damaged much of human psyche. It was the most horrifying experience yet in human history for it was the first war that became technologised and industrialised. Many historians subsequently see the Great War as one of the devastating results of the Industrial Revolution. The harnessing of science and technology was the significant drive that put the war forward and without limitation in terms of death tolls and battle scales. By the early twentieth century, European cities such as Berlin, Paris, and Vienna had been industrialised. Rapid growth in industry

and technology in these countries fueled the war in unprecedented scales by offering the war-participating countries the industrial "production of armaments and ammunition for ever greater amounts of bombardment or ever more atrocious modes of killing" (Matthews 64).

Medieval forms of warfare were undoubtedly obliterated with the new replacement of trenches and gunfire; the destructive impact of weaponry also greatly increased. In the defensive and offensive aspects of war, technology and science played a significant role such as the use of medicine, machine gun, artillery, gas and shelling was to increase the scale of destruction. Battles that used to be fought on land were no longer applicable to the nature of the Great War. There were armies on land peopled by the industrial labourers who were "more intimately acquainted […] with hard labour, long hours and, at best, subsistence wages" (Beckett 6). Skilled and technically trained soldiers occupied the air and sea space. Planes were being used to drop bombs on the opponent's territory. Thus, the scales of conflict and impact on not only private foot soldiers, but also civilians were terrifyingly unthinkable.

Having been called by many names such as "the World War", "the war to end all wars" or "the butcher of civilisation," World War I is also sometimes labeled as "the total war". This idea was first introduced by Arthur Marwick who began to study "models of the inter-relationship between total war and social change" (qdt. in Beckett 3). Marwick states that the Great War which was "fought on a global scale was likely to accelerate the pace of changes already taking place" in the wider world, if not to initiate them (qdt. in Beckett 3). For it was not only the human lives that had been shattered in the battlefield, World War I also wrecked the social, cultural,

economic stability and other important aspects in society at large, which eventually led to social and cultural transformations.

Incidentally, one of the important cultural aspects that had been undermined by the Great War was human sexuality and sexual difference. Whilst the older forms of war enabled men to display their virtues of courage and honour, technology and industrial weaponry rendered such virtues virtually irrelevant as men were randomly slaughtered in the trenches. Such skills that had been performed by soldiers in the battlefield were anything but a sign of bravery, dignity and humanity. To a great extent, this global event has strengthened, if not to initiate, the question of masculinity which is steadfastly tied with the idea of chivalry and bravery. The question concerning male sexuality was even strengthened with "the return of the maimed, wounded, shell-shocked from the Western Front" (Matthews 63). Such uncertainties and doubts accordingly led to the destabilisation of masculine power and the changes of sexual relations between men and women.

Likewise, the outbreak of the war significantly quickened the social change of female sexuality and gender relations. For instance, the social mobolisation of women at the home front displayed a sharp discontinuity from the past in which women remained attached to domesticity. During the war, women, however, began to go out into society to work in the posts that had been left unoccupied by men. Moreover, in order to sustain their own family with the absence of the breadwinner who had been to war, women began to work in the public sphere of men (Farmer 216). Women became even more self-reliant and independent as they were by now capable to fend for themselves. Consequently, they were not totally financially reliant on men's provision. However, this change was only temporary for when the war had ended

women were forced to leave their wartime jobs as their men returned from the war. Yet, those war veterans who had survived the hallowing brutality of war but remained physically or internally broken, were left to the care and nursing of their mothers or their wives. Altogether, these subsequent events after the end of the First World War was a significant perimeter that later would dismantle the social preconception of women and men and the idea of separate spheres between the two sexes.

Signs that a gradual change of attitude toward sexuality was taking place can also be seen in the social and cultural contexts in the early twentieth century. Fictional as well as non-fictional texts began to address the question of sex and sexuality more openly. In this regard, the best example can be seen from Sigmund Freud's psychological exploration of sex and sexuality[1]. Upon the publication of Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905), sex and sexuality are believed to be the outward manifestation of the repressed and the unconscious, which exclusively expresses Freud's morbid attitude towards sex. Rather than being reticent about sex, Freud relates sexual experience to the exploration of human psychology. In his work, Freud also introduces the idea that sex or sexuality (sexual instinct or libido) is intimately connected with and revelatory of an individual's psychological discontents, exposing the sexual subtext of human existence.

In the literary sphere, more books were condemned for being corrupt because of their explicit sexual overtone. The publications of Joyce's two famous novels, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and *Ulysses* (1922), led to prosecutions

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[1] In "Sex and Sexuality" (2006) Liesl Olson decidedly notes that an open discussion of human sexuality began with the groundbreaking works of Sigmund Freud who radically believes that all human behaviour and production is governed by sexual desire. Freudian association of the unconscious with human sexuality also had a profound influence on writers in the modernist period.

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of obscenity. While the former semi-autobiological novel contains sexual explicitness of the protagonist's perceived immoral sexual conduct, the latter was prosecuted for nudity upon the publication of the Nausicaä episode and the final monologue of Molly. The book was eventually banned in the United Kingdom until the 1930s. The novel, hence, sought publication in a book form in Paris in 1922.

Similar things occurred to several of the publications of D. H. Lawrence's novels. Following the banning of *Sons and Lovers* by public libraries in England, *The Rainbow* was seized and destroyed under the Campbell Act for violating the rooted culture of prudery and decency of the Victorian and Edwardian periods (Bradshaw 106). The most famous, of course, is the 1960 trial of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* which was deemed as filthy, corrupt and notorious because it contained graphically sexual scenes and, therefore, an overt "threat to public morality" (Sandbrook n. pag.). However, despite such glaring explicitness of human sexuality, F. R. Leavis in *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist*, praises the author as "the great creative genius of our age, and one of the greatest figures in English literature" (303).

As a person, Lawrence was an interesting figure, a novelist, poet, playwright, essayist and literary critic. Born David Herbert Lawrence in September 11, 1885, the author was the fourth child of Arthur John Lawrence (1846-1924), a coal miner in Eastwood, and Lydia Beadshall, an upper-class élite. Having been brought up in a relatively poor environment, Lawrence is often criticised because of his lack of intellectual and social training. T. S. Eliot himself speaks of Lawrence's ignorance and his lack of civilised culture in *After Strange Gods*. The charge of ignorance was later refuted by Leavis. He claimed that Lawrence's personal history was rather an asset than a shortcoming for despite his socially underprivileged upbringing, "Destiny,

having given him the genius, had arranged also that he should be enabled to develop it to the utmost and qualified to use it for the purpose for which it was meant" (Leavis 306). Rather, Leavis continues, having such family background gives Lawrence the inside-out first-hand experience into the hardship of the working-class life that would become later in his mature years of working as a novelist invaluable writing material. Having been intimately acquainted with several scenes of industrial England, especially the Midlands and Nottingham where he spent most of his childhood, Lawrence adapts such experience as his central setting and themes in his well-known novels such as *Sons and Lovers* where the author depicts the conflicts in the cross-class relationship, he experienced in his childhood with his parents. Other novels that share the industrial scenes are *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, to name but a few.

Before the war erupted, Lawrence became engaged in an intimate relationship with his supervisor's wife, Frieda Von Richthofen. He eventually succeeded in persuading Frieda to elope with him leaving behind her husband, Professor Ernest Weekley, and her three young children. Many of Lawrence's female protagonists, especially Ursula Brangwen, are believed to have been based on Frieda who was herself an exceptional character and a great influence in Lawrence's life. In a letter in May 1912, Lawrence told Edward Garnett[2] about Frieda and her sisters:

> The eldest, a professor of psychology and economics – left her husband, gone with two other men (in succession – yet *really* good – good, the sort of woman once reverences). Then there's Frieda. Then the youngest sister, very beautiful, married to a brute of a swanky

[2] As a critic as well as a literary editor, Edward William Garnett (1868-1937) was one of Lawrence's influential and significant correspondents who helped Lawrence in publishing *Sons and Lovers* and other writings.

> officer in Berlin – and, in a large, splendid way – *cocotte*. Lord what a family. I've never seen anything like it.
>
> (09 v 1912)

To Lawrence, the Richthofen sisters, Frieda, Else, and Joanna, were "women of a different caliber from those he had known before" (Worthen 47). His relationship with the Richthofen sisters and Alice Dax, among the few women of unconventionality Lawrence knew in England, had encouraged and sharpened his literary imagination to write about female sexuality in a way that had not been done in the literary convention of his time.

As much as the Industrial Revolution had a profound effect on Lawrence, the outbreak of the Great War distressed and afflicted him in no lesser degree. First, Lawrence and Frieda's plan to travel abroad was thwarted by the eruption of the Great War in July 1914. They, in other words, were confined in Buckinghamshire. Later after Lawrence had finished *The Rainbow* and suffered a great deal from his damaged reputation as a writer from the publication of the book, he intended to go to America and start a new life. Yet, his plan was not successful because of the ongoing war on the one hand, and, on the other hand, his financial status. Living in Cornwall, Lawrence and his German wife were being suspected of being wartime spies. Tinted with such resentment and the pointlessness of war, the author expressed his "finest rejection of society" in *Women in Love* through certain characters such as Rupert Birkin and Ursula Brangwen, and revised it until the novel was published in 1920 (Worthen 85). Not until the year of 1922, Lawrence's highly regarded collection of short stories, *England, My England*, was published. It delineates Lawrence's statement towards the prevailing ideology of war and industrialism.

From 1919 after the war had ended, Lawrence embarked on extensive travel across the world starting from the east to America. During this period, Lawrence produced a number of fiction and non-fiction works including *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923), *Boy in the Bush* (1924), and *The Plumed Serpent* (1926). As his health continued to decline, Lawrence returned to Italy in 1927 where he spent his last creative burst writing *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, a novel that was banned in America until 1959 and 1960 in England because of his graphic details of sexual desire and the unthinkable relationship of an aristocratic lady and a working-class gamekeeper. The book was considered at the end of its trial in 1960 to be a triumph of literary freedom and expression. Lawrence died on 2 March 1930 in the south of France.

Most of Lawrence's best known novels focus on the themes of the destructive effects of industrialisation, emotional and physical vitality, and intuition in opposition to institutionalised form of learning. The most prominent of all subjects explored in Lawrence's works is human sexuality. Because of their explicit explorations and representations of sexual desire and unconventional and immoral practices of sexual relationship such as adultery, homosexuality, and anal intercourse, Lawrence's novels were condemned by the early critics and the reading public alike as a sign of degeneration and moral corruption of both the fictive characters as well as the notorious novelist himself. It is, however, this departure from the Victorian concepts of sexual experience that eventually put him on the pedestal of fame. To illustrate, his works stand out as an indicator of sexual liberation in many aspects. Firstly, the representations of sex and sexuality in Lawrence's fiction are notable for their frankness and openness which would have been impossible and unthinkable in the

previous century. Oftentimes, sex and sexual desire in the Victorian era are presented with a cautionary note or, in many cases like in Thomas Hardy's novels[3], also with condemnation because the Victorians, especially the middle class, imposed the idea of associating morality, virtue, and respectability primarily with the practice of sex. Portrayed with industrialised England as the backdrop, Lawrence's works combine his social criticism with his profound exploration of sexuality and its physical, psychological and spiritual significance to the human existence.

Secondly, although Lawrence himself also demonstrates a vivid interest in psychology and psychoanalysis as shown in his non-fiction writings, "Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious" (1921) and "Fantasia of the Unconscious" (1922), the significance of his novels actually lies in their direct challenge to the conventional belief and concepts of sex and sexuality that had been presented earlier whether by Freud or any other psychoanalysts. He does not merely present the topic of sex and sexual desire as being corrupt and immoral. While his sexual representations including sexual promiscuity, adultery, and homosexuality, can be seen as implicit manifestations of a psychologically traumatised experience of modern warfare, Lawrence's take on sex and sexuality in his novels can also be read as his literary supreme antidote to remedy the personal and social ills of modernity and the outbreak of the Great War on the corporeal and mental conditions of major characters in his novels. Therefore, instead of being a sign of degeneration, Lawrence's portrayal of

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[3] Many of Hardy's characters like Tess in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1892) and Jude in *Jude the Obscure* (1895) are exposed to the world's sexual caprice and for which crime they are punished by the force of Victorian inhibited conventions, mostly at the cost of their own lives.

sex and sexuality in his writings comes to represent a graphical search for cultural regeneration.

This thesis analyses Lawrence's three novels (*The Rainbow*, *Women in Love*, *and Lady Chatterley's Lover*) and short stories from *England, My England* such as "England, My England" and "The Blind Man". By focusing on the contextual representations of sexuality and modernity as two opposing forces, the thesis aims to demonstrate how cultural consciousness toward the idea of sexuality in the early twentieth century is different from the previous age and how the modern mode of life produces a paradoxical effect on human sexuality. That is, while modernity in the forms of Industrial Revolution and the Great War catalysed sexual emancipation, it paradoxically engendered the viability of human sexuality.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines the meaning of sexuality as diverse as the human capacity for sexual feelings, sexual potency, and a person's sexual orientation or preference. According to *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms,* the word "sexuality" is a term referring to the perceived identities of heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and so forth (Murfin 473). Gender critics, including gay and lesbian theorists, view sexuality as "the product of prevailing social and cultural discourses, mores, and institutions" (Murfin 473). Some feminists as well as some queer critics take a constructionist view of sexuality, contending that all gender designations are culturally determined and not innate. The employment of the word "sexuality" in this thesis will accordingly include the definitions from both the dictionary as well as the literary and theorist perspectives. Although this thesis does not aim to define directly whether the idea of sexuality is a cultural construction or an innate quality, certain discussions and examples that shall follow may subscribe to the

definitive usage of the word prescribed by both feminist and queer perspectives. In connection to the exploration of Lawrence's attitude toward human sexuality, the thesis also examines the paradoxical effects of modernity to human beings in the time of changes. Therefore, as a word, modernity is one of the many words in literary criticism, whose meaning is still being debated. However, in this thesis, the definition of modernity will be defined by two important events in human history, which are definitive of human potential for technological and industrial prowess. These events are the Industrial Revolution and the Great War. With these definitions in mind, the thesis will cross-examine the effect of social and cultural changes in the industrial Victorian well into the early years of the post-war twentieth century on the collective and individual consciousness pertaining to the notions of sex and sexuality.

Although the subject of obscenity and sexual openness in the literary works of Lawrence particularly *The Rain*bow, *Women in Love*, "England, My England", "The Blind Man" and, especially, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, did not merit much of positive criticism in the early years of their publications, later critics agree that the notions of sexuality in Lawrence's novels and short stories are nonetheless worthy of literary merit and are not merely pornographic. This thesis will argue that not only do the chosen works encode a sense of loss and trauma from the abrupt changes of society, i.e. industrialisation and modern warfare, in sexual terms, the texts also present sexual experience as a regenerating organic force countering the inexorable march of technological and industrial modernity in the early years of the twentieth century, which emphasises a sudden departure from the human to the mechanical. The genius of Lawrence may perhaps lie in his exploration of sexuality in a way that he does not simply address the topic without reluctance or reticence, but his representations of

sexual experience also transcend the Victorian vision of sexuality beyond its limited procreative and reproductive significance.

The following thesis body will be divided into four chapters. The first two chapters concentrate on the textual binary opposition of modernity and sexual experiences. Textual materials and evidence in these two chapters will be drawn interchangeably from the two novels, *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. The first chapter of the two will focus on the analysis of Lawrence's discourse of modernity in the form of industrialisation and war. Included in this chapter are literary representations and its devastating effects of what F. B. Pinion calls "corruptive processes" in an industrialised and post-war England (150). The latter chapter discusses Lawrentian philosophy of blood instinct and sexual intimacy. Analysis in this chapter incorporates the narrative chronicle of life and sexual experience in an effort to attain a living balance between individual freedom and collective commitment at the threatening face of looming societal hegemony.

The devastating effect of World War I and its aftermath on the body and psyche of people living in post-war England will be analysed through the study of Lawrence's representations of sexual relationship between husband and wife in chapter IV. Additionally, issue of homoeroticism will be examined in great length in this chapter with some relative evidence from "England, My England", "The Blind Man" and, in part, from *Women in Love*. The last chapter in the thesis body will be devoted to the analysis of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The novel notably delineates sexual explicitness that transcends all social boundaries namely class, gender relation, moral consciousness and sexual convention, not to mention the societal inhibition and introversion. The contextual illustration of such idea is depicted in significant

correlation with the progressive and aggressive developed phase of industrialisation and warfare in the twentieth century that threatens to dismantle not only the familial foundation of human existence but also the very life force that originates it in the first place.

The thesis will contribute to an understanding of social and cultural context of English society from its industrialised mid-nineteenth century to the war-traumatised early twentieth century. The great significance of Lawrence's literary works of that dramatic change in English history lies in its effort to delineate the drastic transformation and its crippling impact upon the physical, mental, psychological and spiritual health of a living person. Combined with graphically verbalised depiction of human emotion is the literary register of individual and collective change of consciousness concerning the cultural conception and reception of sexuality from its timid reservedness of the Victorian rooted culture to a more candid expression of sexual feeling that at once amalgamates the enduring process of sexual liberation modestly introduced during the age of Industrial Revolution well into the eruption of the Great War until the actual time of sexual emancipation in 1960s at the close of the ban of Lawrence's own novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

CHAPTER II

"UNREAL CITY": THE AGE OF DISINTEGRATION IN *THE RAINBOW* AND *WOMEN IN LOVE*

> Unreal City
> Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
> A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
> I had not thought death had undone so many.
>
> T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*

The Rainbow and *Women in Love* were actually one single elusive novel since D. H. Lawrence did not originally intend to have the works in two volumes. When it was first conceived in 1912, Lawrence called it "The Sisters." By the early summer of 1913, the author had finished his first draft but the writing did not satisfy him. Later, there was a change in characters, naming, and the narrative's design leading to a renaming of "The Sisters." This time Lawrence chose to call it "The Wedding Ring." However, unsatisfied he might have felt toward the composition of this new work, Lawrence wrote to Garnett in 1913 describing the strangeness and newness of his new book:

> It is very different from *Sons and Lovers*: written in another language almost. I shall be sorry if you don't like it, but am prepared. I shan't write in the same manner as *Sons and Lovers* again, I think – in that hard violent style full of sensation and presentation. You must see what you think of the new style.
>
> (30 xii 1913)

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Almost upon the completion of "The Wedding Ring" in February 1914, Lawrence stopped altogether, realising what else could be done about this new book.

> I had nearly finished it. It was full of beautiful things, but it missed – I knew that it just missed being itself. So here I am, must sit down and write it out again. I know it is quite a lovely novel really – you know that the perfect statue is in the marble, the kernel of it. But the thing is the getting it out clean.
>
> (09 ii 1914)

The process of this "getting it out clean" began from 1916 to1917 during the war years when the writing eventually split into two volumes. The need to give the protagonist, Ursula Brangwen, some experience in life before she meets Birkin gave birth to *The Rainbow's* three generation chronicle of the Brangwen family from 1830 onwards. The earlier writing, after many revisions, eventually became *Women in Love*.

Considering the two names that Lawrence's writing had been through, "The Sisters" and "The Wedding Ring," before it finally grew to be two separate books, *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920), there is a shift of narrative concentration. While the first title pays much attention on the two siblings, Ursula and Gudrun Brangwen, and their relationship with men, the latter naming presses much more attentive interest in the marriage life between women and men. With these two different names, it proves Lawrence's artistic seriousness in his literary pursuit of a story in which he could depict the new relationship between men and women, and how he could make the adjustment and the alteration of that relationship known in his narrative. True to his course, *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* display the growth and intellectual development of the author himself. Philip Hobsbaum states that the two

novels are an authentic representation of Lawrence's "immense development" (52). Leavis himself also sees the works as serious English novels and the living proof of the author's literary genius. John Worthen states in *D. H. Lawrence and the Idea of the Novel*, expressing in agreement with the others but with much emphasis on *The Rainbow* that the book has taken "on other interests entirely from its original conception of 'the relationship between man and woman'; it had come to be a religious novel of the search for self, and self-fulfillment, through love and marriage" (73).

Lawrence's *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* really deserve such recognition not only because they were written with "the new language" and in "the new style", to use the author's own words, but because the novels deal specifically with the world of England and the chaos that threatened to consume it. As a mature novelist, Lawrence felt very strongly attached to his own world of chaos and confusion.

> I think, do you know, I have inside me a sort of answer to the want of today: to the real, deep want of the English people, not to just what they fancy they want. And gradually, I shall get my hold on them. And this novel is perhaps not such good art, but it is what they want, need, more or less.
>
> (01 ii 1913)

Lawrence told Garnett about his writing that would in three years time become *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. To Lawrence who felt a strong commitment to the society he lived in, he thought he should contribute to the world a work of art that would help lead people out of the labyrinth of chaotic confusion and human barrenness of technological development and industrial progress.

Unlike *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence's new literary campaign would "answer to the want of today" for he believes that the novel is "a means of both changing and remaking its audience" (Worthen 49). In "Why the Novel Matters," Lawrence champions the reading of a novel as the supreme antidote to life without "living".

> The novel is the one bright book of life. Books are not life. They are only tremulations on the ether. But the novel as a tremulation can make the whole man alive tremble. Which is more than poetry, philosophy, science, or any other book-tremulation can do.
>
> ("Why the Novel Matters" 536)

In reading novels, Lawrence truly believes, the audience will be "trembling with life and the wisdom of life," and, thus, it can alter the audience's dead feelings, discard the old skin of barrenness and in its place, restore the natural disposition. As far as *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* are concerned, Lawrence offers his audience in England and the wider world "not […] just what they fancy they want [….but] what they want, need, more or less."

In the letter to his former Croydon colleague, A. W. McLeod, in 1913, Lawrence wrote with such exactness:

> I do so break my heart over England when I read *The New Machievelli*. And I am so sure that only through a readjustment between men and women, and a making free and healthy of this sex, will she get out of her present atrophy.
>
> (23 iv 1913)

As much as his artistic seriousness is committed to the use of the novel as a means to free its audience's mind, Lawrence's literary imagination is as much firmed on the

thought of the readjustment of gender relations and sexual experience as significant themes in his novels. Such adjustment is believed by Lawrence to be a pressing necessity considering the state in which England was in at the time. Having seen England in "her present atrophy," Lawrence felt compelled with an artistic responsibility to record that state in his *new* novel and present "a tremulation" of life and living as a counterforce. According to Pinion in *A D. H. Lawrence Companion*, *The Rainbow* significantly registers "corruptive processes" in an industrialised society which "had started the First World War" (150).

Extensively, these "corruptive processes" are presented in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* in the form of industrialisation and warfare as the major forces in a society that work towards disintegrating people at the core of their very human existence. It is, therefore, fair to assume that the age Lawrence is trying to depict in long narratives of the two novels is the age of disintegration. Having been exemplified in depth in the novels, human beings in the current of technological and industrial advancement at the time are progressively threatened by the dehumanising and crippling effects of industrialisation and modern culture of lifeless futility. The worst effect of all will result in the internal disintegration in which human beings are disconnected from their own humanity and their spontaneity including their relationship with other human beings, the effect of which Lawrence most fears. In this chapter, the discussion will begin with Lawrence's representation of the pastoral Midlands England that runs parallel to the modernised world of industries. By focusing on the physical, psychological and spiritual health of human beings, the impact of industrialism and warfare ideology will be shown to have caused greater damage to human sexuality as well as their own individuality.

The dehumanisation of technological and industrial modernity is a relatively universal theme among Lawrence's contemporaries. Eliot, for instance, tackles the dehumanising effects of industrial modernity as best exemplified in his most perplexing poem, *The Waste Land*.

> Unreal City
>
> Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
>
> A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
>
> I had not thought death had undone so many.
>
> Signs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,
>
> And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.
>
> Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
>
> To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours
>
> With the dead sound of the final stroke of nine.

Despite Eliot's "virulent denial of Lawrence's artistic merits" and the perceived disparity between the two authors[1], the lines quoted above indicate the similarities between both writers' literary imagination [2] (Zubizarreta 64). In *The Rainbow* Lawrence himself describes the experience in the increasingly industrialised town of Wiggiston as "unreal."

> The place had the strange desolation of a ruin. Colliers hanging about in gangs and groups, or passing along the asphalt pavements heavily to

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1 In, for instance, *After Strange Gods* (1934) including his preface to Fr. William Tiverton's *D. H. Lawrence and Human Existence*, Eliot criticises Lawrence as a man characterised by "acute sensibility, violent prejudice and passions, and lack of intellectual and social training" and his works as being carelessly unrefined (*After Strange Gods: A Primer of Modern Heresy* 59).

2 John Zubizarreta reveals in "T. S. Eliot and D. H. Lawrence: the Relationship and Influence" (1993) that regardless of the feud between Eliot and Lawrence there exist similarities in themes and influences concerning literary techniques and ideas between the two writers.

> work, seemed not like living people, but like spectres. The rigidity of the blank streets, the homogeneous amorphous sterility of the whole suggested death rather than life. There was no meeting place, no centre, no artery, no organic formation. There it lay, like the new foundations of a red-brick confusion rapidly spreading, like a skin-disease. (*The Rainbow* 320)

When the living people who are coal-mine workers in the industrialised town of Wiggiston appear not like human beings but rather "spectres", representing death rather than life, the scene evokes an immensely glaring sense of unreality on the beholders. At this point, Lawrence underlines the lost quality of humanness in these workers by depicting them as "spectres". To Lawrence as well as Eliot, a modernised and industrialised society does not entail economic prosperity, financial stability, and societal progress alone. There are other attendant effects in the more industrialised and modernised way of living. What factory and mine work will do to those who labour in such industries is more damaging than it can be reprimanded by the low wages these labourers are paid for.

Aside from the physical deterioration of health due to the excessive inhalation of toxic gas, coal dust and other small particles of filthy dirt, the repetition of menial works in factories and mines will result in the crushing and pressing of human mind that sooner or later the last particle of life would be squeezed out of the body. Human beings would become like machines working with no mind of their own. Eliot also represents this idea through the lines: "Signs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,/ And each man fixed his eyes before his feet", to emphasise the monotonous and dehumanising way of living in the modern world. Like Eliot, Lawrence's prose

heightens the palpable sight of sterility and death while he is trying to display the horror of such an industrialised town.

To Lawrence, these are "visions of pure ugliness" that seriously lacks a touch of life and spirituality. However, Lawrence does not jump immediately to the horrifying experiences of industrial workers in his representation of the dehumanisation of industrial life. His way of showing it is to open the novel, *The Rainbow*, with an enduring image of the pastoral Midlands that soon will have to give way to the damaging industrialisation. In a few long paragraphs with nostalgic sentiments, Lawrence accomplishes in not only establishing the central setting of his novel, but also in it, the sense of loss and looming destruction. "The Brangwens had lived for generations on the Marsh Farm, in the meadows where the Erewash twisted sluggishly through alder trees, separating Derbyshire from Nottinghamshire": these words are the opening lines of *The Rainbow*, immediately establishing the Brangwens in the old pastoral life of the Midlands. Following such opening is the elaboration of their life in the natural surrounding that will soon begin to change.

> The young corn waved and was silken, and the lustre slid along the limbs of the men who saw it. They took the udder of the cows, the cows yielded milk and pulse against the hands of the men, the pulse of the blood of the teats of the cows beat into the pulse of the hands of the men. They mounted their horses, and held life between the grip of their knees, they harnessed their horses at the wagon, and, with hand on the bridle-rings, drew the heaving of the horses after their will.
>
> (*The Rainbow* 10)

Lawrence does not simply display the scene of rural England as the ideal place to which human beings return to seek solace. On the contrary, the rural scene implies the Brangwens' life and their "inter-relations" with their natural surroundings. In nature, Lawrence depicts, there is life. And in living amidst it, human beings are always in touch with the natural living force. By having traces of modernity in the form of mining and modern transportations intruded into the scene, Lawrence emphasises the "disruption of the natural flow" and human beings are, thus, divorced to their organic vitality from within and from without (Draper 24).

Within three pages afterwards, Lawrence introduces the industrial development that has occurred in the town the Brangwens are living. In 1840, the year in which the narrative roughly begins, London and Midland railway construction appears in Ilkeston and soon reaches Erewarsh spur in 1847 (*The Rainbow* 13). Instead of only portraying the ugliness of the industrial invasion upon the rural Midlands, Lawrence reveals the psychological horror of the Brangwens who, despite living "just on the safe side of civilisation," witness the gradually increasing change all along.

> At first the Brangwens were astonished by all this commotion around them. The building of a canal across their land made them strangers in their own place, this raw bank of earth shutting them off disconcerted them. As they worked in the fields, from beyond the now familiar embankment came the rhythmic run of the winding engines, startling at first, but afterwards a narcotic to the brain. Then the shrill whistle of the trains re-echoed through the heart, with fearsome pleasure, announcing the far-off come near and imminent. (*The Rainbow* 14)

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A vivid sense of estrangedness in their own land emerges uneasily in the consciousness of the Brangwens. Instead of the pleasant panorama of natural landscape, the vision is completely changed into "a colliery spinning away in the distance, and further, red, crude houses plastered on the valley in masses, and beyond all, the dim smoking hill of the town" (*The Rainbow* 14). They are altogether startled and disconcerted at such a sight. The air is filled with black smoke and the land is "plastered" with collier houses. What's more, the grinding sound of the machine which is thought at first to be "rhythmic" becomes "narcotic" to the brains of the listeners. In doing so, Lawrence makes sure the effect of such change does not just stop at the natural landscape of the town's environment, but extends to include the physical and psychological health of the town inhabitants as well.

Upon the arrival of the new way of living in the form of factory and mine work, people begin to leave behind their farm lives. Industrial work may have given the town's inhabitants more opportunities in learning and working, but, as Lawrence exposes here and there, people also suffer a great deal from this industrialised way of living. Take the Brangwen boys for example. Alfred whose skill of drawing enables him to become "a draughtsman in a lace-factory in Nottingham" grows to be "rigid, a rare-spoken, almost surly man" (*The Rainbow* 15). Two generations later, Tom Brangwens, Ursula's uncle, manages the "big new colliery in Yorkshire." In the chapter, "Shame," Tom is revealed to be everything but a sound, soft-hearted human being. What is left is "a disintegrated lifelessness of soul," of which Ursula is, upon her brief visit, frightened.

> He (Tom Brangwen) no longer cared about anything on earth, neither man nor woman, nor God nor humanity. He had come to a stability of

> nullification. He did not care any more, neither about his body nor about his soul. […] Only the simple, superficial fact of living persisted. He was still healthy. He lived. Therefore he would fill each moment. […] When he was in the absolute privacy of his own life, he did as he pleased, unscrupulous, without any ulterior thought. He believed neither in good nor evil. Each moment was like a separate little island, isolated from time, and blank, unconditioned by time.
>
> (*The Rainbow* 319-20)

Tom has been for the past years like a skeleton of lifelessness and hollowness. Although it is not directly stated in the narrative, it is not impossible to account the change of personality and disposition of Tom by the change of life and way of living. He has for many years been living the monotonous life of a colliery master in "a large new house of red-brick standing outside a mass of homogeneous red-brick dwellings called Wiggiston" (*The Rainbow* 320). As much as "the large new house" itself does not differ in the least from the "homogeneous red-brick dwelling" with only small exception of the size, the man who has lived in it is not different from those lifeless "spectres" hanging about the industrial town either.

This horrifying knowledge of her own uncle sits uneasily in Ursula's mind throughout her short stay at the town. However, Lawrence as a miner's son who has undergone suffering and hardship of an industrial life with his family does not stop at the changes on the individual disposition in his criticism of "the monstrous mechanism" of an industrial life. Later, in Ursula's intense conversation with her uncle, Tom, Lawrence exposes the destructive ideology and industrial mentality in the

tragic loss of Mrs Smith's husband, Tom's "fair-haired, good-looking young" house servant. Tom narrates the life of Mrs Smith in a matter-of-fact manner:

> "She is a widow. Her husband died of consumption a little while ago." Brangwen gave a sinister little laugh. "He lay there in the house-place at her mother's, and five or six other people in the house and died very gradually. I asked her if his death wasn't a great trouble to her. 'Well,' she said, 'he was very fretful towards the last, never satisfied, never easy, always fret-fretting, an' never knowing what would satisfy him. So in one way it was a relief when it was over – got him and for everybody.' – They had only been married two years, and she has one boy. I asked her if she hadn't been very happy. 'Oh, yes sir, we was very comfortable at first, till he took bad – oh, we was very comfortable – oh yes – ! But you see – you get used to it. I've had my father an' two brothers go off just the same. You get used to it.'"
>
> (*The Rainbow* 323)

In an extremely compacted worker-house, Mrs Smith's husband dies of consumption. Not to mention the harsh condition of living, Lawrence reveals the tragic truth in this exchange between uncle and niece that love or emotional attachment between husband and wife does not even exist. Mrs Smith takes her husband's death with much indifference. By the way in which she recounts her experiences and the loss of her husband to Tom, it is almost as if it were done mechanically without any deep, meaningful affection. It is fair to think that one driving reason for such a lack of emotion and attachment is that the loss of life happens too much often among industrial families: "But you see – you get used to it. I've had my father an' two

brothers go off just the same. You get used to it." Therefore, such loss can be accounted for Mrs Smith's emotional numbness and lack of sympathy.

At the core of industrial practice is the dehumanising ideology that has been to keep the working-class labourers satisfied with what little they make and have in life and what much more they lose. Immediately after the quoted narrative of Mrs Smith's loss of her husband, Tom tells Ursula and Winifred about Mrs Smith's upcoming remarriage: "She'll be getting married again directly. One man or another – it doesn't matter very much. They're all colliers" (*The Rainbow* 323). Ursula is even more horrified at the statement, but continues to listen to Tom's monotonous explanation.

> "It is with the women as with us," he replied. "Her husband was John Smith, loader. We reckoned him as a loader, he reckoned himself as a loader, and so she knew he represented his job. Marriage and home is a little side-show. The women know it right enough, and take it for what it's worth. One man or another, it doesn't matter all the world. The pit matters. […] Every man his own little side-shows, his home, but the pit owns every man. The women have what is left. What's left of this man, or what is left of that – it doesn't matter altogether. The pit takes all that really matters." (*The Rainbow* 323)

Victorian discourse of industrialisation has it that every man must be reduced to its most functioning part of the machine. What life is there in a man does not matter so long as a man can work and produce in a factory or in a miner. Human beings as seen in this talk are reduced to the point of being dehumanised. John Smith is no longer John Smith but a loader, his functioning position in the mine he works. In other words, workers like Smith, as Lawrence is trying to display, are dehumanised by the pits they

are working in. This idea is also similarly discussed in *Women in Love* in which the integral human part of the person has been so much reduced to mere nothingness that each man has lost his essentially individual significance and character. In short, one man is not so much different from the other; they have all been made into the instrument of the machine: "One man or another, it doesn't matter all the world. The pit matters"

What's more, while life at the mine becomes the central stage in which all workers must *perform* at the cost of their own humanity, home and marriage become less, if not at all, significant. Home and marriage where sparks of life and relationship flourish dim away their influential gradation to man's life and become "a little side-show" because now the machine and the pit own the man. Accordingly, it would have been a wonder if Mrs Smith has any feeling at all toward the loss of the man she had married. It is also worth noting that without such emotional attachment in the family, industrialisation has weakened, if not completely wrecked, the very foundation of life and relationship. Satisfaction and indifference can very well be discerned from the passage. As human beings like John Smith are reduced to mere mechanical parts in the mines or the pits, Mrs Smith is still satisfied with what has become of her husband not only because she is emotionless and lacking physical attachment to the man, but also because she has taken him "for what it's worth." Therefore, in her indifference towards her husband's dehumanising state, she is satisfied with what she will get weekly from his work's wages no matter how unfairly low it is. At this point, Lawrence is extending his criticism of industrialisation to encompass the inevitable attendant social inclination towards capitalism.

Winifred remarks after hearing Tom speaking of Mrs Smith: "It is the same everywhere […] It is the office, or the shop or the business that gets the man, the woman gets the bit the shop can't digest. What is he, at home, a man? He is a meaningless lump – a standing machine, a machine out of work" (*The Rainbow* 323-24). The lines advocate the very same idea of "monstrous mechanism" of industrialisation in England at large. Industrialisation underpins all of the important ideas of unrelenting economic prosperity, social and cultural progress, listless energy and creativity. Therefore, people who are more inclined towards enduring such harsh and lifeless conditions of living would have wanted some monetary compensation in return to ensure the continuation of their "superficial" living as is the case with Tom despite his awareness of the scale of destruction industrial work would bring to men. What can also be detected from Winifred's lines confirms the idea that the dehumanised and mechanised industrial workers, when out of work from factory or the pit, do not return to their original being. The damage that the machine has done is so tremendous that a return to such organic existence is a probability, if not an impossibility, that is hard to come by. Thus, workers remain an inactive "standing machine" whenever they are out of work and at home. What is left for the woman at home is the "meaningless lump" that the machine cannot digest. So, it is understandable that Mrs Smith with her lack of emotional attachment to her husband is not to blame. She herself can hardly have the luxury to *live* with her machine-like husband, let alone her sadness incurred at the loss of his life, or, in this case, of the machine for Smith's last bit of life must have been squeezed out of his body long before his physical death.

The long talk results in Ursula's growing hatred of the once-beloved uncle. She has learned from the visit how much she differs from Winifred and her uncle. Not long before this scene, she feels specially attached to the two characters. Right at this point, however, Lawrence makes a sharp departure of Ursula from these two who eventually marry each other:"Then she [Ursula] recovered, felt herself in a great loneliness, wherein she was sad but free. She had departed. No more would she subscribe to the great colliery, to the great machine which has taken us all captives" (*The Rainbow* 324). The protagonist even notices that the marriage between Winifred and Tom is possible one way because when they first meet each other, Tom detects "in her [Winifred] a kinship with his own dark corruption" (*The Rainbow* 322) and in the other way because actually Tom's "real mistress" is not Winifred but "the machine" implying that his real attachment is with the machine he is working with and also, figuratively, with the mechanised Winifred (*The Rainbow* 325).

This episode in *The Rainbow* is held to be very important in Lawrence's criticism of the "monstrous mechanism" of industrialisation. However, this scene can be read as a resonance of thought that has been earlier presented in the narrative as the foregrounding fundamental ideology that has led to the outbreak of wars in modern British history. Lawrence truly believes that such industrial practice and ideology is what has prepared England for the participation in wars, especially World War I. As the original conception and composition of *The Rainbow* occurred before 1914, many critics like Pinion believe the novel to be Lawrence's "'pre-war statement'" (150). From 1850 onwards, Britain was involved in several military conflicts. From 1853 to 1856 the Crimean War cast a dark shadow over Europe. After that, there were two occurrences of the Boer Wars, one of which is narrated in *The Rainbow*. The Boer

Wars began from 1880 to 1881 and, once more, from 1899 to 1902 by the British Empire against two independent Boer Republics, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic. In *The Rainbow*, in October 1899 British Empire declares war against Boers in South Africa, the war in which Anton Shrebensky willingly participates.

Although it is the Boer Wars that appear to have caused a breach in the relationship between the two individuals in *The Rainbow*, Anton Shrebensky and Ursula Brangwen, it is important that the sentiment Lawrence expresses in writing about this piece of history is very much colored and tinged in a great degree with his growing hatred of the ongoing warfare in the society at the time of his writing. Having seen enough of the pointlessness of the endless ongoing of World War I, Lawrence became impatient and depressed about what he viewed as the mad occurrence. As the rewriting of the novels including *Women in Love* began during wartime (1916-1917) at the height of the Great War, it is only natural that the author would input his own attitude and thought of the ongoing war of his time and what he saw in his society in the writing of the Boer war which happened only a decade before.

As it is narrated, Anton has to leave for South Africa in 1899 because of the outbreak of the second Boer War. While Anton represents military conformity, Ursula, on the other hand, utters in resentment her attitude towards war: “The idea of war altogether made her feel uneasy, uneasy. When men began organised fighting with each other it seemed to her as if the poles of the universe were cracking, and the whole might go tumbling into the bottomless pit” (*The Rainbow* 303). Filled with such sentiment towards war, Ursula radically disagrees with Anton’s extreme attitude towards the practice of warfare.

> He [Anton] went about at his duties, giving himself up to them. At the bottom of his heart his self, the soul that aspired and had true hope of self-effectuation lay as dead, still-born, a dead weight in his womb. Who was he, to hold important his personal connections? What did a man matter, personally? He was just a brick in the whole great social fabric, the nation, the modern humanity. His personal movements were small, and entirely subsidiary. […] What did personal intimacy matter? One had to fill one's place in the whole, the great scheme of man's elaborate civilisation, that was all. The Whole mattered – but the unit, the person, had no importance, except as he represented the Whole.
>
> (*The Rainbow* 304)

Nationalism and patriotism find a way in which to manipulate the general public and individual men like Anton to their greater advantage. Through education which Lawrence himself views as one of the destructive systems in *The Rainbow*, "the ideal of national unity" has been asserted to help boost the patriotic love for the nation (Beckett 8). National identity, in extension, is a means in which propagandist campaigns aim to use in order to unite the mass of individuals under the same homogeneous umbrella. The passage above reveals that the political campaigns are aiming at the cost of the nation's citizens' individuality to mold the individuals into the great national "Whole" (Beckett 8). Disposed of individual worth, the insertion of the national identity over each individual diminishes the intrinsic human right and personality. This practice of the war is nothing different from the blurring of the division between human beings and the machine in factories which the Industrial Revolution helped establish.

People with their flesh and blood become non-entities. Anton disregards his own "personal connections" and asks, "Who was he, to hold important his personal connections? What did a man matter personally?" In the same way as what industrialisation has done to Mr and Mrs Smith, Anton cannot grasp his own value and significance without attaching himself to, and, thereby, having diminished in, the great national "Whole." Personal feeling and relationship do not matter. That is the reason why he can depart so willingly and readily for war leaving behind Ursula: "His personal movements were small, and entirely subsidiary." Individual worth is, the passage seems to suggest, dismissed altogether in order to accomplish persuading people in the fight for a constructed national identity: "To his own intrinsic life, he was dead. And he could not rise again from the dead. His soul lay in the tomb. His life lay in the established order of things" (*The Rainbow* 304). Like Mrs Smith who endures the loss of her husband's life without much difficulty, Anton "went his way, serving what he had to serve, and enduring what he had to endure, without remark" (*The Rainbow* 304). At the end, Anton, young and passionate as he used to be, becomes, if with any valuable quality at all, a mere representation of "the Whole". His own disposition diminished completely, therefore, the man returns after years of war experience and becomes dependent, superficial and lost in his own off-war insignificant self.

The diminishing of individual values and humanity that had been established at the advent of the Industrial Revolution takes its deeper root in the eruption of World War I. It conveniently gives Lawrence room to criticise both the practice and the damage of such ideology upon the life of living human beings. Industrialism, nationalism and patriotism help nourish the ideal construction of unity dismissing

minute individual worth at whatever cost. Especially in the case of Anton and his war responsibilities, it does not only destroy his own organic and self-sufficient existence, it erases his own entire being for he is so visually impaired that he cannot even conceive his own self independent from the greater "Whole." His deep attachment to the ideal of unity and the greater Nation is unobtrusively impossible to neglect. This is also significant in the way that it points directly to how Lawrence sees each of his individual characters in *The Rainbow* in connection with the world at large. Anton lacks the living balance of detachment and attachment. His own existence depends very much, almost entirely, on the existence of the nation. His blind association and attachment to the greater "Whole" maims his vision and life. Eventually, it is because of this living imbalance that results in his breakup with Ursula.

The effect of such dehumanising ideology and industrial practice is further exemplified in the psychological exploration of the character of Gerald Crich in *Women in Love*. The revelation of the character's inner conflict and how the man has gone to a great length in order to thwart it allows Lawrence to tackle the problem of industrialism and war ideology on the human psyche. Young as he may be, it is not presumptuous to say that Gerald has become, during the course of the novel, the apt representation of the Victorian ideal. He possesses all the qualities the Victorian society values in a young gentleman such as gentility, adventurous spirit, conformity, and industrial yearning for unrelenting progress. He used to be a soldier and an explorer. As *Women in Love* begins its course, Gerald has already managed his family's business of coal mines. He also possesses an adventurous spirit of the age as explorer, which is what he does after the war. Therefore, he is more like a combination of Tom who is an industrialist and Anton who is an officer in the army.

On the symbolic level, he becomes, therefore, a living embodiment of industrial mentality.

The readers find him in the novel as a relatively good-hearted gentleman who has lived his carefree life with friends in London. Little do they know about the man, until Lawrence reveals Gerald in his own reflection in the mirror some two hundred pages afterwards that there is something dark or sinister in the man's soul.

> And once or twice lately, when he was alone in the evening and had nothing to do, he had suddenly stood up in terror, not knowing what he was. And he went to the mirror and looked long and closely at his own face, at his own eyes, seeking for something. He was afraid, in mortal dry fear, but he knew not what of. He looked at his own face. There it was, shapely and healthy and the same as ever, yet somehow, it was not real, it was a mask. He dared not touch it, for fear it should prove to be only a composition mask. His eyes were blue and keen as ever, and as firm in their sockets. Yet he was not sure that they were not blue false bubbles that would burst in a moment and leave clear annihilation. He could see the darkness in them, as if they were only bubbles of darkness. He was afraid that one day he would break down and be a purely meaningless babble lapping round a darkness.
>
> (*Women in Love* 232)

The reflection in the mirror frightens Gerald. As he gazes into his own eyes in search of a sign of life, what is reflected back to him is a blazing shield of darkness and of "clear annihilation." Although his external appearance, his look, or his face, remain as healthy and firm as ever, the young industrialist is painfully aware of the hollowness

within. “Terror” and “dry fear” seize his heart with a firm suffocating grip. Even the healthiness and firmness of skin could have been just a delusion of perfect health while in fact the man is disintegrated from within.

Industrialisation, as presented by Lawrence, becomes the key instrument in disintegrating the life of Gerald. It has replaced Gerald’s sparks and traces of life shown in his eyes with the blackness and blankness of the mechanical.

> It was the first great step in undoing, the first great phase of chaos, the substitution of the mechanical principle for the organic, the destruction of the organic purpose, the organic unity, and the subordination of every organic unit to the great mechanical purpose. It was pure organic disintegration and pure mechanical organization. (*Women in Love* 231)

As the workers like John Smith are reduced to mere instruments in the great wheel of the machine, Gerald himself, as the industrial master, becomes “mere mechanical [instrument] (*Women in Love* 230). He himself at one point seems to realise this “undoing of the machine, but Gerald is well indulged in the industrial power as he lays “hold of the world”: “It was like being part of a machine. He himself happened to be a controlling, central part, the masses of men were the parts variously controlled” (*Women in Love* 222, 27).

This moment of introspection and self-reflection allows Lawrence time and space to study the effects of industrialism and ways in which one can find proper treatment. Gerald himself knows very well that something has to be done quickly or else he would “break down and be a purely meaningless babble lapping round a darkness.”

> […] inside this hollow shell was all the darkness and fearful space of death, he knew he would have to find reinforcements, otherwise he would collapse inwards upon the great dark void which circled at the centre of his soul. […] He would have to find something to make good the equilibrium. (*Women in Love* 322)

His way of "reinforcement" and "to make good the equilibrium" is found in his sexual relationship with women. At this point, Lawrence permits Gerald to fulfill his desire only to criticise it at the end. Before he used to find sexual satisfaction from "desperate women" (*Women in Love* 233), but later on the man feels at the disintegrated core of his soul that the damage within is too great that such a superficial relationship could not counter it.

Women appear to Gerald as an instrument or a means in which his senses "could be physically roused" and cured. Gudrun Brangwen is Gerald's new target. She is an intelligent young woman who has quite an unconventional way of living and seeing the world. The opportunity opens its way for Gerald to establish a meaningful relationship with Gudrun. However, Gerald's love and his intimate touch suffocate Gudrun. Carolyn Tilghman in "Unruly Desire, Domestic Authority, and Odd Coupling in D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*" describes the scene in which Gerald, with his violent desire, visits Gudrun at night in "Death and Love" as his forceful "penetration of Gudrun's domestic space" (96). As soon as Gerald crosses the threshold of Gudrun's bedroom, he seems to forcefully assert his power and will over the woman in order to possess and own her.

> His arms were fast round her, he seemed to be gathering her into himself, her warmth, her softness, her adorable weight, drinking in the

> suffusion of her physical being, avidly. He lifted her, and seemed to pour her into himself, like wine into a cup. (*Women in Love* 331)

This scene of intimate confrontation is portrayed almost as if Gudrun's every trace of life and liveliness would be depleted and sucked out of her own body. It is as though Gerald is more hungry and thirsty for life than he outwardly appears to be.

With sexual contact with Gudrun, Gerald wishes to revive his benumbed sense not knowing what is happening to his own partner.

> All his veins, that were murdered and lacerated, healed softly as life came pulsing in, stealing invisibly in to him as if it were the all-powerful effluence of the sun. His blood, which seemed to have been drawn back to death, came ebbing on the return, surely, beautifully, powerfully.
>
> He felt his limbs growing fuller and flexible with life, his body gained an unknown strength. He was a man again, strong and rounded.
>
> (*Women in Love* 344)

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The fulfillment and satisfaction are only one-sided. Lawrence is carefully depicting the scene showing only what and how Gerald feels. What is previously "murdered and lacerated" by industrial lifelessness is momentarily restored back to life.

Immediately following this scene after Gerald has gone to sleep in Gudrun's arms, the narrative voice moves back to the woman whose presence after all this time is forgotten and remains unnoticeable. The way Lawrence depicts the scene underscores a sense of separation between the two characters in their sexual intimacy both in terms of satisfaction and consciousness. Unlike Gerald who is fast asleep, Gudrun with an acute sense of uneasiness cannot rest. She "lay wide awake […]

motionless, with wide eyes staring motionless into the darkness, whilst he [Gerald] was sunk away in sleep, his arms round her" (*Women in Love* 345). Gudrun has to wait for her release at the arrival of the last hour of the night. To be with him, the woman is burdened with fear that his willful and hungry self should consume her. Thinking only of her usefulness and his own "equilibrium," Gerald fails what he sets out to do in the first place because while he feels "full and complete, perfected," Gudrun, on the other hand, is left feeling suffocated and annihilated.

A feminist critic, Kate Millet, attacks Lawrence on what she sees as his sexist representation of women, arguing that Lawrence always "produces powerful feelings of hostility and a negative attitude toward women" in the characterisations of the female characters in his novels (257). Concerning Gerald and Gudrun, Lawrence portrays Gudrun as an unconventional woman and, yet, she is being used by Gerald. On the other hand, Gerald is being defended in many scenes by Birkin whom Millet reckons to be Lawrence's personage (262). However, it is not fair to Lawrence to consider such scenes or the others without taking into consideration the author's wider perception of industrial mentality. For example, the impact of industrial mentality to human psyche is shown in sexual terms through Gerald's sexual aggression and violence as he sexually forces and reduces Gudrun into his instrument of desire. Moreover, it is revealed upon close examination of the characterisation of Gerald that Lawrence allows Gerald to sexually use Gudrun only to undermine his industrial mentality and criticise, to a great extent, the dehumanising effect of industrialism, the destructive of which is not limited to the victim of an upholder of industrial ideology like Gerald. In other words, Gerald is also victimised by the very industrial attitude he possesses.

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As has been mentioned earlier that Gerald enjoys very much the powerful position as an industrial master, his sexually improper activity with Gudrun is believed to be twofold in significance. On the first level, concerning sexual intimacy, it is depicted through this scene Lawrence's firm belief in the regeneration of life through sexual intercourse. However, Gerald's sexual practice is of a corrupt and consuming nature. It is not the kind of regenerating sex Lawrence most values. That will lead to the other level of Lawrence's criticism of industrialisation. To Gerald who is a proud miner, he holds above all else the esteem of his industrial being and his willful mind.

> Four raw new towns, and many ugly industrial hamlets were crowded under his dependence. He saw the stream of miners flowing along the causeways from the mines at the end of the afternoon, thousands of blackened, slightly distorted human beings with red mouths, all moving subjugate to his will. (*Women in Love* 222)

Although the man notices the ugliness and distortion of human beings and scenes before him, they do not stop him from submitting himself to such enterprise. On the other hand, Gerald does not mind that much so long as they are the solid proof of his power and will. Industrial production including its "blackened distorted human beings with red mouths", in other words, becomes the everyday living indicators of his absolute control over the earth.

This revelation at the heart of an industrialist implies that it is neither the money nor the social position that Gerald mostly aspires for. It is, on the contrary, the opportunity to reveal to the wider world the scale of which his will can command.

This industrial attitude is presented in the novel as the destructive force that initiates in the same way as it prolongs the wars.

> And it was his will to subjugate Matter to his own ends. The subjugation itself was the point, the fight was the be-all, the fruit of victory were mere results. He did not care about money, fundamentally. He was neither ostentatious nor luxurious, neither did he care about social position, not finally. What he wanted was the pure fulfilment of his own will in the struggle with the natural conditions. His will was now, to take the coal out of the earth, profitably.
>
> (*Women in Love* 223-24)

The life of working miners is of little importance to Gerald. All that matters to him is his own willful self and industrial power and at this fault Lawrence relates Gerald's industrial mentality to his taking advantages of Gudrun in their sexual relationship. To him, Gudrun is his "mere instrumentality of the individual" who comes to usefulness only when such condition reveals itself necessary (*Women in Love* 223). Gerald's oppressive will and possessiveness threaten to consume Gudrun. He wants to possess her entirely, to subjugate her under his will, and to neglect all the while the conditions to which he has reduced her to be. Therefore, it is not Gerald who is the final target of Lawrence's criticism. It is, after all, not entirely his fault. He, who has tried his hand in the colonial and industrial enterprise, has also given himself entirely in and became one of industrialism's victim. Although he is also the one who perpetuates such a mentality and practice, he is not different from the mechanical instrument he has reduced others to be.

It is fairly adequate to conclude at this point that what Lawrence sees in his own contemporary world from the increasingly industrialised mid-nineteenth century Britain before and after the period of World War I has been graphically registered in the author's own artistic creations of *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. Having firmly believed that progressive industrialisation in his own country is the root of the problematic state Britain is in, Lawrence explores such social and cultural phenomena in his profound exploration of industrial practice and mentality entirely permeated the English metropolitan as well as provincial scenes. Lawrence's central argument lies at the disintegration of the human integral part at the dehumanising hand of industrialisation. In his exploration of such a destructive force, Lawrence reveals the deterioration of human physical and psychological health. The author also portrays in great detail the combined force of industrialism and capitalism at the cost of human organic sensibility. Additionally, industrial masters as well as workers become the mechanical instrument in this modernised mode of living and working. What is more interesting is how Lawrence links this industrial mentality to Britain's declaration of wars against other nations. Lawrence argues that this industrial system is so destructive that it does not only supply World War I with technological and industrial products, but it, in fact, is the key force that initiates conflicts in the first place. Moreover, Lawrence also explores in great length sexual intimacy between men and women, which has been damaged by industrialism and warfare. As exemplified in Anton and Ursula's intimate relationship, industrial and war mentality introduces a serious breach in their relationship and, eventually, terminates it. Such tension also occurs between Gerald and Gudrun in which Lawrence notes the devastating effect of industrial mentality to the human psyche in sexual terms.

In the next chapter, the discussion will continue contending that the effect of industrial modernity includes more variation of sexual activities that has become oppressive and exploitative. Aside from that, chapter III also discusses in great depth the other form of sexual intimacy which is positive and meaningful. This sexual experience will, upon demonstration, counter the physical as well as spiritual damage from the industrial mentality and technological warfare.

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CHAPTER III
"A HOLY CONNECTION":
THE POLITICS OF SEX AND SENSUALITY
IN *THE RAINBOW* AND *WOMEN IN LOVE*

Women in Love is regarded as the sequel to D. H. Lawrence's previous novel, *The Rainbow*. After many revisions and transformations, the book was finally available only to subscribers. Originally intended to be a single novel, *Women in Love* starts off at where *The Rainbow* finishes. The narrative follows the life of Ursula Brangwen and her sister, Gudrun Brangwen. However, considering the concluding chapter of *The Rainbow* and the narrative dimension of *Women in Love,* perhaps it is not fair to assume such continuity of the two novels.

The narrative may have been built around the same set of families and characters, yet the stylistic pronouncement and the narrative conviction takes on an entirely new course. At the final chapter of *The Rainbow*, Lawrence ends the novel with the image of a rainbow towering over the earth symbolising a sense of brightness and hope the author himself had towards the society he lived in.

> And the rainbow stood on the earth. She knew that the sordid people who crept hard-scaled and separate on the face of the world's corruption were living still, that the rainbow was arched in their blood and would quiver to life in their spirit, that they would cast off their horny covering of disintegration, that new, clean, naked bodies would

> issue to a new germination, to a new growth, rising to the light and the wind and the clean rain of heaven. She saw in the rainbow the earth's new architecture, the old, brittle corruption of houses and factories swept away, the world built up in a living fabric of Truth, fitting to the over-arching heaven. (*The Rainbow* 458-59)

Such are the words Lawrence chooses to end *The Rainbow*. Upon seeing "a band of faint iridescence colouring in faint colours" (*The Rainbow* 458), Ursula's "heart anguished with hope." Having just been rejected by Anton and miscarried a child, Ursula's otherwise unfortunate future seems to be brightened up and hopeful at the sight of "the rainbow forming itself" (*The Rainbow* 458). To a Romantic poet, William Wordsworth, a rainbow famously figures as the symbol of natural beauty and a revealed hope. It also signals a fresh start and a new beginning. Even from the first book of Genesis (9:12-16) and the last book of Revelation (4:1-3), the rainbow has always been considered to represent hope and a promising future. Many critics link Wordsworth's rainbow to Noah's suggesting the similarity of the rainbow vision which has come to encompass the continuation and survival of mankind. To Lawrence himself, the image of the rainbow represents his "final social optimism" that he wished to "communicate to the people of England in the summer of 1915," almost a year after the Great War had started (Worthen 83). It is, however, his hope, regardless of the massive scale of destruction caused by the First World War in less than a year after its outbreak, to envision mankind's survival and a promising continuity of life afterwards.

However, after many years of rewritings and revisions of *Women in Love*, Lawrence's social and political sentiment is changed completely. By that time, he has

faced many difficulties in life. In late 1915, not long after its publication, *The Rainbow* was persecuted for obscenity and not for eleven years available in England, although it had been circulated privately in the United States of America. All unsold copies of his book were seized and burnt. Lawrence was dramatically hurt by such treatment. Additionally, by the end of 1915 and the beginning of 1916, Lawrence began to see vividly and painfully the pointlessness and senselessness of World War I. Having seen enough of it, Lawrence saw the war as a pure mad incident as many soldiers, officials as well as civilians had been randomly slaughtered for no clear purpose whatsoever. The atrocity of the war rendered within the young author the piquant sense of depression and hopelessness toward the world and humanity at large. This sentiment in relation to the war crisis is noted among critics as well as scholars to be one of the prominent themes in *Women in Love* as it is extensively discussed by Anne Wright in *Literature of Crisis, 1910-22*.

Having been hopeless and depressed from the mad ongoing of the war, Lawrence, thus, wanted to live outside England, to be completely away from what he views as England's state of "atrophy." His wish, in other words, was to build a community[1] outside English society, where Lawrence and a small group of his followers could achieve spiritual satisfaction and regeneration. This strong sentiment of rejection towards his own society appears in *Women in Love* in the character of Rupert Birkin: "'The whole idea is dead. Humanity itself is dry-rotten really'" (*Women in Love* 126).

[1] Lawrence's proposed *rananim* or an ideal community that exists outside England and away from the atrocities of the Great War was first introduced in 1915. Lawrence intended to build this ideal community in Florida, America before the idea was eventually abandoned.

> "But I abhor humanity, I wish it was swept away. It could go, and there would be no absolute loss, if every man being perished tomorrow. The reality would be untouched. Nay, it would be better. The real tree of life would then be rid of the most ghastly heavy crop of Dead Sea Fruit, the intolerable burden of myriad simulacra of people, an infinite weight of mortal lies." (*Women in Love* 127)

Many critics have regarded Birkin as not only Lawrence's spokesman but also as his fictive avatar. More than once during the course of the narrative, Birkin expresses such absolute ideas about "a clean, lovely, humanless world" (*Women in Love* 127). Although it is impossible to find such a world as it was also difficult for Lawrence himself to establish such a community in his real life, both Lawrence and Birkin strove for something quite close to their ideal. Successive travelling followed. Like Birkin and Ursula, Lawrence and Frieda drifted from one place to another, from Europe to America and back to Europe again[2].

Although his Utopian phoenix-like community never came to be established, World War I left an enormous mark in Lawrence's consciousness. *Women in Love*, as it had been composed during war time, is believed to contain "Lawrence's deepening sense of mission and the development of his unique way of conveying his messianic principles" (Karl 151). One of the issues that is interesting to single out now is the sense of responsibility towards the wider world. As the Great War has drawn upon the author a deep sense of hopelessness that results in Lawrence's escape to America and other places, the war also created "the contradictory feelings" within the author's

[2] Successive travelling from within Europe in the year of 1919 was followed by Lawrence and Frieda's trip to Australia in which place Lawrence composed *Kangaroo* (1923) and to Mexico and America in later years.

mind (Worthen 84). On the one hand, Lawrence wanted to, as the counter force to the prevailing ideology of industrial and war mentality that threatens to consume and diminish human individuality as it is earlier discussed in the previous chapter, "assert the integrity of the free individual" and recall back the lost vitality and spirituality of the human soul (Worthen 84). On the other hand, despite his complete rejection of society as voiced by Birkin, Lawrence all the more feels responsible for his society, his world and the fate of the human civilisation in its close contact of the extremely destructive effect of World War I. Commitment and meaningful attachment to social and political situations of his time called the author back and forth to his English ground. Lawrence, therefore, is seen in *Women in Love* especially depicting this kind of conflict within the living consciousness of his major characters and sexual privacy. It will be shown later in this discussion how Lawrence depicts the destructive force of the Great War upon the characters' lives and how they make their choices to have their own free individuality recognised and to be responsible and committed to their own community at the same time.

Another significant issue that has been interwoven with the above subject is that of sex and sexuality. Lawrence is believed to be reliant so much upon the idea of intuition and spontaneity in his literary writings. This idea of intuition and spontaneity is regarded by Lawrence as the authentic source of knowledge and the wisdom of life. Oftentimes, characters in Lawrentian novels will follow what Lawrence calls "blood intimacy" and "the phallic consciousness" as the supreme life principle. This idea is also found vividly expressed in others of Lawrence's novels. In *The Rainbow*, for example, almost every Brangwen child has had a hard "violent struggle against [their] physical inability to study" (*The Rainbow* 17), because they are more inclined to

follow their own heart and intuition in opposition to institutionalised education, which Lawrence sees as their great rival. Instinct or "blood consciousness" is deemed as a superior source of knowledge. On 7 December 1915 in a letter addressed to Lady Ottoline Morrell [3], Lawrence revealed his key philosophy of life of "blood consciousness" which was later found to be the central theme prevalent in almost all of his writings.

> I have been reading Frazer's *Golden Bough* and *Totemism and Exogamy*. Now I am convinced of what I believed when I was about twenty – that there is another seat of consciousness than the brain and the nerve system: there is a blood-consciousness which exists in us independently of the ordinary mental consciousness, which depends on the eyes as its source or connector. There is the blood-consciousness, with the sexual connection, holding the same relation as the eye, in seeing, holds to the mental consciousness. One lives, knows, and has one's being in the blood, without any reference to nerves and brain. […] And the tragedy of this our life, and of your life, is that the mental and nerve consciousness exerts a tyranny over the blood-consciousness, and that your will has gone completely over to the mental consciousness, and is engaged in the destruction of your blood-being or blood-consciousness, the final liberating of the one which is only death in result. (07 xii 1915)

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[3] Lady Ottoline Violet Anne Morrell (1873-1938) was a generous patron for artists, writers as well as intellectuals such as D. H. Lawrence, Siegfried Sassoon, and Aldous Huxley. She had a great influence on Lawrence as the author often shared his thoughts and creative plans with her. Lawrence recreates Ottoline in many of his female characters such as Hermione Roddice in *Women in Love*.

Like other modernist writers, Lawrence himself was profoundly influenced by Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, in which sexual intercourse is recognised as the central source of life power. In this letter, it is also clear how Lawrence holds and places his idea of "blood-consciousness" above all else. To him, life that does not originate and follow the stream of "blood-consciousness" cannot, in any way, be called life. People living in such life cannot be fully human. Roughly, this "blood consciousness" means instinct and intuition. It is not the mind or the nerves that should direct and dictate a human way of living; Lawrence is found arguing, it is, on the contrary, what human beings generally neglect as an inferior realm of consciousness, "the blood-consciousness", on which human beings should establish their lives.

The above excerpt from a letter also contains Lawrentian belief in sexual supremacy. Like the eyes, sexual activity is held as an important connector that shall contact human beings back to its "blood-consciousness." Sex, therefore, becomes the means of contacting the supreme life source of "blood-consciousness." In other words, men and women in their healthy sexual intercourse will be brought back to their life source. Additionally, in his non-fiction writing, "Fantasia of the Unconscious", Lawrence also speaks of the said idea that will help shed light on the newly emphasised dimension of "blood-consciousness":

> The blood-consciousness and the blood-passion is the very source and origin of us. Not that we can stay at the source. Nor even make the goal of the source, as Freud does. The business of living is to travel away from the source. But you must start every single day fresh from

> the source. You must rise every day afresh out of the dark sea of the blood.

One important piece of Lawrentian belief that can be drawn from this passage is the initiation by and the departure from the life source of "blood-consciousness." Lawrence truly believes that meaningful and healthy life must spring from the stream of "blood-consciousness." Nonetheless, he also puts emphasis on the departure from such the source. Life cannot stay or remain at the source. It has to make a purposeful departure from the source. It is interesting to note that the means which makes this departure possible is also the very means that contacts human beings back to the source in the first place. This key idea will be further explained in the narrative context in order to gain a more rounded and well-clarified insight into Lawrence's philosophy of life. At this point, it is enough to say that in his key novels, particularly *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, Lawrence explores the social and cultural condition of his time in connection with his firm belief in the philosophy of "blood-consciousness." The analysis in this chapter will capture Lawrence's most insightful probing into the body and the mind of his characters how the conflict of individuality and community is represented and resolved in connection with his best known dogma of blood intimacy and, also called by another name, the phallic consciousness. This exploration will reveal Lawrence's cultural consciousness towards sex and how he wishes sex be viewed in society.

With radical changes in society caused by the advent of Industrial Revolution and the outbreak of World War I, there arises the inevitable need to call for a reexamination of sex and its function, among other issues, to appropriate the drastic turmoil of social and cultural consciousness. Arguably, the representation of sex in

The Rainbow and *Women in Love* will make a final departure from its Victorian sensibility. Issues of sexuality, blood intimacy, and the contradictory forces produced by World War I will, therefore, be discussed interconnectedly in the textual analysis of this chapter. As represented in the texts, sexual experience is, in short, a regenerating organic force countering the inexorable march of technological and industrial modernity in the early years of the twentieth century, which emphasise a sudden departure from the human to the mechanical. Additionally, although sexuality is culturally believed to be dwelling in the physical and emotional realm of human existence, Lawrence's contextual representation will transcend such limited cultural conception of sexuality and display in a great extent of how sexuality transports human consciousness into the realm of spirituality resolving the oppositional conflicts of the physical and the spiritual, male and female, freedom and commitment, and individuality and community.

To begin with, Lawrence establishes the idea of "blood consciousness" in the characterisation of the major Brangwen children. As it is earlier stated that nearly every Brangwen child is more inclined towards the working of intuition and "blood-consciousness" than the working of the mind and reason, Anna's father, Tom Brangwen, is the best example who refuses to follow the rational and nervous faculty, unlike his other siblings.

> In feeling he was developed, sensitive to the atmosphere around him, brutal perhaps, but at the same time delicate, very delicate […]
> He was more sensuously developed, more refined in instinct than they. For their mechanical stupidity he hated them, and suffered cruel contempt for them. (*The Rainbow* 17)

Immediately after the opening of *The Rainbow*, Lawrence characterises Tom as a man of "blood-consciousness". As a boy, he is sensitive, intuitive, and instinctive, unlike his peers at school whose rigidity and moral consciousness Lawrence compares to "mechanical stupidity." By doing so, the author sets the two forces of mechanism and intuition in opposition.

After that, Lawrence places in oppositional motions two permanent forces that will run throughout the narrative of *The Rainbow* and its sequel. On the one hand, there exists the relentless stream of engines and machines as Lawrence represents in the social development and industrialisation of the town Tom is living in. On the other hand, there is sexual consciousness. However, Lawrence's representations of sex vary and, thus, fall into two distinctive categories. While the first category of sex is what Lawrence believes to be "sexual connector" that shall connect people back to their life source, the other kind of its variation is pure sex that is equally synonymous with lust. This kind of sexual relationship would result in a worsening sense of emptiness and despair. The latter is first introduced to the reader through the growing puberty of Tom at the age of nineteen at the opening of *The Rainbow*. Right at that age, Tom experiences his first sexual encounter with a prostitute. What he experiences then is later recognised by Tom himself as mere "nothingness" (*The Rainbow* 20). A sense of emptiness and nothingness that derives from an unhealthy, meaningless sexual relationship between Tom and a prostitute disillusions him.

From this impersonal sexual experience Lawrence also depicts a certain kind of sexual relationship between man and woman that has been tarnished and disabled by modern forces of industrialisation and war ideology. Similar to the sexual episode of Gudrun and Gerald which has been discussed in the previous chapter, Lawrence

displays the drastic consequences of war in human sexuality. As it is presented in the text, Ursula and Anton are in a serious relationship. They more often than not engage in various alternative kinds of sexual intimacy. In the following passionate kiss scene between the two characters, Lawrence heightens the nature of their contact and their sense of self as he is directing his severe criticism on the prevailing ideology in his society.

> In the shed they played at kisses, really played at kisses. It was a delicious, exciting game. She turned to him, her face all laughing, like a challenge. And he accepted the challenge at once. He twined his hand full of her hair, and gently, with his hand wrapped round with hair behind her head, gradually brought her face nearer to his, whilst she laughed breathless with challenge, and his eyes gleamed with answer, with enjoyment of the game. And he kissed her, asserting his will over her, and she kissed him back, asserting her deliberate enjoyment of him. (*The Rainbow* 280)

Both of them come into close contact with each other, but the tension described in this scene is not that of sexual desire. Despite their physical contact, the two are not bound within each other sensual embrace or passionate feeling of love. This, however, is the result of modern consciousness pertaining to the discourse of industrialisation and warfare which bases its idea on the diminishing of the other and the increasing growth of the self.

As products of their time, Anton and Ursula cannot help but be influenced by such prevailing ideology. Therefore, to them relationship is a mere game of "asserting" one's self and will over the other. Sexual intimacy is not a matter of contacting but,

rather, a matter of asserting oneself and possessing the other, and by doing such, accentuating his or her own sense of self.

> It intensified and heightened their senses, they were more vivid and powerful in their being. […] It was a magnificent self-assertion on the part of both of them, he asserted himself before her, he felt himself infinitely male and infinitely irresistible, she asserted herself before him, she knew herself infinitely desirable and hence infinitely strong. And after all, what could either of them get from such a passion but a sense of his or of her own maximum self, in contradistinction to all the rest of life? (*The Rainbow* 281)

In this passage, Ursula and Anton remain distinctively separated in their sexual intimacy. In their intimate moment, instead of losing themselves they cling to their own assertive will and self. The absolute outcome of such contact is the "the maximum self". Therefore, as Lawrence presents in the passage, the failure of such contact is twofold. First, it fails to connect their existence back to the life source of "blood-consciousness" for it is not either passion or love they are expressing in this scene but the sense of possession and the blind will to overcome the other. Moreover, even if they are in love, Ursula does not feel strongly and passionately attached to Anton. This also points to the nature of their relationship which is also the failure of such contact. By asserting their own will over the other instead of giving themselves in, they remain tragically separated in their relationship. Their sad separatedness is later dramatised in their contradicting conversation about war in some pages afterwards (*The Rainbow* 288).

What more can be implied from the act of asserting oneself over the other is the lack of confidence in their own sense of self. This self doubt allows Lawrence to examine the contradictory effect of such prevailing ideology. That is to say, while they subscribe to industrial and war ideology that threatens to consume people's intrinsic individuality, they themselves have lost the completeness and sufficiency of their own sense of self. When Anton and Ursula's relationship fails, it is not, Lawrence is trying to depict, the intense desire to assert oneself over the other alone. There is another reality concerning the notion of self in and sexual experience which Lawrence exposes in their failed relationship. Its modern make-belief concerning this issue, Lawrence argues, is also prevalent in the idea of lovers being the other half of each other.

> On the whole, he [Birkin] hated sex, it was such a limitation. It was sex that turned a man into a broken half of a couple, the woman into the other broken half. And he wanted to be single in himself, the woman single in her self. (*Women in Love* 199)

In contrast to such make-belief, as Lawrence sees it, in a relationship between men and women, especially in sexual activity, to render a meaningful sex, the two participants must have a complete and sufficient self. However, Anton, for instance, having believed in the assertion of the norm mentality over the minority and the diminishing intrinsic value of the individual, has become insufficient and incomplete, always bound to the greater "Whole": "The Whole mattered – but the unit, the person, had no importance, except as he represented the Whole" (*The Rainbow* 304). As a result, his sexual contact with Ursula becomes the willful assertion of self and complete desire for possession. In the same way Gerald drinks up the "wine" of life

from Gudrun, Anton is seen at the edge of the narrative consuming the life force of Ursula as he is trying to fill in the void of his existence. His sexual act is presumably both possessive and exploitative in nature. Like what happens to Gudrun, Ursula in "The Bitterness of Ecstasy" begins to feel more acutely the burden Anton has placed upon her being and, eventually, suffocated from it.

However, Ursula at the opening of *The Rainbow*'s sequel is not, nonetheless, very much different from Anton. At the beginning of *Women in Love*, Ursula desperately wants to establish "a holy connection" with Rupert Birkin whom she sees as complete and sufficient while she herself is incomplete and insufficient.

> It was a lack of robust self, she had no natural sufficiency, there was a terrible void, a lack, a deficiency of being within her.
>
> And she wanted someone to close up this deficiency, to close it up for ever. She craved for Rupert Birkin. When he was there she felt complete, she was sufficient, whole. (*Women in Love* 16-17)

To embark into a relationship or engage in sexual activity of any kind, men and women must be a complete, sufficient self unto themselves for a relationship, to Lawrence, is not a game or puzzle that one needs to find the missing piece in order to fill the void. This is a genuine message that Lawrence wishes to communicate to the reader. And this is why Birkin rejects Ursula in the first place. This passage, hence, reveals Ursula as weak as she is desperate because she had a miscarriage in *The Rainbow* and has no prospect future at the beginning of *Women in Love*. She feels an urgent need to fill the gap of her life without much consideration about the consequences.

According to Lawrence, this is where Ursula is at fault. The completeness and the sufficiency of the self are the two significant qualities two people must have in order to establish their relationship. At first with Anton, Ursula experiences the other kind of sexual relationship which heightens the polarity of her being and her partner:

> […] the passion of Ursula to know her own maximum self, limited and so defined against him. She could limit and define herself against him, the male, she could be her maximum self, female, oh female, triumphant for one moment in exquisite assertion against the male, in a supreme contradistinction to the male. (*The Rainbow* 281)

Lawrence, however, sees it differently. His criticism can be detected from the above passage: Ursula's self is defined and limited to Anton's assertive self. Both of them remain the male and the female, the self and the other. There is no connection in their existence. One merely exists in his or her usefulness at the other's disposal. The appearance of Birkin in *Women in Love* allows Ursula to experience life and sexual intimacy from a different perspective. According to her relationship with Birkin, either in the experience of love or in the experience of sex, each distinct and complete pole of selves is equal. It is the mere result of assertive will and fear that prevents Ursula from finally grasping at the idea. In "Moony" Birkin also explains with outspoken anger to Ursula what he really wants from her: "I want you to drop your assertive will, your frightened apprehensive self-insistence, that is what I want. – I want you to trust yourself so implicitly, that you can let your self go" (*Women in Love* 250-51).

While Ursula mistakes Birkin's challenging idea of love and sex for the administration of male domination over female individuality: "I don't believe in love

like that. I tell you [Birkin], you want love to administer to your egotism, to subserve you. Love is a process of subservience with you" (*Women in Love* 153), what Birkin, however, simply wants to communicate with her is his unprecedented notion of sex and relationship of man and woman.

> He [Birkin] wanted sex to revert to the level of the other appetites to be regarded as a functional process, not as a fulfillment. He believed in sex marriage. But beyond this, he wanted a further conjunction, where man had being and woman had being, two pure beings, each constituting the freedom of the other, balancing each other like two poles of one force, like two angels, or two demons.
>
> (*Women in Love* 199)

Tightly knitted with the idea of complete and sufficient self is Lawrence's novel perception of sexual intimacy between man and woman. To him, sex cannot be perceived as only a desire for physical consummation. It is something of "a functional process." "[A] further conjunction" between man and woman is also made possible in sexual intimacy. And by this "conjunction", it is not only on the physical level.

For the sake of clarity, we can begin from Lawrence's representation of sexual experience in its most physical condition. According to Lawrentian philosophy of "blood consciousness" stated in "Fantasia of the Unconscious", sex is the key connector that shall help human beings tap into their organic source of life from within. As traces of modern technology and industry dehumanise and pull human beings from their own organic self, sexuality will work in an opposing effort to counteract that devastating force. Take for example the lives of Tom and Will, two Brangwens from two generations. Their lives are very much mechanised by the

encroachment of industry and technology in their own neighborhood. Both of them have gone astray in their own way. Tom neglects his wife and has been consorting with his industrial peers whereas Will manages to escape his household problems and almost commits adultery, if he has not already. This is the result, Lawrence argues, of living apart from their "blood-consciousness." What is remarkably similar in the two husbands is that after such scenes of neglecting and going away from their own households, the narrative turns immediately to sexual confrontation between husbands and wives. In Will's case, he is described as being "so violently active" after sexual consummation (*The Rainbow* 220-21). He has changed into a different man from that moment onwards. This is where Lawrence dramatises his firm belief in the superlative working of "blood-consciousness."

In sharp contrast to the idea of "maximum self" is Lawrence's notion of "purposive self", a condition of self at which Will has arrived after he has engaged in sexual intercourse with his wife.

> His intimate life was so violently active, that it set another man in him free. And this new man turned with interest to public life, to see what part he could take in it. This would give him scope for new activity, activity of a kind for which he was now created and released. He wanted to be unanimous with the whole of purposive mankind.
>
> (*The Rainbow* 220-21)

Unlike the man he used to be, Will is brought back to his source of life from within. This brings about the transformation of his self. Therefore, instead of being exhaustive, a healthy meaningful sexual act is regenerating and elevating. To illustrate, previously Will used to be "indifferent to public life", but after his sexual intimacy

with his wife he is now “free to attend to the outside life as well” (*The Rainbow* 220). In Lawrence’s words, the “sexual connector” has freed “another man in [Will]”. It is interesting that unlike Anton and Ursula’s sexual intimacy which results in the increasing sense of “maximum self”, when Will and Anna’s intimate life is “so violently active,” both of them can finally “develop a real purposive self” (*The Rainbow* 221).

In addition to that, Lawrence also explores the tension between seemingly assertive polarity of beings, the male and female selves, in the sexual relationship of Tom and Lydia. Unlike that of Anton and Ursula’s, Lawrence only shows the tension before he undermines it. In the passage below, Lydia and Tom are engaged in sexual intercourse that is akin to that of Will and Anna’s. What is similar in nature is the transformation of the participants. However, what is presented below in more detail is Lawrence’s contextual analysis of such moment, especially the moment that is akin to an orgasmic experience which includes the experience of fear and death.

> She put her fingers on him. And it was torture to him, that he must give himself to her actively, participating in her, that he must meet and embrace and know her, who was other than himself. There was that in him which shrank from yielding to her, resisted the relaxing towards her, opposed the mingling with her, even whilst he most desired it. He was afraid, he wanted to save himself. (*The Rainbow* 90)

Lawrence explores in this scene of sexual intimacy between Tom and Lydia the tension of oppositional polarity in human existence. To him, sexual intercourse will render a kind of fear in the participants in losing himself or herself in the rhythm of

the act. Later during the copulation Lydia becomes something of the beyond, the foreign, the other, and the unattainable to which Tom is afraid of losing his self.

> Then gradually, the tension, the withholding relaxed in him, and he began to flow towards her. She was beyond him, the unattainable. But he let go his hold on himself, he relinquished himself, and knew the subterranean force of his desire to come to her, to find himself in her. He began to approach her, to draw near. (*The Rainbow* 90)

However, sexual desire works towards the dismantling of such fear. It is suggested in the above passage that the commingling of polarity is necessary in the sexual act. However, Lawrence also points out later that such commingling does not mean the complete and absolute disappearance of one's self or another: "One must commit oneself to a conjunction with the other – forever. But it is not selfless – it is a maintaining of the self in mystic balance and integrity – like a star balanced with another star" (*Women in Love* 152). Therefore, instead of losing one's self in the process, one may find what is thought to be lost in sexual connection. What, however, is the actual force of eliminating such fear and enabling such desire "to draw near"? The question is what Lawrence determines to pursue in his next representation of sexual experience.

In most of Lawrence' representation of sexual relations, sexual activity of any kind, whether it is conventional or unconventional, penetrative and non-penetrative, the idea of death is strongly attached. For example, in Anna and Will's relationship, sexual intercourse is described as "the darkness and death of their own sensual activities" and "a sensuality violent and extreme as death" (*The Rainbow* 219, 20). What Lawrence is presenting here is that some forms of sexual experience involve

and generate the loss of selfhood. In his view, while sex guarantees the continuation of life in the form of reproduction, sex is paradoxically revealed to be the dwelling place of death. Death as an experience is, therefore, an aspect critically crucial in making sex a contradictory practice. In his book, *Eroticism,* Georges Bataille argues that human beings are after all "discontinuous beings" (12). With that state in mind, human beings remain separated and conscious of their own existence and will as it is well represented through Ursula and Anton's relationship. Therefore, while certain prevailing ideologies of war and industrialism emphasises on the assertion of will of oneself over the other, sexual intercourse works the other way round. In our willful separateness, human beings can "eradicate the fundamental divides between the self and the other" in the act of sexual intercourse (Bristow 112); one could call this moment the loss of personality or the loss of selfhood. Additionally, Battaille also points out that when two human beings are united in their sexual performance, this "death" is actually "the death and the disappearance of the separate beings" (14). Therefore, it is in sexual intimacy that two people are allowed to feel connected and attached to each other, while the moment also gives birth to a new kind of existence or new sense of self, which is no longer "agonizingly alone" (Bristow 112).

More than that, such death and disappearance also include the death and the disappearance of the old sense of what his or her self used to be. At this point, sexual act ceases to be mere physical experience. The moment of sexual intimacy is, in other words, tantamount to a religious experience implying the higher significance of human sexuality.

> It was the entry into another circle of existence, it was the baptism to another life, it was the complete confirmation. Their feet trod strange

> ground of knowledge, their footsteps were lit-up with discovery [...] Everything was lost, and everything was found. The new world was discovered, it remained only to be explored. (*The Rainbow* 90)

As Lawrence sees the sexual act as the key connector of "blood-consciousness," he demonstrates in this scene how such contact changes and transforms the human sense of self. Unlike Tom's former sexual experience with the prostitute, this copulation with Lydia is described as having the religious power of baptising. Through this "erotic baptism" Tom has emerged, in other words, into a completely new, strange world (Baldick 388). His own conception of self and existence is being overturned. It is as if sexual experience has reopened his blind eyes to see how life should be lived and who he really is. Lawrence describes this transformation by using such metaphors as "the new world" and "the entry into another circle of existence" to imply Tom's newly discovered state of being.

Moreover, although it is indeed the physical sensitivity that generates sexual desire, the sexual act should have a more purposive dimension than being physical. In the same way as what Lawrence talks about "the blood-consciousness," human beings through sexual experience should be able to get back in touch with their own humanity and their life power, but they should not remain *there*: "Not that we can stay at the source. Nor even make the goal of the source, as Freud does. The business of living is to travel away from the source." Although Lawrence has made an emphasis that life should be in touch with "the blood-consciousness" each day, the author also places equal emphasis on the departure from that source. Sexual desire is typically regarded as a physical longing, but what sex can do should be more than something merely physical. Hence, sex is "a functional process" not only in connecting us back

to our life source, but also transport and import us into the realm of the spiritual. The connection between the body and the spirit is clearly manifest in the novel. As much as he appears to be obsessive in the physicality of human existence, especially of sex, Lawrence is not so blind as to dismiss the mental and spiritual significance. He believes that by enhancing the body, the mind and the spirit will be improved in proportion. Lawrence has made it unmistakably discernible in his some representations of sexual experience: "the body is only one of the manifestations of the spirit, the transmutation of the integral spirit is the transmutation of the physical body as well" (*Women in Love* 192).

> I want to find you, where you don't know your own existence, the you that your common self denies utterly. But I don't want your good looks, and I don't want your womanly feelings, and I don't want your thoughts nor opinions nor your ideas – they are all bagatelles to me. (*Women in Love* 147)

What Lawrence is trying to convey through this passage of a talk between Birkin and Ursula is how sexual experience will transcend its conventionally believed realm of the physical. Kate Millet in *Sexual Politics* might have detected the masculine dismissal of female value[4] from this passage, yet what Lawrence wishes to communicate to his readers is that the experience of "the holy connection" between man and woman must connect their "discontinuous" beings together by transcending the physicality of human beings. From this perspective, Lawrence sees sex as an

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[4] In *Sexual Politics* (1969), not only does Millet propose that a female character like Ursula lives quietly at Birkin's disposal, but the centrality of *Women in Love* is actually "the story of Birkin's unrequited love for Gerald" where in which Birkin is at the apex and at the bottom of the triangle lies Ursula and Gerald, the formula which can be considered the actual "diagrams of power in [Lawrence's] sexual politics" (255-56).

experience having the power to dispose of the constructed oppositional polarity of life where man is different from woman. In other words, it has to have the disorientating power of eradicating the old notion of self as apart and different in perpetual antagonism with the other altogether until the self is transformed into "the unknown" and "the beyond". It should, in its figurative sense, transport the two beings into "the world beyond." And there in "the mystic balance" of "the unknown," sex can really unite and connect two human souls, not just two bodies. It is possible to say that in their inexplicably close physical contact, they remain connected in their mental as well as their spiritual consciousness.

What's more, in Birkin's notion of the "communion between man and woman" he also notes the significance of freedom in this sexual commitment: "But beyond this, he wanted a further conjunction, where man had being and woman had being, two pure beings, each constituting the freedom of the other, balancing each other like two poles of one force" (*Women in Love* 199). This is the opposite of the prevailing ideology in society that is undertaken by industrialism and warfare when one becomes committed to his social and political course, one loses entirely one's own valuable individual self. In contrast to that, Lawrence's representation of sex demarcates such diminishing concept of existence from his own. To say the least, in a relationship or in a marriage, couples are expected to have the world of their own in their "own little house" minding their "own little interests," having been confined in their "little privacy."

> "Then don't do it," said Birkin. "I tell you," he went on, "the same as I've said before, marriage in the old sense seems to me repulsive. Egoïsme à deux is nothing to it. It's a sort of tacit hunting in

> couples: the world all in couples, each couple in its own little house, watching its own little interests, and stewing in its own little privacy" (*Women in Love* 325)

Privacy in married life is accordingly what Lawrence fears most. To a certain extent, the word "privacy" incurs a deep sense of misunderstanding as well as mistrust. It does not suggest any connection or relation between the household and the world at large. Therefore, in contrast to such diminishing ideology, Lawrence displays in Birkin and Ursula's relationship that there is a significant balance between freedom and commitment in life.

This sense of freedom and commitment in a relationship to a greater extent implies Lawrence's own struggle to come to terms with the contradictory will within him: one is to escape and the other is to be committed in his own society. However, while this conflict is heightened at the outbreak of World War I, Lawrence attempts to resolve such conflict in his representation of the sexual experience of Birkin and Ursula. At first, Ursula might have been angry at such idea for she desires a complete, personal and private world with Birkin. Yet, later she learns to accept what Birkin believes and loosens in degree her previously assertive will. Ursula's late transformation becomes palpable in the chapter entitled "Excurse." There in the drive to nowhere, both Ursula and Birkin engage in their most outrageous conversation concerning their own relationship. While formally Birkin and Ursula seem to hold different ideas towards many issues such as love, sex, marriage, and relationship, in this scene Lawrence dramatises Ursula's change of consciousness through his sexual imagery of a flower to reinforce his idea of the living balance in a relationship.

> "See what a flower I found you," she said, wistfully, holding a piece of purple-red bell-heather under his face. He saw the clump of coloured bells, and the tree-like, tiny branch: also her hands, with their over-fine, over-sensitive skin. (*Women in Love* 310)

After having "walked away, desultorily" from Birkin's marriage proposal (*Women in Love* 309), Ursula returns with a flower in her hand before she gives it to Birkin. In this particular moment of give and take between the two protagonists, Lawrence underpins a more living balance between the two sexes in which man and woman fare equally in their relationship. Even more to the point, by taking this scene as a significant parallel to the last episode of the novel in which Ursula and Birkin symbolise the notions of commitment and independence respectively, Lawrence reveals a precarious balance between such two notions in human existence. The marriage between the two, therefore, stands as a harmonious matrimony between male and female, give and take, and freedom and commitment.

Moreover, this flower in "Excurse" also reminds the reader of the first scene in which the two characters meet for the first time during the course of the narrative, in which a flower imagery also plays a significant role in suggesting sexual undertones.

> "Not very," he [Birkin] said. "You must mark in these things obviously. It's the fact you want to emphasise, not a subjective impression to record. What's the fact? – red little spiky stigmas of the female flower, dangling yellow male catkin, yellow pollen flying from one to the other. Make a pictorial record of the fact, as a child does when drawing face – two eyes, one nose, mouth with teeth – so –"
>
> (*Women in Love* 36)

Quite different from the flower scene in "Excurse", this particular early meeting between Ursula and Birkin does not suggest any trace of connection between the two. The power tension is very palpable in this scene. Birkin in the passage is manifesting his power and knowledge over Ursula, who teaches at the school Birkin supervises. While Birkin imposes his strand of knowledge onto Ursula, the woman also seems to lose her voice. This suggests the inequality between the two individuals. Additionally, while sexual implication is very vivid in the female and male flowers, the way Birkin wants Ursula to "[m]ake a pictorial record of the fact" of the flowers reveals his lack of passion and emotional attachment to the woman. In contrast to that early scene, the female pollen seems to be flying to commingle with the yellow pollen in the scene of "Excurse." This latter scene, therefore, implies the sexual consummation between Ursula and Birkin, only Lawrence chooses to do it figuratively before having it occur literally towards the end of the same chapter. It is worth noting here that while sexual relationship is a private matter between two individuals, Lawrence's representation of it enlarges its significance to include the contradictory reception of the war in the cultural consciousness of Lawrence's age. Having reconciled Ursula and Birkin in marriage, Lawrence seems to be suggesting not only a more balanced and harmonious way of living between the two sexes, but also the equilibrium of life achieved at the time of war in which the conflict between independence and commitment may have been resolved.

As the previous chapter delineates the working of industrialisation and warfare, and its affect on the human physical, mental and spiritual health, it is fair to conclude now that this chapter continues the discussion from its previous chapter by raising an awareness of cultural consciousness towards the idea of sex. Opening with

Lawrence's representations of a traumatised experience of sex affected by industrial mentality and warfare, the chapter continues its analysis, in parallel manner, of the idea of "maximum self," and the incomplete and insufficient self as the result from industrial consciousness. As the prevailing ideology of war and industrialism draws people away from their own humanity, sexual activity is also the realm which Lawrence displays not only as the physical act that helps to connect human beings back to their life source according to Lawrence's philosophy of "blood-consciousness," but also as a religious experience derived from eroticism. This sexual experience can be seen as a means by which the old mechanised sense of self is undermined and transformed into a healthier sort of existence.

Both *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* can, therefore, be seen as novels that represent sexual experience that goes beyond the limited mores prevalent in the Victorian era. The novels register all possible dimensions of human sexuality whether it be the physical, the emotional, or the spiritual. For in sexual relationship, human beings experience the loss of selfhood and the rediscovery of a new sense of self. Several important demarcations existing in society are also being overturned by Lawrence's representations and its variations of sex: reason and intuition, body and spirit, or the physical and the spiritual. Additionally, rather than being private and personal, Lawrence's dramatisations of sex transform in greater significance and magnitude the most intimate sexual experience into a matter of social struggle. Partly reflecting the individual's internal turmoil, the conflict between freedom and commitment to society is also shown in the personal experience of romantic relationship of man and woman. This conflict is seen to be resolved in the conciliation of such forces exemplified in the relationship between Ursula and Birkin implying the

continued viability of life at a time of crisis while Gerald and Gudrun's absolute concepts of commitment and freedom respectively make their marriage impossible to come.

In the next chapter such social commitment and responsibility in the life of an individual and his attempt to reconcile with the larger society at the expense of his individuality as well as his own sexuality will be explored.

CHAPTER IV
"THE TOMB OF HIS MANHOOD":
MANLINESS AND HOMOEROTICISM
IN "ENGLAND, MY ENGLAND" AND "THE BLIND MAN"

What have I done for you,
England, my England?
What is there I would not do,
England, my own?
William Ernest Henley, "Pro Rege Nostro"

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The conflict between responsibility and personal conviction evoked by the outbreak of the First World War is even more vividly and explicitly pronounced in D. H. Lawrence's later works. Only two years after the publication of *Women in Love*, the author's avid criticism of the Great War could be discerned explicitly in his collection of short stories with a patriotic entitlement, *England, My England* (1922). Included in the collection are ten stories namely the title short story, "England, My England," "Tickets, Please," "The Blind Man," "Wintry Peacock," and "The Horse Dealer's Daughter." The title of the collection is taken from a piece of patriotic verse numbered 742, "Pro Rege Nostro," by a Victorian poet, William Ernest Henley (1849-1903) while the poem is more commonly known by its famous refrain "England, My England." Although Henley did not live long enough to witness the atrocities of the First World War, his poems especially, "Pro Rege Nostro," became popular because of its patriotic and propagandistic sentiment during the times of war. Among many social and political campaigns, the need to construct a national identity

and to garner as much as possible the collective will of the people in the nation was what was happening in their society at the time World War I was about to erupt. Campaigns to boost the collective spirit of nationalism and patriotism were being circulated in the society to build up a sense of national unity among people. Political pamphlets and propaganda were used as a means to call for social responsibility and commitment in the course England was about to take. When the war had finally broken out, such campaigns were used in a greater degree in order to enlist more people to join the war. Henley's "Pro Rege Nostro" asks for such commitment to the nation. It calls, rather, demands for collective identity among English people of different classes. Bravery, sacrifice and faith are the aspects the poem seems to be harvesting from each young English man. Pride in one's nation and in one's own land is also the key feature that is used for propagandistic ends.

Not happy with the propagandistic sentiment the poem expresses, Lawrence sought to parody such attitudes and outlooks towards the nation and the war at large in his short stories. The collection, *England, My England*, to illustrate, delineates the life of English people in the Midlands on the eve of World War I. Life before, during and after the war is explored in great detail in the ten short stories. In this chapter, however, only two short stories are chosen as representatives of the whole collection as Lawrence's keen observation of social and individual struggles. The conflict between the individual's search for freedom and the demands for social commitment including its sexual attitudes exemplified in the texts mark the two short stories as distinctive as well as relatively parallel to one another. In sum, as "England, My England" carefully outlines life in English society before the outbreak of the First World War, the short story also seeks to dramatise the change of power relations

between the two sexes at the same time the rural England is experiencing social changes. Parallel to that is Lawrence's interrogation of the age-old notion of manhood and male masculinity which had been dismantled at the outbreak of World War I. "The Blind Man," on the other hand, explicitly explores the tension of a sexual relationship between husband and wife in their lives after the end of the Great War. In relative significance, the text also embodies the exploration of the homosexual act as a symbolic gesture of an individual struggle to reconcile with the outer world.

In the first narrative that opens his 1923 collection of short story, *England, My England*, Lawrence characterises a man by the name of Egbert as a man who belongs to a world that is different from Lawrence's England where modern and industrial encroachment to rural life is very imminent. By doing so, the author denotes his keen observation of individual struggle and subsequent isolation in an increasingly industrialised society at the same time that he criticises it. The following passage displays the world in which the narrative's protagonist lives with a deepening sense of nostalgia.

> The sunlight blazed down upon the earth, there was a vividness of flamy vegetation, of fierce seclusion amid the savage peace of the commons. Strange how the savage England lingers in patches: as here, amid these shaggy gorse commons, and marshy, snake-infested places near the foot of the south downs. The spirit of place lingering on primeval, as when the Saxons came, so long ago.
>
> (*Collected Stories* 381)

The opening of "England, My England" does at once place the story's protagonist and his stubborn refusal to adjust in the primitive world of rural England. Egbert himself

is almost the prototype of a shepherd in pastoral literature: "He had no profession: he earned nothing. But he talked of literature and music, he had a passion for old folk-music, collecting folk-songs and folk-dances, studying the Morris-dance and the old customs" (*Collected Stories* 383). At once, this character is depicted as an isolated individual in a world of Crockham through which "the spear of modern invention had not pass" (*Collected Stories* 384). However, through flashback and a series of memories, Lawrence also displays the magnitude of Egbert's isolation that it is not merely seen in his sense of place but also in his diminishing sexual role, a sense of manhood, and his individual worth recognised by his own family as well as by a society at large.

The beginning of "England, My England" is Lawrence's record of social change and the lost world of primitive England. As shown in the passage quoted above, the protagonist is first seen in the pastoral field of England's Midlands. To create graphically a mood almost immediately akin to nostalgia right at the beginning, Lawrence also describes in the passage the spirit of the place and how beautiful the pasture lingers in the protagonist's mind. In conjunction with that affect, it is also implied that the beauty of the pastoral world is now in decline and reduced into "patches" by the threatening encroachment of modern technology. Expressively, by the beginning of the twentieth century all over England industrialisation has almost encroached on new rural landscapes. The England Egbert has known is regrettably coming to pass. It is only some reclusive lands that remain untouched. However, it is also suggested in the short story that it is only a matter of time when a piece of land which is "secret, primitive, [and] savage" would be intruded at last by traces of modernity.

This sense of isolation tinted by the pastoral landscape and the longing for the lost past is further emphasised in sharp contrast with Lawrence's representation of the new spirit of the industrial age. The spirit comes in the form of a full-grown man of Winifred's father, Godfrey Marshall, Egbert's father-in-law. In contrast to the protagonist, Marshall is "a man of energy" and "a man of courage" (*Collected Stories* 382, 83). In accordance with the Victorian spirit, Marshall becomes the sole embodiment of listlessness, energy, productivity and power. He is the central figure of authority in Egbert's family. The contrast between the two characters is very palpable which allows Lawrence to juxtapose two different ways of life and, at the same time, display the gradual disappearance of one and the soaring domination of the other. As primitive and savage as he is, Egbert in "the present" England is "all amateurish and sketchy" in the presence of Marshall (*Collected Stories* 385). In other words, the protagonist loses his individual worth in the present world at the rise of energetic wheel of the machine which Marshall solely stands for.

With this towering figure of Marshall, Lawrence explores extensively the diminishing role of Egbert as a husband as well as a father. As a husband, Egbert rarely provides anything for his wife. The house they are living in is not even Egbert's but Winifred's. Additionally, while he refuses to go to work but indulges himself in the playfulness of the pastoral world, Marshal is the one who provides financial support to the family. The father-in-law gives and provides whatever is needed for the family. When Egbert's child, Joyce, gets injured, he cannot provide any moral or financial support because of his stubborn refusal to admit the change and the seriousness of the situation: "Surely the knee itself wasn't hurt! Surely not. It was only a surface cut" (*Collected Stories* 395). Marshall, on the other hand, comes in and

replaces Egbert as a substitute of a father as well as a husband. To illustrate, he gives orders and advice to his daughter on what to do with the child's accident. Marshall then arranges for medical treatment and professional supervision in London which subsequently cures the otherwise lamed Joyce. If Marshall, therefore, can be read on the symbolic level of the text as the representation of modernised and industrialised way of living, it is perhaps what accounts for Egbert's damaged masculinity and diminishing manliness.

The result of such replacement of power can be seen in Egbert's romantic relationship with his wife. While they can manage to remain physically passionate towards each other, Egbert loses his power as a husband over his wife. In his place is the figure of Marshall:

> She [Winifred] loved Egbert with passion. But behind her was the power of her father [Marshall]. It was the power of her father she referred to, whenever she needed to refer. It never occurred to her to refer to Egbert, if she were in difficulty or doubt. No, in all the serious matters she depended on her father." (*Collected Stories* 385)

As the embodiment of industrialised and modernised power, Marshall replaces Egbert in some ways as a husband. In a family's crisis, Marshall as head of the family gives orders, while Egbert runs errands. His wife does not listen to him. She relies much more on a powerful figure of her father. Moreover, what relationship a husband should have had with his wife is also later dismantled by this force. Lawrence notes the dramatic changes in the sexual experience of the two characters: "She still had a physical passion for him, that physical passion on which he had put all his life and soul. But – but –" (*Collected Stories* 387). The obvious sense of transformation in

their sexual life comes palpable when Joyce gets her knee broken. There Egbert eventually loses that physical passion his wife has always had for him.

> But – but – oh, the awful looming cloud of that *but*! – he did not stand firm in the landscape of her life like a tower of strength, like a great pillar of significance. No, he was like a cat one has about the house, which will one day disappear and leave no trace. He was like a flower in the garden, trembling in the wind of life, and then gone, leaving nothing to show. (*Collected Stories* 388)

His being to Winifred is described almost as if he has no personal significance and almost invisible to her. Egbert is "like a cat one has about" or "like a flower in the garden" while her father is the pillar of power and strength. These similes of "a cat" or "a flower" additionally connote how Marshall's presence reduces Egbert's individuality and make him appear more effeminate.

The gradual diminishing of Egbert's manliness can be further detected in his relationship with his daughters. Having failed to satisfy his wife and loses his secure position as a husband, Egbert turns his attention to his children. Formally, Egbert is isolated by his own "sense of permanency in the past" and his neglected role of breadwinner in a family. Now, the man is trying to gain back his self confidence by establishing a stronger bond with his children exemplified in his effort to steal his children's love and attention from his wife (*Collected Stories* 393). Yet, Egbert fails enormously when he cannot provide Joyce the proper treatment needed. His failure and his lack of responsibility are further emhapsised in the scene of caretaking which Winifred provides for Joyce. This scene is to heighten both Egbert's lack of responsibility to his own family as well as his absolute isolation. In this scene, Egbert

witnesses the powerful sense of motherhood, responsibility, and love Winifred has towards her child: "'Let my heart die! Let my woman's heart of flesh die! Saviour, let my heart die. And save my child" (*Collected Stories* 398-99). The scene does not merely reinforce Egbert's inability to provide for his family, but it also affects Egbert's notion of manhood. As a husband, he has already lost Winifred. Now as a father, he has found himself in the same isolated position in which his own foregrounding ideology of manhood and personhood is altogether destroyed in that moment when he witnesses the figure of Winifred seated with Joyce. Egbert recognises that moment to be "like the tomb of his manhood and his fatherhood" (*Collected Stories* 399).

All this culminates in Egbert's subsequent loss of self-esteem and his sense of fatherhood and manhood. He believes there is nothing he can do at home. When the war breaks out, Egbert gradually sees the opportunity to regain what he has previously lost. To Egbert who is not completely convinced of the purpose of war, life in battle fields seems to offer not only an adequate sum of money which will be set aside for family provision, but also a chance where he can re-establish his own sense of self, and display his once lost masculine value and valour. The advent of the Great War also allows Lawrence to explore the event as crucial to an isolated individual like Egbert who uses the opportunity the war offers to reach back to society as well as to his own family where once he has lost his self esteem and, thus, his belief in his own significance.

Ironically, Lawrence only allows Egbert to choose such a path in order to undermine it. Instead of re-establishing his own individuality, Egbert is reduced into and only recognised by his wife as "a private soldier" (*Collected Stories* 404). What

previously is left of his individuality has been completely subjugated under “the mass feeling” and the collective identity of the nation. The absolute disappearance of Egbert’s individuality is first seen clearly through the uniform commonly worn by soldiers: “Egbert came for a week-end, in his gritty, thick, sandpaper khaki and puttees and the hideous cap” (*Collected Stories* 405).

> Winifred now had a new duty towards him: the duty of a wife towards a husband who is himself performing his duty towards the world. She loved him still. She would always love him, as far as earthly love went. But it was duty she now lived by. When he came back to her in khaki, a soldier, she submitted to him as a wife. It was her duty. But to his passion she could never again fully submit. Something prevented her, for ever: even her own deepest choice. (*Collected Stories* 404)

Although he only becomes a soldier to satisfy his father-in-law and his wife, Winifred can never fully submit to her husband physically or sexually. This is because the brutality of technologised warfare has not only obliterated his entire individuality but, as Lawrence has it, “extinguished” “his subtle physique” and “degraded” “his thoroughbred sensibilities” to the point where Winifred does not regard her husband as a human being, but a mere instrument of the national whole (*Collected Stories* 405) .

Worse still, Egbert’s wish of reclaiming in the warfare his lost manliness becomes a matter of hopeless impossibility. While the old form of war is the place where men can display their masculine valour, bravery, and human dignity, Lawrence makes sure that this machine-fed brutalities of modern warfare offer everything but.

> The guns were stationed on a little bushy bullock just outside a village. But occasionally, it was difficult to say from which direction came the sharp crackle of rifle-fire, and beyond, the far-off thud of cannon. The afternoon was wintry and cold.
>
> A lieutenant stood on a little iron platform at the top of the ladders, taking the sights and giving the aim, calling in a high, tense, mechanical voice. Out of the sky came the sharp cry of the directions, then the warning numbers, then 'Fire!' The shot went, the piston of the gun sprang back, there was a sharp explosion, and a very faint film of smoke in the air. Then the other two guns fired, and there was a lull. (*Collected Stories* 406)

The presence of the machine guns, "the sharp crackle of rifle-fire", and "the far-off thud of cannon" in the vicious trench warfare pose an overt attack on many earlier presumptions concerning masculinity and military code of honour. Soldiers are no longer facing each other in the battlefield. They now fight from hidden places like bushes or trenches. Furthermore, they do not use the old forms of killing methods. Instead, there are machine guns and explosive weapons that can be shot from afar and kill more people randomly in a larger scale. This modernised and technologised practice of the Great War shatters Egbert's earlier notion of warfare. It does not in any way exhibit courage or bravery. Neither does it demonstrate any honourable code of chivalry and humanity. Thus, the wish to recover his manhood in the battlefield is altogether annihilated when the excruciating pain of gunshot runs through his blood and his sight and hearing are overwhelmingly numbed at the bombardment of shouting and gun fires.

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Before Egbert welcomes the darkness of death at the end of the narrative, Lawrence goes a step further in addressing the vicious undoing of the trench warfare unto the human body and soul. Earlier, Egbert is described as an isolated individuality through his stubborn refusal to adjust to the gradually changing world of industry. Having also been isolated from his wife and child, Egbert eventually seeks solace in the war as he sees it as a significant opportunity both to regain his lost manliness and reaching back to society. However, as much as the war does not fulfill his lost manliness, it also refuses to eliminate that feeling of isolation within the protagonist's mind. On the other hand, it aggravates Egbert's sense of agonising loneliness. The narrative does so both on the physical as well as on the spiritual level.

> He moved into a lightning-like mechanical response at the sharp cry from the officer overheard. Mechanism, the pure mechanical action of obedience at the guns. Pure mechanical action at the guns. It left the soul unburdened, brooding in the dark nakedness. In the end, the soul is alone, brooding on the face of the uncreated flux, as a bird on a dark sea. (*Collected Stories* 406)

To endure the excruciating agony of the warfare brutality, Egbert accepts his machine-induced degradation of the soul and moves along the flow of the mechanical numbness. In this way, Egbert is ultimately cut off from the reality and the rest of the world: "at the centre the soul remained dark and aloof, alone" (*Collected Stories* 407). His soul is described as plunging into the "dark nakedness" of the sea. There exists the lone bird which Lawrence uses as the symbol of Egbert's soul to reinforce the state of loneliness in which Egbert is in.

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To produce a powerful irony, Lawrence portrays the juxtaposition of what Egbert imagines what the war can offer him and what it really does. In the end, Egbert rejects in totality the notion of life, his relationship with his wife, and his love for his children. He remains detached and isolated in the dark realm of perpetual separation embracing the dissolution of death.

> There had been life. There had been Winifred and his children. But the frail of death-agony effort to catch at straws of memory, straws of life from the past, brought on too great a nausea. No, no! No Winifred, no children. No world, no people. Better the agony of dissolution ahead than the nausea of the effort backwards, [...] than that there should be any reaching back towards life. To forget! Utterly, utterly to forget, in the great forgetting of death. (*Collected Stories* 408-09)

Instead of reaching out and reuniting with his family and the society at large, the protagonist is left in utter loneliness. Interestingly, Lawrence relates such worsening sensation to the moment of Egbert's physical death at which he is about to arrive in a few lines afterwards.

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Such dramatisation of Egbert's isolation and personal struggle to be reconciled with his family is how Lawrence delineates the conflicts between the individual and an increasingly industrialised world. The narrative succeeds in depicting such local and personal narrative to represent the whole calamity the larger society is facing. Egbert is arguably the embodiment of a past life and pastoral sensibility which England used to be and is subsequently forced to stand in an isolated patch scattered all over the landscape waiting to be consumed by a more modernised way of living represented by Marshall. The isolation of Egbert is discernible through many levels,

which also reveals how Lawrence conceives what is essential in human relationship. Once again, human sexuality is the common ground in which Lawrence displays such conflicts and their consequences. The issue of masculinity in this short narrative is brought particularly to forefront to dramatise how Egbert is reduced in significant degrees and subsequently isolated from both his own family and the world.

In his struggle to reclaim his lost manliness, Egbert's military undertaking also allows Lawrence to pose an overt attack on World War I and its dehumanising ideology. Seeing it as his last resort to restore his masculine confidence and display his duty towards his society, the war ironically removes the last pieces of individuality from Egbert. Its technologised practice also undermines Egbert's final pursuit of his individual worth and his masculinity. "England, My England" ends with the protagonist finding himself alone in the vast sea of darkness reinforcing the notion of isolation with which the narrative begins its course. Only this time, the scale of which is brought to the highest with no visible end to it.

In another story from *England, My England* Lawrence pursues the notion of isolation caused by the hallowing cruelty of the vicious trench warfare in a life of a war veteran, Maurice, after the end of the First World War in "The Blind Man." While the sea of darkness in "England, My England" is commonly conceived through its metaphorical significance, Lawrence literalises that metaphor in "The Blind Man." Similar to Egbert whose life has been dismantled and disintegrated by the machine-fed warfare, Maurice finds himself after the war in a state of blindness. The passage below delineates the suffering from dreadful isolation through its psychological effect on Isabel, Maurice's wife.

> Sometimes, after months of this intensity, a sense of burden overcame Isabel, a weariness, a terrible *ennui*, in that silent house approached between a colonnade of tall-shattered pines. Then she felt she would go mad, for she could not bear it. And sometimes he had devastating fits of depression, which seemed to lay waste his whole being. It was worse than depression – a black misery, when his own life was a torture to him, and when his presence was unbearable to his wife.
>
> (*Collected Stories* 423)

Beside Maurice, Isabel is the other being who is trapped within this darkness of complete separation. With her war-wounded husband, Isabel has all the more felt the acuteness of loneliness not only because she is invisible to Maurice, but she has been completely cut off from the outer world. Both of them live entirely alone with no one but themselves. Therefore, this state of blind existence can be regarded as Lawrence's critique of the devastation of the Great War in the way that it suggests both the physical disfigurement on the human body as well as the psychological separation and isolation of one's existence in total darkness.

However, "The Blind Man" sets out in a different manner from "England, My England." While the majority of the narrative of "England, My England" places more emphasis on how Egbert comes to be *isolated*, "The Blind Man" marks out the way in which Maurice copes with his life after the war and how he works his way to eliminate the separation caused by the war. In order to depict that effort of reaching out and reuniting with the larger society, Lawrence in "The Blind Man" turns to what seemingly is suggestive of homosexual affiliation. Such prospect is discernible in the

barn scene between Maurice and his friend, Bertie, in which the two characters engage in a tactile that almost immediately appears to be that of homosexual kind.

Many critics view the bond and the touch between Maurice and Bertie as having homosexual undertones. Kate Millet, among others, examines in *Sexual Politics* the possibility of homosexuality in Lawrence's works. According to the critic, homosexuality in Lawrence's works is not simply a sentiment or an inclination camouflaged as minor to heterosexual relationship. On the contrary, any textual representation of homosexual attachments and relationships is in fact the significant and central theme that Lawrence's works fail to keep hidden (Millet 257). The wrestling scene in *Women in Love* between Gerald and Birkin and the barn scene between Maurice and Bertie in "The Blind Man", for instance, are used as obvious evidence of such hypothesis. However, this thesis will argue that rather than having homosexual implications, the forming of male alliance with other males indicates Lawrence's firm belief in companionship and fraternity to ward off the physical and psychological separation caused by the hallowing brutality of the Great War.

In order to capture such experience of war-induced isolation and struggle, Lawrence turns to the private life of the Pervins as the key textual representation. After the war, their lives are measured out in bitter chapters. Maurice has to endure his loss of sight and isolation. Isabel has to put up with her husband's "shattering black moods" (*Collected Stories* 424) and the complete separation from the outside world for she has to at all time tend to her husband's needs. Together, they tolerate each day in resentful solitude. However, as they live together, Lawrence makes sure to dramatise the physical and psychological isolation between the two characters. This idea can be seen when Isabel goes out to look for her husband in the stable. An

impenetrable darkness consumes her; her husband too is lost in the blackness of the night air.

> The loud jarring of the inner door-latch made her start; the door was opened. She could hear and feel her husband entering an invisibly passing among the horses near to her, in darkness as they were, actively intermingled. The rather low sound of his voice as he spoke to the horses came velvety to her nerves. How near he was, and how invisible! The darkness seemed to be in a strange swirl of violent life, just upon her. She turned giddy. (*Collected Stories* 429)

The above scene almost translates the palpably suffocating atmosphere in the stable. Isabel is uneasy and fretful in darkness. The sense of desperation and fear grows within the woman's heart. Maurice himself who at first seems to find no difficulty in this new state of living begins to feel the exasperation and misery of the inability to visualise.

This deprivation altogether affects their lives. They are in one way very entirely close to each other. However, in the intensity of this suffocating intimacy, Lawrence seems to suggest, what is needed is a re-connection with the outside world, which comes during the course of the narrative in the form of a man. Isabel who narrates the first half of the short story imagines the mentioned solution to the reader as she can no longer tolerate such separation and suffocating intimacy: "Dazed, she schemed for a way out. She invited friends, she tried to give him [Maurice] some further connection with the outer world" (*Collected Stories* 424). Eventually Bertie visits the household. To Lawrence, he is the organic representation of the outside world, to which the Pervins, especially the blind Maurice shall reconnect himself back.

Previously, the friendship between Bertie and Maurice is said to be "dead" after Maurice has returned from the war. In Lawrence's words, because of the severity of his war-induced wound, Maurice has "put up a tombstone to their dead friendship" (*Collected Stories* 426). This interestingly sums up the post-war experience of Maurice: how he is wounded to point where he is unable to keep intact any valuable thread of friendship he has had before the outbreak of the war. His physical blindness and isolation, therefore, signify the broken circle of life in the whole scheme of universe which puts one organic being into imposed loneliness and separation.

However, it is not only Maurice or Isabel who is in isolation. Bertie himself is very much a human being unto no one but himself. Bertie is first described by Isabel as being the opposition of Maurice: "Bertie was a barrister and a man of letters, a Scotchman of the intellectual type, quick, ironical, sentimental, and on his knees before the woman he adored but did not want to marry" (*Collected Stories* 425). In other words, what Bertie dreads most is the passionate engagement with another human being whether it be a man or a woman. Presumably, Bertie is another typical Lawrencian character who is too afraid of intimate relationship to be seriously in one himself.

> And he had his friends among the fair sex – not lovers, friends. So long as he could avoid any danger of courtship or marriage, he adored a few women with constant and unfailing homage, and he was chivalrously fond of quite a number. But if they seemed to encroach on him, he withdrew and detested them. (*Collected Stories* 434)

Isabel views this to be Bertie's weakness. With his reservedness and his sheltered seclusion, Bertie is "unable ever to enter into close contact of any sort" (*Collected*

Stories 434). Any physical relationship is merely superficial to his existence. There he also remains, like Maurice, in deep secluded loneliness.

With such isolation in mind, Lawrence devises a restoration of friendship and companionship which he disguises in the narrative in the form of homosexual attachments to heighten the strong bond between the two persons. According to Hugh Stevens, the intimate act of this nature is significantly regarded as the “masculine bonding” which in nearly all Lawrence’s writings “involve[s] and acknowledge[s] strong homoerotic feelings but are nevertheless not defined as ‘homosexual’” ("The Plumed Serpent and the Erotics of Primitive Musculinity" 224, 21). Therefore, as a blind man, Maurice develops a stronger sense of human reception of touch as a compensation of his loss of sight. This allows Lawrence to display the seemingly homosexual alliance between Bertie and Maurice in the barn scene. Yet, what is being explored and revealed here is how one human being re-connects with another human being.

> ‘I thought you were taller,’ he [Maurice] said, starting. Then he laid his hand on Bertie Reid’s head, closing the dome of the skull in a soft, firm grasp, gathering it, as it were; then, shifting his grasp and softly closing again, with a fine, close pressure, till he had covered the skull and the face of the smaller man, tracing the brows, and touching the full, closed eyes, […] The hand of the blind man grasped the shoulder, the arm, the hand of the other man. He seemed to take him, in the soft, travelling grasp. *(Collected Stories 438)*

Beginning by taking in the physical contour of another human being, Maurice establishes a living thread with Bertie. As soon as Bertie is asked to press his figure

on the other man's "disfigured eye-sockets, trembling in every fibre," both of them have by now initiated "a rare understanding" of one another (*Collected Stories* 439,25).

This "rare understanding" is not only on the physical layer of knowing or touching. However, it includes a more superior knowing and taking in of another being different from oneself and, thus, establishing a mutual connection of fellowship. Maurice shouts out loud in glee, "'Oh my God,' he said, 'we shall know each other now, shan't we? We shall know each other now" (*Collected Stories* 439).

> We're all right together now, aren't we?' said Maurice. 'It's all right now, as long as we live, so far as we're concerned?'
>
> […]
>
> Maurice stood with head lifted, as if listening. The new delicate fulfilment of mortal friendship had come as a revelation and surprise to him, something exquisite and uphoped-for. He seemed to be listening to hear if it were real. (*Collected Stories* 439)

Rather than prescribing homosexual possibility to such intimate touch, it is best to consider it as sexless or non-sexual. It is, however, the establishing of human bond between two distinctive human beings. The narrative voice even relates such experience to have religious undertone as if at this moment Maurice is experiencing a religious revelation for at last he succeeds in connecting with another human being other than his wife.

According to Mark Spilka, such experience is described as "the friendship rite" or "the consummation of friendship" in which "one man moves toward greater fullness of being" and has his blindness including his isolation "transcended" (29,157).

However, on the other side stands Bertie annihilated. He has been all along filled with an acute sense of revulsion and a desperate desire to escape. Lawrence describes Bertie at the moment of this experience as being “mute and terror-struck” (*Collected Stories* 439). At the end of the narrative, Bertie appears to be completely destroyed by Maurice’s touch: “He could not bear it that he had been touched by the blind man, his insane reserve broken in. He was like a mollusc whose shell is broken” (*Collected Stories* 440). Yet, what in fact Bertie wants to escape from, as Lawrence has it, is the “hot, poignant love, the passion of friendship” Maurice offers in the touch. Therefore, what is actually being destroyed and broken in Bertie is “his outer bulwark against life” (Spilka 29). In other words, the outer shell of Bertie’s superficial life has been cracked open by the touch of passionate friendship. The neuter nothingness at the centre of his life is at last exposed and destroyed. The fulfillment is mutual, the friendship is reinstalled, and their previously broken bond is back connected.

By looking at it this way, the possibility of homosexuality in the case of Bertie and Maurice’s relationship is very slim as it is not either the case in Gerald and Birkin’s in *Women in Love*. Lawrence only utilises such sexual intimacy to demarcate “man’s capacity for physical, non-sexual communion with his fellow man” (Spilka 162) and the notion of living connection in human existence: one does not stay hidden in the compound of one’s marriage and “let everybody and everything else fade into insignificance” like what Maurice and Isabel do in the early post-war years of marriage (*Collected Stories* 425). That is, one is always connected with the outer world. If isolation or separation is brought about by whatever force, a re-connection must be on its way. The “friendship rite” in “The Blind Man” advocates to such an idea. It portrays how one is in isolation and how that “rite” is needed to be performed.

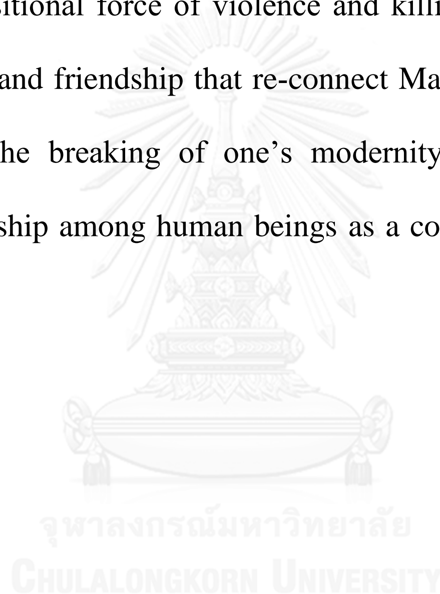
This is how Lawrence views it as a necessity for one to break such isolation and to connect with the world outside. Homoeroticism is simply deployed to accentuate the intensity of such connection against the severe intervention of the machine-fed warfare.

In addition to that, homosexuality comes in play to make the living balance complete and whole. This idea is earlier presented in *Women in Love*. When Birkin proposes to Ursula that he wishes to form an affiliation with Gerald, it is not merely homosexual inclination that is at play. On the contrary, what Lawrence suggests there as he is doing it as well in "The Blind Man" is the maintaining of balance in one's existence. If Ursula represents a personal commitment and relationship, Birkin's relationship with Gerald will come to stand for his desire for freedom and unrestricted nonsexual kind of relationship. In extension, as Birkin and Gerald's relationship also suggests, Maurice's seemingly homosexual touch with another man has more of symbolic significance than literally homosexual meaning. It is presumably the symbol of one human being's further connection outside one's own private life, an organic connection with the wider world that includes love as well as responsibility.

To sum up, in contrasting disparity the two short stories represent Lawrence's wish to communicate to his contemporary society. By focusing on two private households, the novelist charts cultural and political climate of his time. Being one significant force, isolation drives the protagonist in "England, My England" to war in hope to find what he has lost in the increasingly modernised way of living. Ironically, what the man finds in the battlefield is the materialisation of war ideology where one individual worth and long-held presumption concerning the notion of masculinity and the code of honour are being shattered and undermined by the cruel reality of the

technology-fed warfare. Therefore, instead of finding what he wishes to reclaim, he dies in the remote landscape of darkness.

If ever Egbert were to live on after the war, his life would not be much different from that of Maurice from “The Blind Man.” Maurice has to endure his physical blindness and the accompanying depression. Like Egbert, he lives in dark isolation that with each passing day seems to grow more threatening. While Lawrence depicts the war as a way of reuniting with the wider world in “England, My England,” he turns to the oppositional force of violence and killing in “The Blind Man.” It is love, passion, touch, and friendship that re-connect Maurice, Isabel as well as Bertie together signifying the breaking of one’s modernity-generated isolation and the expansion of relationship among human beings as a counter force to war that breaks and destroys them.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CHAPTER V
"AN ORGANIC WHOLE" AND "A PLUCKED APPLE": RESURRECTION IN THE PRIMEVAL WORLD IN *LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER*

This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
[…]
That England, that was wont to conquer others,
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.
William Shakespeare, *Richard II*

From William Shakespeare to D. H. Lawrence, the beauty of England has been compared with the majestic beauty of Eden. However, to make such comparison whole, it is inevitable that both writers should also write about the loss of that paradise-like tranquility and complacency, and the fall of mankind. In the same way Shakespeare depicts such lamentable loss in John of Gaunt's famous soliloquy during his dying moments in *Richard II*, Lawrence displays these similar sentiments in several of his works. To recall, the opening of "England, My England" does serve as one of the best examples in portraying Lawrence's likelihood to perceive England as a primeval world of Edenic paradise.

> The green garden path, the tufts of flowers, purple and white columbines, and great oriental red poppies with their black chaps and mulleins tall and yellow: this flamy garden which had been a garden for a thousand years, scooped out in the little hollow among the snake-infested commons. (*Collected Stories* 381)

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The paradise described in "England, My England" is by now lost for the pastoral landscapes have already been intruded and torn to "patches" by what Lawrence perceived to be the demonic feet and hands of modern technology. The Adam-like figure, Egbert, only remains in his blind refusal of the long lost past. Throughout the whole course of the narrative, Egbert seems to be stubbornly working in vain to recreate a primitive world of the past and rebuild the natural fortress against "the spear of modern invention." Yet, he fails tremendously in regaining his lost paradise.

As Egbert fails, Lawrence allows once again another attempt in retrieving the lost Eden in his last novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*[1] (1928). In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*'s world, England or the world at large has already been ripped apart by a destructive process starting with the Industrial Revolution, urbanisation and modernisation, and the Great War as the final destruction. Especially in England, Lawrence sees a double descent into a gulf of chasm. The first stroke is the advent of Industrial Revolution and the second blow is the First World War, which hit England in the face causing a far greater destruction than ever.

> England, my England! But which is my England? The stately homes of England make good photographs, and create the illusion of a connection with the Elizabethans. The handsome old halls are there, for the days of Good Queen Anne and Tom Jones. But smuts fall

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[1] There are actually three versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* which were written during the years of 1926-1928. Varying in length and theme the first version is *The First Lady Chatterley* which according to Frieda is the best of the three while the second version was written in 1927 under a new title of *John Thomas and Lady Jane*. Many alterations occurred during the final rewriting including the naming and characterisation of major characters for example Parkin in the first two versions becomes Mellors in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Although it is argued that the last version is not the best, (yet it is the one under discussion here) it is the novel in which the tension of life and sexual desire are best played out against the industrial Midlands ravaged setting which runs parallel to the secluded world of the wood.

> blacker and blacker on the drab stucco, that has long ceased to be golden. […]
>
> Now they are pulling down the stately homes, the Georgian halls are going. Fritchley, a perfect old Georgian mansion, was even now, as Connie passed in the car, being demolished. It was in perfect repair; till the war, the Weatherbys had lived in style there. But now it was too big, too expansive, and the country had become too uncongenial. […]
>
> This is history. One England blots out another. The mines had made the halls wealthy. Now they were blotting them out, as they had already blotted out the cottages. The industrial England blots out the agricultural England. One meaning blots out another. The new England blots out the old England. And the continuity is not organic, but mechanical. (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 156)

Three long paragraphs describe the change of England's physical landscape. From the old primitive world of England, Lady Chatterley or Connie witnesses "the terrifying, new and gruesome England" that has been characterised by its blackening walls and halls of "the stately homes," the depletion and disappearance of hills and countryside, and, in its place, the coal mines and the machines.

Beginning the above passage is Lawrence's reference to William Ernest Henley's poem (1849-1903). By doing so, he poses an overt attack on the propagandistic and patriotic sentiment that the poem, "England, My England" seeks to harvest from the public audience. Instead of undermining such sentiment and the practice of war as he has done in the short story, Lawrence verbalises a blunt rhetorical question tinted with strong sarcasm. As Henley seeks to plant the seed of

patriotism into the heart of his reader through the reinforcement of pride in their own land, Lawrence directly asks “But which is my England?” *That* England that Henley proposes in his poem for which one can sacrifice oneself, according to Lawrence, has already been put to death. Similar to Shakespeare’s *Richard II*, *that* England has already disappeared. To Lawrence, there is no known England for one to feel proud for. Therefore, since the source of pride has already been ruined, such patriotism that the poem seeks to raise is mere emptiness. It is even more ironic considering while Henley is raising patriotism through his propagandistic poem to fight against other nations in war, Lawrence extensively argues that it is by the same destructive workings of warfare and industrialisation that have made Henley’s attempt impossible for *the* England one can give one’s life for is simply not there anymore.

Moreover, the artistic inclination to see England as Eden is not only to emphasise the loss of such primeval magnificence. The comparison is to allow Lawrence to explore how such loss and transformation come to occur, and, above all else, in what way one can work in an effort to regain the paradise they have been deprived of. Having mentioned already the waste landscape of England, what is left is the people who shall occupy it. Just like in “England, My England,” there exist in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* the figures of Adam and Eve in a world after the great fall of mankind, who shall be the principle characters in which Lawrence displays both the loss and the transformation altogether. Those characters are the upper class Lady Constance Chatterley who is married to Lord Clifford Chatterley and the gamekeeper of their estate, Oliver Mellors. According to Hugh Stevens, Lawrence’s “bleakest realisation of the destructiveness of the industrial and the modern” in the novel is revealed through the portrayal of these characters ("D. H. Lawrence: Organicism and

the Modernist Novel" 142). At the onset of the novel, Lawrence portrays these three characters especially Lady Chatterley as being “a plucked apple” that has fallen off the tree representing the lack of natural connection with the “organic whole” (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 37). However, unlike Adam and Eve in the Book of Genesis, Lady Chatterley and Oliver Mellors in their seemingly fallen state of vital deprivation seem to be able to rejuvenate their barren life and, at last, find their way back to the primeval Garden of Eden. That vital return as presented vividly in the novel is accomplished through their own resurrected human sexuality, for which the novel itself is notoriously infamous.

As Lawrence’s last novel, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* is arguably the most important work regarding its social impact on the cultural topography of English society. Although the novel was privately published in Florence in 1928, it risked the threat of censorship and confiscation. Because of its overt sexual expression and its explicit use of sexual expletives, the book was deemed then as posing a “threat to public morality” (Sandbrook n. pag.). Naturally, the book is believed to be “the most notorious novel of the century” and has been condemned to be Lawrence’s “dreary, sad performance with some passages of unintentional, hilarious, low comedy” (qdt. in Sandbrook n. pag.). Concerning the court persecution itself, the jury had been asked:

> “Would you approve of your young sons, young daughters – because girls can read as well as boys – reading this book? Is it a book that you would have lying around in your own house? Is it a book that you would even wish your wife or your servants to read?”
>
> (qdt. in Sandbrook n. pag.)

To a number of people, what Lawrence presents in this book is filled with dirty sex and lacks in substance any moral code of conduct or literary significance as such would be deemed appropriate to the Victorian culture of prudency. Therefore, many saw it fit to ban what they perceived as an immoral book and, by doing so, protect the reading audience from being contaminated and corrupted by such a book.

However, later on with the implementation of the Obscene Publications Act of 1959 which allowed the publishers to escape conviction if they could show that the work was of literary merit, the ban of the novel was lifted in the USA in 1959 and in England in 1960. Several figures in literary, academic, and religious circles such as E. M. Forster, Cecil Day-Lewis, Rebecca West, Richard Hoggart and John Robinson, the Bishop of Woolich, appeared as witnesses. They were persuaded that the book in question including its linguistic expressions of erotica and pornography had within it a certain measure of literary merit. Geoffrey Robertson also views the Chatterley Trial in 1960 as the focal point in English cultural landscape concerning human sexuality. It has been argued that at this period sexual revolution actually began as very well noted in Philip Larkin's "Annus Mirabilis":

> Sexual intercourse began
> In nineteen sixty-three
> (which was rather late for me) –
> Between the end of the Chatterley ban
> And the Beatles' first LP.

It is possible to say that the acquittal of Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and the victory of the trial are indicators of English's growing tolerance of sexual freedom and difference. In short, it marks a freer society where sexual openness will not be easily discouraged. Such sexual emancipation is gradually visible in the tolerance of

homosexuality, the use of contraceptive medicine and abortion during and after this period. Aside to sexual liberation, the new obscenity as well as the unbanning of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* marked the period in which "modernism, if not literature and culture in general, was finally and fully ungagged" (Bradshaw 111).

Before this triumphant moment of literary freedom and the implementation of the Obscene Publications Act of 1959, Lawrence himself was incensed to justify his sexual politics and its explicitness in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The following excerpt from "A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'"[2] (1930), aims to give a more explicit take on what he wishes the public to gain from the reading *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

> To them, sex means just plainly, and simply lady's underclothing, and the fumbling therewith. […]
>
> That ghastly crudity of seeing in sex nothing but a functional act and a certain fumbling with clothes is, in my opinion, a low degree of barbarism, savagery. (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 315)

Lawrence sees this as the common practice concerning sexuality in modern society of his time. What people see in his novel is immediately linked to their normal consciousness toward what sex is viewed according to the Victorian attitudes. That is to say, any sexual expression is pornographic or on the topic of sex people are instantly reminded of what is underneath the clothing. Quite different from that, Lawrence's sexual representations in the novel are not nudity or pornographic. In his 1929 essay entitled "Pornography and Obscenity", the author famously writes:

[2] The copy of "A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'" which is offered in this thesis is taken from Penguin's 2006 edition of Lady *Chatterley's Lover*.

> Pornography is the attempt to insult sex, to do dirt on it. […] The insult to the human body, the insult to a vital human relationship! Ugly and cheap they make the human nudity, ugly and degraded, they make the sexual act, trivial and cheap and nasty.
>
> (*D. H. Lawrence: Late Essays and Articles* 241)

Therefore, the novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, aims to change that Victorian sexual attitude by openly addressing the issue of sexuality without frisson or reticence.

Concerning the perceived immoral, sick, and corrupt sexual experience in the text, Lawrence truly believed his work could not be considered as in any way pornographic because pornography and his writing had a different standing. In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, sex is of regenerating and elevating kind. It is his celebration of the physical and the bodily that aims to re-connect human life back to human most primitive desire. He further argues in "A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'" that "Obscenity only comes in when the mind despises and fears the body, and the body hates and resists the mind" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 309). Therefore, what's more that is presented here is Lawrence's politics of obscenity that shall rebalance the disequilibrium between the mind and the body resolving the tension of such conflict.

Therefore, sex in his novel is not cheap or trivial. It is not even merely a physical matter. As implied from the passage above, Lawrence's sexual act would be something very much different from the Victorian consciousness towards the idea of sex. In contrast to the "modern sex" which Lawrence regards as "personal and nervous, and in effect, exhaustive disintegrative" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 327), what Lawrence presents in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is the kind of sexual act that the hope for England as well as its people's regeneration can be based upon. This brings us

back to Lawrentian philosophy of "blood consciousness." Lawrence writes in "A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'" that only "the true, positive blood-contract, not the nervous negative reaction" can establish "the living and re-vitalising connection between man and woman" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 327). What is interesting about this sexual revision is that the notion of sexuality is no longer confined within the realm of reproduction and procreation. The text in extension presents sexual experience as a regenerating organic force countering the inexorable march of technological and industrial modernity in the early years of twentieth century, which emphasises a sudden departure from the human to the mechanical. To put it differently, the sexual act in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, in its most basic form, displays the liberation of and the return to the instinctual self, and, in its highest form, the organic and the regenerative forces that shall rejuvenate the body as well as the spirit and, thus, connect it back to its organic whole.

Lady Chatterley's Lover charts the cultural, social, and economic landscapes of British society towards the final half of the nineteenth century to the end of World War I, which were largely characterised by the second phase of the Industrial Revolution, also known as the Second Industrial Revolution or the Technological Revolution. This large stage of Industrial Revolution corresponded with the economic and technological progress with an increasing adoption of mass manufacturing, the factory electrification, and the large scale of machine tools. Among its major production was the larger scale of iron and steel. This phenomenon is exemplified in the characterisation of Sir Clifford Chatterley, who more than anyone in the novel, is a typical Victorian upper class character. Although he becomes crippled because of

the war, he still possesses a high regard of himself as belonging to a ruling class. As he fails in art, Clifford tries to reassert his power in the mining business.

> He began to read again his technical works on the coal-mining industry, he studied the government reports, and he read with care the latest things on mining and the chemistry of coal and of shale with were written in German. […]
>
> At first he thought the solution lay in electricity: convert the coal into electric power, there at the pit-head, and sell the power. Then a new idea came. The Germans invented a new locomotive engine with a self-feeder that did not need a fireman. And it was to be fed with a new fuel, that burnt in small quantities at a great heat, under peculiar conditions.
>
> The idea of a new concentrated fuel that burnt with a hard slowness at a fierce heat was what first attracted Clifford. There must be some sort of external stimulus to the burning of such fuel, not merely air supply. He began to experiment, and got a clever young fellow who had proved brilliant in chemistry, to help him.
>
> (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 107-08)

This long excerpt reveals how Clifford moves from research into experiment and, finally, that experiment actually produces an enormous change in the industry of coal-mining. Moreover, as it is presented in the quotation above, new materials are being used in the business such as electricity, internal combustion engine, and chemicals.

Such industrial development later becomes the sole interest of Clifford. Lawrence renders such experience to be a result of the madness of industrial greed for

relentless power. In other words, Clifford is madly possessed by this unremitting desire to keep his pits and his industry active and going.

> He (Clifford) knew he ought to find some way of *using* it (his coal), or converting it, so that he needn't sell it, or needn't have the chagrin of failing to sell it. But if he made electric power, could he sell that? or use it? And to convert into oil was as yet too costly and too elaborate. To keep industry alive there must be more industry, and more industry, and more industry, like madness. (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 214)

His mad activeness and industrial prowess is characterised by his attempt to gain as much as possible from the pits. Corresponding to the technological and scientific progress of the time, Clifford aims to utilise such development in his business in order to gain more money. Yet, what is highly emphasised in this passage is not his greed for money alone but the endless process line of production in the industrial world. There has to be more industry "and more industry and more industry." According to Jae-Kyung Koh, at this point of time Clifford has become the embodiment of "the inhuman mechanical determinism of the post war period" (190). However, Lawrence explicitly states that such unrelenting continuity and mad determinism are "like madness" "and it require[s] a madman to succeed in it" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 214). Clifford is apparently that figure of a madman trying to keep the industrial engine running for the sake of running itself.

As it is wont to be in Lawrence's fiction, the author goes down to the family unit to depict such mad desire to keep the industry "alive". In this case, it is portrayed in the relationship between Clifford and Connie. As a typical Victorian gentleman, there is more to his name than title and estate. Having lost his elder brother in the war,

Clifford becomes the last living heir of Wragby Hall, an estate somewhere in “the smoky Midlands” (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 5). Thus, it is his one imperative duty as well as many Victorians’, to produce an heir to keep the Chatterley name alive. At this point, Lawrence does exceedingly well in paralleling his mechanical desire to have an heir regardless of the fact that he is sexually impotent with Clifford’s mad pursuit towards the continuity of industrial mechanism.

> “I’m sorry we can’t have a son,” she said.
>
> He looked at her slowly, with his full, pale-blue eyes.
>
> “It would almost be a good thing if you had a child by another man,” he said. “If we brought it up at Wragby, it would belong to us and to the place. I don’t believe very intensely in fatherhood. If we had the child to rear, it would be our own. And it would carry on. Don’t you think it’s worth considering?”
>
> “Connie looked up at him at last. The child, her child, was just an “it” to him. It – it – it! (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 43-44)

This conversation takes place when Clifford is very much concerned with his physical impotency. Yet, he is enormously determined to preserve “[the] tradition of England.” At this “tradition” to have a child or an heir to carry on the family name and its property bewilders and, eventually, enrages Connie. Clifford talks as if a child who is to carry his name is a mere instrument of some designated purposes. “It” only appears to be of some use to Clifford in the similar way he is trying to make use of his coal and his electricity. Worse still, he does not even mind very much the fact that he cannot be the biological father of the child to be conceived. This suggests the hollowness and emptiness of his love for the child as his own and, more vividly, it

casts a doubt on his love for Connie. That is, Clifford also sees her as his instrument that can breed him a child to rear, nay to use.

Lawrence further links, quite extensively, that conversation of a child bearing to Clifford's sexual condition. Firstly, it is an emphasis on Lawrence's direct criticism of the Great War by reinforcing the fact that Clifford is sexually disabled. However, the criticism is much deeper in this scene. It is ironic how a man who later will become obsessed with the unrelenting madness of the coal mine industry is formally wounded to the point of being sexually impotent by the machine-fed warfare. Moreover, as he is shipped back home physically crippled, Clifford in this very scene is revealed to the reader to be as well emotionally "paralysed" to the point of being dead.

> "But what do the occasional connections matter? And the occasional sexual connections especially? If people don't exaggerate them ridiculously, they pass like the mating of birds. And so they should. [...] You and I are interwoven in a marriage. If we stick to that, we ought to be able to arrange this sex thing as we arrange going to the dentist: since fate has given us a check-mate physically there."
>
> (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 44)

What Lawrence believes to be most valuable to human existence is discarded as "occasional sexual connections" by Clifford. He talks of sex and personal relationships between man and woman with no intimate feeling or emotional bond. It is rather mechanical in the way he speaks of sex as he compares it to "going to the dentist" or the use of the verb "arrange" as if sex is something like a business transaction that can be "arranged" dispassionately.

This paralysed state of Clifford's existence has a profound effect on Connie. What Lawrence presents through Connie is also one of the significant cultural landscapes of British society. While Clifford's life and his interest suggest the next phase of industrial development and warfare in England, Connie's state of being indicates cultural and social barrenness, and a severe touch of what Eliot calls in "Ulysses, Order, and Myth" "the immense panorama of futility and anarchy" in human existence brought about by the devastating hand of the industrial and technological progress ("Ulysses, Order, and Myth" 178). To illustrate, Lawrence gives a vivid physiognomic description of Connie that, at the same time, reveals her lack of spiritual vitality in the beginning of chapter VII: "her body should have had a full, downward-slipping richness. But it lacked something" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 70). Additionally, her barren physicality is immediately linked with her lost vitality and diminishing spirit of womanhood.

> Instead of ripening its firm, down-running curves, her body was flattening and going a little harsh. It was as if it had not had enough sun and warmth. It was a little grayish and sapless. Disappointed of its real womanhood, it had not succeeded in becoming boyish and unsubstantial and transparent. Instead, it had gone opaque.
>
> Her breasts were rather small, without meaning hanging there. But they were unripe, a little bitter, without meaning hanging there. And her belly had lost the fresh round gleam it had had when she was young, in the days of her German boy, who loved her really physically.
>
> (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 70)

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In its highly sexual tone, the passage delineates Connie's physical as well as spiritual loss of vitality. Her womanhood and, in extension, her existence becomes meaningless and sterile. The presence of her body is described as being "without meaning".

Moreover, Lawrence connects the physical and spiritual barrenness of Connie with the barren and denuded landscapes of the natural world to connote a far more devastating effect of modernity on both the human psyche and the natural surroundings. The aim is to create both a metaphorical and literal dramatic impact.

> This was one of the places that Sir Geoffrey had cut during the war, for trench timber. The whole knoll, which rose softly on the right of the riding, was denuded and strangely forlorn. On the crown of the knoll where the oaks had stood, now was bareness […].
>
> (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 42)

The descriptions of "a ravaged landscape" come to be used by Lawrence in an overt attempt to criticise the purposelessness of the war for which England has sacrificed the natural world ("D. H. Lawrence: Organicism and the Modernist Novel" 142). On the figurative level, the image of the bare hill and barren landscape symbolises the physical and spiritual injuries of Connie who has her womanhood and vitality gone to waste.

A more modern doctor would say this state of being is the result of depression: "You're spending your vitality without making any. Can't go on, you know Depression! Avoid depression!" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 78). However, as the narrative implies, what is more likely to be the cause of Connie's decreasing vitality may significantly lie with her husband. Clifford is described to be a man in "[a]

strange denial of the common pulse of humanity" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 14). Connie believes that it is because Clifford is "much too hurt in himself" that he can barely find it possible to have "connection with other people."

> But she [Connie] could not help feeling how little connection he really had with people. The miners were, in a sense, his own men: but he saw them as objects rather than men, parts of the pit rather than as parts of life, and crude raw phenomena rather than human beings along with him. […]
>
> He was remotely interested: but like a man looking down a microscope, or up a telescope. He was not in touch. He was not in actual touch with anything or anybody; save traditionally, with Wragby, and through the close bond of family defence, with Emma. Beyond this, nothing really touched him. Connie felt that she herself didn't really, not really touch him. She had never finally got at him: perhaps there was nothing at get at, ultimately: just a negation of human contact. (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 15-16)

Having been mechanised by the great wheel of modernity which materialises itself in the form of industrialisation and modernised warfare, perhaps Clifford can be compared with Gerald in *Women in Love* or Anton in *The Rainbow*. Therefore, in his life with his wife, Clifford remains aloof and detached physically as well as emotionally. Together with his war condition, the passage above implies that industrial life is the true cause that disconnects Clifford from the "common impulse of humanity." To many critics, it is Clifford's "devotion to the mechanical principle" which frustrates Connie the most (Koh 190). This, according to the narrative, affects

Connie a great deal for she herself becomes an isolated figure whose vitality has been drained out of her day by day in the deserted house she shares with her sexually crippled husband who is not only sexually impotent, but psychically barren.

Lawrence expands the degree of such disconnectedness further beyond the level of human relationship. Connie can no longer feel connected with the natural surroundings.

> But it [the wood] was not really a refuge, a sanctuary, because she had no connection with it. It was only a place where she could get *away* from the rest. She never really touched the spirit of the wood itself – if it had any such nonsensical thing.
>
> Vaguely, she knew herself that she was going to pieces in some way. Vaguely, she knew she was out of connection: she had lost touch with the substantial and vital world. (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 20)

The passage above recalls the image of “a plucked apple” falling out of a tree and Connie is one of the principal characters in the novel to whom the textual symbolism mainly applies. By extending Connie’s disconnected state of existence to the natural world, what is implied is Lawrence’s attitude towards the relationship between human beings and their environment. Since characters like Clifford, Connie, and Mellors are formally organic beings made unnatural, their disconnected state of existence suggests the organic discontinuity between their lives and the natural universe. In other words, they are like machines in the garden.

To regain a diminishing vitality and a formal state of organic existence, Lawrence explores Connie and Mellors’ relationship including their sexual contact. Having been “dazed, disappointed, [and] lost” in her sexual act with Michaelis whose

characterisation is reminiscent of Anton in *The Rainbow* (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 29), Connie seeks the kind of contact that yields in very movement the sparks of life and it is in the wood where she unexpectedly finds what her feeble soul longs for.

> Then all the five coops were occupied by hens, three brown and a grey and a black. All alike they clustered themselves down on eggs in the soft nestling ponderosity of the female urge, the female nature, fluffing out their feathers. And with brilliant eyes they watched Connie, as she crouched before them, and they gave sharp clucks of anger and alarm, but chiefly of female anger at being approached.
>
> (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 113)

The above passage comes both as a shock and revelation to Connie. Firstly, having seen the hens cluster down on eggs, it reminds her of her “unused” womanhood and her neglected female sensitivity. Secondly, the scene represents in extension the sign of life and liveliness to which her life after marriage has been infinitely divorced. Not only her sexuality that has not been satisfied, but her sense of womanhood and, to a certain extent, her sense of purposive self, have been left to waste. Moreover, this scene reinforces the similar sensation within Connie, the one which she has when she first catches a sight of Mellor washing himself in the backyard. The naked-to-the-hips figure of Mellors is described as “a certain beauty of a pure creature” and “a certain lambency, the warm white flame of a single life revealing itself in contours that one might touch: a body!” (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 66). What Connie sees within Mellors is that spark of life similar to what Lawrence projects some fifty pages later. She is, therefore, reminded of what she truly needs, of what sex really means to her.

Lawrence's association of these two scenes makes that comparison even more explicit to the reader as well as to Connie.

Rather than being exhaustive and disintegrative, Lawrence's sexual experience between Connie and Mellors is pertaining to the experience of rejuvenation and regeneration. According to Spilka, this kind of sexual experience including "the act of love itself is the communion-rite" that will lead to a gradual "change in being" as well as in their private relationship regarding their sexuality and their developed personality (187, 90). To illustrate, having been through a series of tragic circumstances with his wife as well as in the war, Mellors develops a solitary soul which has lost "the old connecting passion" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 118). However, his sexual act with Connie breaks him open. He is once again reconnected with life and humanity in his sexual contact with Connie: "She [Connie] had connected him up again, when he had wanted to be alone" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 118). To Connie, this sexual experience is described as "a new stirring, a new nakedness emerging" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 125).

> And she felt the soft bud of him within her stirring and in strange rhythms flushing up into her, with a strange, rhythmic growing motion, swelling and swelling till it filled all her cleaving consciousness. And then began again the unspeakable motion that was not really motion, but pure deepening whirlpools of sensation, swirling deeper and deeper through all her tissue and consciousness, till she was one perfect concentric fluid of feeling. And she lay there crying in unconscious, inarticulate cries, the voice out of the uttermost night, the

> life-exclamation. And the man heard it beneath him with a kind of awe, as his life sprang out into her. (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 134)

With this regenerating experience of sex, Connie goes back home and is then regarded as "very different from her old self, and as if she was sinking deep, deep to the centre of all womanhood, and the sleep of creation" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 135). Mellors, on the other hand, "returns, from lonely isolation, to life and warmhearted love" (Spilka 190). What, therefore, can be implied from this kind of regenerating experience of sex is Lawrence's attitude towards sex that the author believes the true sexual contact will generate a blossoming of life and whirlpool of sensation. Both Connie and Mellors oppose the industrial mechanical barrenness of Clifford through sustaining "the spirit of life" and their most primitive human sensation of love and sexual feeling (Koh 203). This, according to Lawrence's philosophy of "blood-consciousness", is believed to be a significant return to human's source of life power from which a meaningful existence can emerge.

Moreover, as Connie as well as Mellors who have been cut apart from their own humanity in different manners, are being tuned back to their life force, they are as well brought together in this intimate contact in order to produce a meaningful relationship. This includes their mutual respect and their passionate love for each other (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 206). By doing so, Lawrence relates the physical experience of sexual intercourse with a spiritual rebirth. To put it differently, in the sexual passage above that is highly filled with physical passion and sexual desire, Lawrence also presents the idea of spiritual transformation to imply the cohesion between the mind and the body in human relationships. To illustrate, formally, Connie, for example, is believed to be cultivating her vitality without producing any. After the

most intimate physical contact with another human being, Connie is being rejuvenated both in mind and in body for it is described that in her womb Connie feels intensely both the physical yearning for such touch and the new stirring of life reincarnated: "human sensuality that warms the blood and freshens the whole being" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 71).There at this uttermost physical moment, Connie is bodily as well as spiritually reborn. Thus this is how Lawrence resolves the tension between mind and body, and how he subtly undermines the intensely sexual overtone of the book for it is not only the physical level of existence alone that Connie is being resurrected. It is, on the contrary, her emotional as well as spiritual vitalities.

However, such sexual passages in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* are there not only to be undermined. Lawrence subscribes equally to both the physical and the spiritual levels of human existence. Therefore, its sexual explicitness is aimed to produce another effect. The novel is written in the language of sexuality which was, then, unprintable in order for Lawrence to put an even more vivid emphasis on human experience concerning sexuality at the destructive encroachment of modernity. As a writer in the time of what Lawrence calls "the atrophied England", the need to bring back human beings to their life force and regenerate their existence is urgently imperative. As Battaille states in *Eroticism* that "the whole business of eroticism is to strike to the inmost core of the living being so that the heart stands still," this aim is partly achieved through its unexpurgated references to sexual organs (17). Notice the difference between the narrative voice and language used in Lawrence's formal pre-war novels like *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* and that of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*'s. Corresponding to the post-war sterility, the degree of sexual explicitness in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is, therefore, quite dramatic. While *The Rainbow* and *Women*

in Love may have suffered a certain degree of public persecution, its language and style are nothing compared to *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, a novel that has entirely been composed after Lawrence has seen in its totality the magnitude of post-war destruction and hopelessness caused by the Great War. Propelled by such sentiments of loss and despair that surpasses what he has conceived or imagined before the beginning of the war, sexual passages and expletives in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* point to the author's great effort to remedy and revitalise the machine-induced agony and sufferings in all human beings by presenting a narrative in its stark nakedness of sexual desire and human passion. Certain sexual passages in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* that contain explicit language of sexuality such as the f-word or the c-word are, therefore, meant to indicate the author's moral seriousness and artistic integrity to encourage men and women to "think sex, fully, completely, honestly, and cleanly" for, to Lawrence, it is necessary to "use the so-called obscene words, because these are a natural part of the mind's consciousness of the body" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 308, 09). It is, in other words, the way to bring human beings back to their most primitive human nature through the presentation of human sexuality that is completely devoid of reticence and decoration.

Apart from the language of sexuality, the idea of nakedness is also discernible in the narrative act of the two principle characters. Oftentimes, in their uttermost private and intimate moments Connie and Mellors dress in nothing else but their own naked skin. On the figurative level, Lawrence's notion of nakedness goes far beyond the idea of freedom and liberation. Rather, it is the complete exposure of human passion and desire: "Through a little frightened, she [Connie] let him [Mellors] have his way, and the reckless, shameless sensuality shook her to her foundations, stripped

her to the very last, and made a different woman of her" (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 246). The affect of which is intended on both the characters as well as on the reader's side. To both parties, the complete disclosure of human body and passion in the novel signifies the direct confrontation of their own primitive emotion and desire that have been marred or disabled by the industrial and modern warfare. "With the fire of sheer sensuality" of Connie and Mellors, the readers, too, are brought back to their own humanity.

Moreover, in the same way the language of sexuality itself is devoid of decoration or embellishment, Connie and Mellors' nakedness is free from the feeling of shame and embarrassment. It is, in other words, the complete nakedness stripped down to the core.

> In this short summer night she [Connie] learnt so much. She would have thought a woman would have died of shame. Instead of which, the shame died. Shame, which is fear: the deep organic shame, the old, old physical fear which crouches in the bodily roots of us, and can only be chased away by the sensual fire, at last it was roused up and routed by the phallic hunt of the man, and she came to the very heart of the jungle of herself. She felt, now, she had some to the real bed-rock of her nature, and was essentially shameless. She felt a triumph, almost a vainglory. So! That was how it was! That was life! That was how oneself really was! There was nothing left to disguise or be ashamed of. (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 247)

Interestingly, the human passion and sexual desire comes to symbolise in this scene as the religious fire of purification. The symbolism in this passage reinforces the idea

that human beings under current social and cultural tradition of the Victorian era concerning the notion of sexuality has been soiled. The vision has been marred and the thought has been discouraged. Therefore, what Lawrence is trying to do, according to this passage, is to present a narrative that will challenge that sexual attitude and purify it. This effort to purge human sexual experience from the social construction of fear and shame that has long prevailed is aimed to reach the state of nakedness of physical passion free from imposed shame. This is vividly exemplified in the voluptuous touch and sensual exchange between Connie and Mellors. The palpable fire of their sexual passion that has subjected the novel itself under persecution in the first place is transformed into the fire of purification that shall rid all shame and fear from the genuine expression of human emotion.

In their experience of sexual revitalisation, Lawrence uses a number of natural imagery. Derived alone from the previous passage, there are “the bed-rock of her nature”, “the roots of us”, and “the very heart of the jungle of herself.” These images manifestly reinforce the notion of primitivism in all human beings. That is, in their sexual contact, Connie and Mellors have been regenerated and returned to their organic existence.

> She (Connie) slipped on her rubber shoes again and ran out with a wild little laugh, holding up her breasts to the heavy rain and spreading her arms, and running blurred in the rain with the eurythmic dance-movements she had learned so long ago in Dresden […]
> He (Mellors) laughed wryly, and threw off his clothes. It was too much. He jumped out, naked and white, with a little shiver, into the hard, slanting rain. (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* 221)

More important than that is Lawrence's emphasis on the existence of the natural world in which the two characters are mostly engaging in their sexual experience. The above scene depicts how Connie and Mellor, stripped naked, run through the rain in their most liberating and exuberant moment. Yet, what is implied is their relation to the natural surroundings which can be discernible in their organic exchange and interaction with the rain, and, in some other scenes, with the wood at large. According to Draper, this interaction with the natural world also implies Lawrence's theory of wholeness of being which is achieved through a "vivid electric flow of energy between the poles within one human being or 'between the individual himself and other individuals concerned in his living, or between him and his immediate surroundings, human, physical, geographical'" (24). This natural flow is, therefore, threefold in the representation of Connie and Mellors's relationship. Firstly, the "vivid electric flow is within one's self in their sexual encounter, and, thereby, both of them are exchanging the natural flow of energy between themselves. More importantly, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* also extends that natural flow beyond human interaction to the organic exchange between a human being and its immediate geographical surroundings.

At the height of their relationship in the primitive space of the wood, Lawrence also recalls in this scene as well as in others, the biblical images of Adam and Eve reincarnated in the figures of Mellors and Connie respectively. Formally in the beginning of the novel, the two characters are represented as the fallen Adam and Eve in their disconnectedness from the Garden of Eden. Yet, later on in the secluded scenes in the wood, Lawrence seems to celebrate "the aloneness of two people, and their passion: isolated, ecstatic beings, 'in the formal scheme of a pastoral idyll'"

(Cavitch 197). In other words, through their sexual rejuvenation, Connie and Mellors accomplish in reclaiming that sensual, primitive touch or organic connection with the primeval world exemplified in the natural imagery, their interaction with wood, and their decision to live their lives in the Grange Farm at the end of the narrative. They are now more than ever sharing the common organic impulse with the natural world. Ultimately, their return to a more primitive way of living as well as their sexual revitalisation comes to signify their regenerated connection with the "organic whole" which, according to the narrative, means both the fullness and wholeness of an organic existence, and the organic universe which the Midlands wood comes to represent.

To counteract with inexorable march of modernity represented through Clifford, Lawrence turns to human sexuality as the sight for exploration of human existence. In extension, sexual experience represents the deepest and most primitive of human emotion. Therefore, as Lawrence turns to physical desire and sexual passion in his narrative, he is also simultaneously reinforcing the necessity to return to our own humanity. This sentiment permeates the whole narrative of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as Lawrence is trying to project the waste landscape of modern society through the representation of the sexually war-crippled Clifford and the unused womanhood and barrenness of Lady Chatterley. Therefore, sexual act in this novel has taken on a new wider course. Lawrence extends its significance to the physical and spiritual rejuvenation and revitalisation of human life. Having been devastated physically or spiritually, directly or indirectly, characters like Mellors and Connie, as Lawrence presents during the course of the novel in their sexual experience in the wood, manages to regain their lost connection with the human world as well as the natural

world. In short, they are being restored to their formally primitive existence through their own sexuality, in which their beings become whole and organic.

CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION

Aside from the economic, political, social and cultural transformations at the turn of the twentieth century, human sexuality is one of the many aspects, which should be brought under scrutiny. The writings of D. H. Lawrence can very well be said to yield a striking depiction of such changes in cultural consciousness pertaining to the experience of human sexuality. Collectively his works chart a graphic search for sexual transcendence beyond the Victorian limited sexual attitudes of reproduction and procreation, the transcendence which marks a drastic transformation of sexual topography in British literary and cultural consciousness. In contrast to the Victorian timidity and discouraged attitudes towards sexual acts, Lawrence's writings call for an immediate and frank expression of physical desire. This openness and frankness of human emotion underpins the pressing return to our uttermost humanity and the liveliness of life as a counterforce to the dehumanising mentality of modernity which is prevalent in the cultural experience of industrialisation and the First World War.

Apart from such sexual frankness, Lawrence deploys the realm of human sexuality as the significant site for his profound exploration of the impact of industrial mentality on the human body and mind. The characters like Anton in *The Rainbow* and Gerald in *Women in Love* can be said to be the embodiment of industrial mentality. Both men display the industrial force which threatens to reduce and, eventually, consume the individual worth in all human beings. Lawrence best depicts such manipulative mechanism in Anton's and Gerald's relationships with Ursula and

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Gudrun, respectively. Their sexual acts are significantly turned into a suffocating intimacy where these men maximise their sense of being by reducing the female individual worth and draining every last spark of the lives from Ursula and Gudrun who gradually lose their identity.

The thesis, furthermore, reveals that not only do Lawrence's writings encode a sense of loss and trauma from the abrupt changes of society in sexual terms, the texts also present sexual experience in its physical, emotional, spiritual as well as ritualised variations as the crucial remedy that shall save humanity from the negative impact of modernity. Bound to Lawrence's philosophy of "blood consciousness," sex is believed to be the significant connector between human beings and their life force. The meaning of this is twofold. Firstly, Lawrence views a meaningful sexual experience with another human being as the projection of the human quality within. Therefore, those who can engage in a passionate relationship are proved to possess as much as to maintain their humanness at a time when human beings are killing each other randomly and senselessly in the battlefields. Therefore, as industrialisation and warfare dehumanise and mechanise human beings, sexual acts return them to their liveliness and humanity. The return occurs both from within and between individuals as it is presented by the relationships between Birkin and Ursula, and sexual encounter of Lady Chatterley and Mellors.

In addition to that, sex and its meaningful intimacy have been presented as the experience that shall eradicate the machine-induced divides between the self and the other, and connect each separate being that would otherwise remain agonisingly alone together in the form of relationship as well as friendship. Respectively, these are vividly exemplified in the romantic relationship between Ursula and Birkin and in the

perceivably homoerotic touch between Maurice and Bertie in "The Blind Man". With the perfect measurement of love, freedom and commitment, Ursula and Birkin are united in their holy connection of sexual experience. The connection suggests the successful relationship between two people of different sexes. Furthermore, in "England, My England" Lawrence presents the decline of masculinity and individuality at the encroachment of industrialisation and warfare. However, while Egbert's isolation is being heightened by his own sense of self in connection with his own family, Maurice in "The Blind Man" accomplishes in establishing love and friendship with his long lost friend, Bertie.

In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence returns to the themes of war-induced loneliness and the unthinkable destruction of World War I. Through Connie, Clifford, and Mellors, Lawrence displays the lifelessness and barrenness of human existence. For example, like the three characters in the short stories, Mellors has lost touched with humanity literally as well as symbolically. Connie herself is the perfect example of lost vitality. Her marriage with Clifford has been described as barren and fruitless. Her sexual life is left to waste because Clifford is sexually crippled because of the war. Therefore, Clifford comes to stand symbolically for the paralysed and sterile landscape of modern culture which can neither bear fruit nor maintain it. It is rather the world after the war where traces of life are wasted and destroyed in the battlefields, and where modern technology and aggressive industry continually strive to progress regardless of what cost they had already paid. While Clifford is blindly striving towards such destruction, Lawrence allows Connie, Clifford's counterpart in representing the lost vitality and barrenness, to resurrect, at which point she dramatically deviates from her husband.

While Lawrence opens the novel with the description of destruction caused by the war, he moves during the course of the novel towards resurrection. This physical and spiritual revival is evident in Mellor's and Connie's relationship. In her union across social divide with Mellors, Connie revitalises her wasted sexuality and barren existence. Mellors himself is brought back to his own humanity. He begins to have trust in humanity again after his passionate encounter with Connie. Through sexual revitalisation, as Lawrence displays, both Connie and Mellors are successfully returned to their primal state of organic existence in which they are connected to one another and also share the common impulse with the natural universe.

It is now fair to say that in his movement towards sexual frankness Lawrence has written brilliant tales that surveys nearly a century of a cultural history of human sexuality as it impinges on a microcosmic exploration of life and relationship in family units. With his novels namely *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love*, and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and short stories like "England, My England" and "The Blind Man," Lawrence explores the possibilities of life and the tensions of human desire in the growing industrialised rural England and the period of warfare. Whether it be frank or hyperbolic, literal or symbolic, Lawrence's representations of sexual experience including its variations at the time of grave change are matters far greater than being physical or emotional. As seen from the discussion, sexuality in the work of D.H. Lawrence is embedded with both positive and negative aspects of human existence. It can be a realm in which the working of our traumatised and mechanized spirit and mind is made known. However, sexuality is also the realm through which human beings can regain their lost touch of humanity as well as return to the most

primitive characteristics of human emotion, sexual desire, love and passion in opposition to the loss, brutality and inhumanness World War I has to offer.

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