

# **LITERATURE IN ENGLISH 1914 TO THE PRESENT**

**Code No.**

**M. A. English (Previous)  
Semester-I**



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**D.H. LAWRENCE**

**Sons and Lovers**

## Unit-I

### D.H. Lawrence: Sons and Lovers

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#### Biographical Sketch (1885-1930)

David Herbert Lawrence was the son of an illiterate coal miner, John Arthur Lawrence and a genteel schoolteacher, Lydia Beardsall, in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire. Lawrence, the fourth child of his mismatched parents was especially close to his mother. From early years he was plagued with tuberculosis which growing acute in his forties eventually killed him. He began work with clerical jobs and in 1908 he qualified as a teacher from Nottingham University College. After four years of teaching he eloped with Frieda to Italy and were later married in 1914. Later, after the First World War, he traveled all over the world including Australia, Mexico, New Mexico and Europe. He found immense comfort and harmony in the plains and mountains and offered a refuge from the decadence of life that was taking place in Europe. His health steadily worsened and he died in 1930.

#### The Age

It is impossible for any writer to remain untouched by the social, political, intellectual and cultural environment of his age. Every writer depicts the characteristics of his age as he generally transcribes life. In order to understand well the writings of an author, knowledge of the times in which he lived is indispensable. Hence, we shall analyze the social and the literary background that influenced the works of D.H. Lawrence

According to William J. Long: "The long and progressive reign of Queen Victoria came to a climax in the Diamond Jubilee Year (1897), a time of peace and plenty when British Empire seemed to be at the summit of its power and security". However, the two important factors that influence the social life and literary sphere at this period of time were imperialism that led to the two world wars and the wave of social unrest as a result of decline in religious faith and social or moral values. War happened to be the main motive force for social and cultural changes in this period, the moral order began to decay rapidly and a sense of alienation prevailed among the general public.

The situation is very aptly described by Lawrence: "It was in 1915 the old world ended. In the winter of 1915-16 the spirit of the Old London collapsed; the city, in some way, perished, perished from being the heart of the world, and became a vortex of broken passions, lusts, hopes, fears and horrors. The integrity of London collapsed and the genuine debasement began, the unspeakable baseness of the press and the public voice, the reign of that bloated ignominy, "John Bull" ... The well-bred, really cultured classes were on the whole passive resisters. They shirked their duty. It is the business of people who really knew better to fight tooth and nail to keep up a standard, to hold control of authority."

The rapid growth of industrialization in England in the Victorian age marked the shift of England to an industrial country from an agricultural country thus, forwarding a rapid change in the social life of the people. By the end of the nineteenth century there was a total change towards urbanization with a breakdown of the agricultural way of life. The simultaneous coming up of industrialization and urbanization brought with it many problems. The industrial towns grew haphazardly and congestedly, these congested places often lacked the basic amenities of lives reducing the living standards of people to almost inhuman condition. There was a marked rise in vice and crime and a gradual decline in the standards of spiritual and ethical values.

There arose a mad race for acquisition of wealth and this became the ultimate aim of a gentleman's life. All human relationships came to be regarded in terms of money. The evil effects of industrialization are remarkably

reflected in the works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century novelists like Ruskin and Carlyle severely condemned the commercialization of this age. Certain spiritual values seemed to be vanishing with gradual decline of the rural way of life and urban societies led to the establishment of material values in life. The new age, however was not without its possible aspects, like there came into being a welfare state—the state was now responsible for education, health and well being of the individual. However, writers continued to think of the agricultural life as the ideal form of life and nostalgically referred to it in their works.

As a result of all these changes, there started a period of uncertainty and moral perplexity. The blind faith in social belief and tradition was given up with rational and scientific questioning. However, the Victorian writer in spite of this questioning was never critical of the very fundamentals of the social and moral order. For example Dickens, though a critical writer criticizes only a few basic evils inherent in their social system. On the other hand he has an acceptance of their way of life and takes pride in it. The beginning of the twentieth century introduces to us writers like Shaw, Wells and Glasworthy who were highly critical of the existing social, economic and moral system.

The different critical attitude of the writers, which tend to be contradictory, has led to confusion on the part of the common man. R.A. Scott-James writes: “the twentieth century has, for its characteristic, to put everything in every sphere of life, to the question, and secondly, in the light of this reception, to reform, to reconstruct, to accept the new and attempt to mould it by conscious, purposeful effort.” With the spirit of interrogation came the questioning of the male authority and assertion of the liberation of women. With the end of the war came complete decline in the supremacy of the male authority. People instead of submissively following their leaders became suspicious of manifestations. Their subordinates and juniors, who now did not hesitate to revolt against them, no longer accepted the incompetence of those in authority.

Among other changes, the most important change was the enhancement of the position of women. Women were no longer confined to the four walls of the house but had a significant role to play in the family and the society. The movement of women’s liberation got a strong impetus with the spread of education and a tendency towards democratization. There was now a general allowance and encouragement for the women to go in for higher education and their right to vote was vehemently advocated. The tenets of Christianity were no longer accepted unquestioningly. Contemporary religious scholars and philosophers like Max Muller shattered the concept of the supremacy of Christianity. The theory of evolution of Charles Darwin threatened the very basis of the Christian faith. Hence, the complacency of the Victorians was shed off and there was a gradual loss of faith in God and religion.

With weakening of religious faith under the influence of science and rationalism, public issues could no longer be moulded with religious controversies. There arose a keen interest in the study of nature of man in philosophy and metaphysics. The assessment of human behaviour was greatly revolutionized with the psychological theories propounded by Freud followed by Jung and Bergson. Freud declared man to be a biological phenomenon, a creature of instincts and impulses. Freud laid emphasis on the powers of the unconscious to affect the conduct of man. Now more emphasis began to be assigned to the study of the unconscious. The normal were also recognized to be neurotic and abnormal to a certain extent. It was established by Freud and his followers that neurosis and other signs of abnormality are a result of repressed sex instincts. His theory of Oedipus complex was strongly propounded and thoroughly exploited by the twentieth century writers (like D.H. Lawrence). It became established that man’s intellectual communications are actually the rationalizations of his emotional needs. Emphasis began to be placed on feeling and intuition rather than intellect, which had all through been regarded as a means of true and real understanding.

The psychological theories of Freud and his followers were not only confined to the literary field, but imparted a considerable influence on the private and family relationships. The theory of Oedipus complex led to the interpretation of various relationships in its terms. It was now believed that mothers could naturally be jealous of their daughters or daughters-in-law. Sons were supposed to have greater attachment for their mothers

rather than their fathers. The daughters were bound to be more attached to their fathers. All such relationships were pervaded with sexual undertones. For instance, T.S. Eliot interpreted *Hamlet* in terms of Oedipus complex. All abnormal human conduct occurs from repressed sex instincts. It was believed that the behaviour of a man was a direct outcome of his early development as a child. The old authoritarian pattern of family relationships broke up.

The questioning of authority and with dismantling of traditional patterns of human relationships, there was an environment of tensions and frustrations. The age became pervaded with the temper of anti-heroism. Various factors including unemployment and economic depression added to the hardship of life. The sense of security unlike the Victorian age was lost because of the shaking foundation of the social and political order and beside the forces of labour legislation, democratization and dissemination of scientific ideas added to the deteriorating situation. The evolution of strong durable convictions that form the basis of emotional stability was not allowed because of the rapid scientific advancement. Man lost faith in God and became rootless and this rootlessness brought its own problems and frustrations and thus, it led to severe anxiety which became the most important characteristic of this age.

In the literary sphere there was a rapid decline in the literature that was produced because of the commercialization of the printing press. The cheap literature catered to the needs of the general public and they were abundant in vulgarity and brutality. The themes of popular literature were no longer touching upon human relationships but had taken over to violence, crime and mediocre love stories. One could say that this age was noticeably an age of popularization and commercialization. Even the serious literature, in order to survive, had to adapt itself to this new world that lacked ethical values and principles. Psychological theories of Freud and other made symbolism quite significant in presenting the literary work and also the stream of consciousness evolved as a very considerable literary technique. "In a world of increasing socialization, standardization and uniformity, the aim was to stress uniqueness, the purely personal, in experience, in one of the mechanical rationality, to assert other modes through which human beings can express themselves, to see life as a series of emotional intensities involving a logic different from that of the rational world and capturable only in dissociated images of stream of consciousness musings." In addition, realism became major part of literature instead of an inclination towards pastoralism and romanticism. Usually avoided facts about life now found place in the modern literature, for instance, war slums and camps, prostitution and other realities were incorporated along with heavy dose of cynicism and satire. Along with traditional forms of literature—novel, drama and poetry—a great amount of literary criticism was produced during this age. The works of art were interpreted through sciences like psychology, anthropology, semantics, linguistics, etc. Many schools of criticism, (for example The New Critics, The Marxist, The Moralists, The Psychological school, The Impressionists, The Formalists, Archetypal Criticism, The Historical Criticism), contributed to this field,

### **Fiction of the 20<sup>th</sup> century**

The foremost feature of modern writing, perhaps, could be that things not very often begin when and where they are expected or supposed to begin. Indeed the very concepts of beginning and ending become debatable, as Lawrence writes: "In the beginning—there never was any beginning". In fact, James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* actually ends in a peculiar manner—the opening sentence being the completion of the final one, the final sentence hence once again turning the reader back to the beginning of the work.

**Rise of the Novel:** there has perhaps never been so radical a change in any branch of literature, as that which came over the English Novel in the first half of this century. Not only has it mirrored the change in the external world, like every art medium, but it has also developed internally. The English Novel right from its beginning, has been monopoly of the English Bourgeoisie, and so dealt mainly with the social and economic culture of the age. The traditional novelists took their stable society for granted. They never questioned its beliefs or values, and tread their characters in relation to the society. What is more important is the fact of that these novelists were assured that their readers shared all their views, shared the basic assumption of the sanctity of social

institutions, family, church etc, and necessity to conform to the rules of such institution. This opinion and approach to novel writing reached its peak in Victorian England.

Yet towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, disillusion with bourgeois complacency and commercialism crept in, and this was a major external force in the rise of what we call 'the modern' novel. Ironically enough, it began with the Victorians themselves. George Eliot and Emily Bronte questioned the basic of an individual's links and society. Tennyson began to doubt the linear progress of his and his contemporaries' works. This generated interest in discovering new themes and new ways of expressing them and gradually the break with the past was achieved. Of course, there was now startling jump from one type of novel to the other. The subject matter became increasingly critical of Victorian materialism, sex was no longer a taboo, but still the tradition was not completely done away with. One cannot deny the presence of Victorian elements in the early works of all the major modern writers. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* is in main-stream of typical Victorian fiction, despite his candid views on sexuality. This is particularly true of Forster and Huxley, who, one feels have never managed to make a complete break with traditional novelists. Affinities in both technique and theme have been studied between Lawrence and Hardy, Conrad and Dickens, Woolf and Sterne. Yet all these novelists—Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, Conrad and Joyce—were steadily making trime and paving the way for the modern novel.

At the same time, the hold of society over the individual was loosening. Man was emerging as an individual in his own right and not merely a member of society. Church, family and schools (all institutions) were no longer the prime concern of the individuals. The writers of this period could no longer take it for granted that their impression held good for others, For society, which formed the basis of beliefs shared by the reader and writer, was no longer the major motivating force. It is this breakdown of what David Daiches calls a 'public sense of significance' (the shared belief of the writer and reader of what is significant in human experience), that forced sensitive artists to discover new ways of expressing new themes and feelings.

This breakdown was the result not only of social and economic cause as the Industrial Revolution, but also related to remarkable discovery made in psychology and other areas. One such discovery was Henry Bergson's concept of *Law duree*. Bergson asserts that clock time is artificial, and that 'mental' time is the only natural time. Time, he said, is a continuous, heterogeneous flow, which cannot be characterized by separate moments. According to this theory then a novel of linear progress, which moved from situation to situation in a fixed chronological statement, was not a 'real' rendering of human experience. Therefore, a new kind of narrative developed to capture the reality, the essence of human experience—since it emphasized fluctuating time, which constantly moved backward and forward. In such a narrative structure there is no tension between the past, the present and the future, because a character can proceed from one to another as often as he wants to. One of the first novelists to use this technique was Marcel Proust. His work influenced every major twentieth century English novelist as is evident from such works as, *Nostramo*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Ulysses*, *a Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and more.

Together with this new concept of time was the changing concept of human consciousness influenced by the work of Freud and other psychologists. The fact emphasized in this concept was the "multiplicity of consciousness". That is to say, an individual's consciousness is the sum total of all that he has ever experienced and his cultural affinities with the members of his race. So, actually the past does not exist separately. What we term the 'past' exist along with the present determining every response of ours. So a novelist who seeks to project the total view of his characters, has to effectively communicate the simultaneity of the characters' different levels of consciousness. Since the traditional novelist had not been faced with such a problem, the modern novelist had to evolve an appropriate technique. This resulted in the stream of consciousness technique.

These then are the three major forces that resulted in the growth of the modern novel. They also influenced the major theme of the modern literature—the theme of an "individual's loneliness". Since all beliefs in religion, family and other institutions were completely shattered; the modern writer was a completely isolated



figure. No longer could he depend on the stability of the conventions, he had to forge completely new relationships based on a different set of values. Since most modern novelists have undergone this experience personally, it forms the keynote of their major works. Thus, we have Lawrence and Joyce re-living their own experiences through the characters of their novels. In their works and in those of other major novelists, “loneliness is seen as the necessary condition of man” (David Daiches). Yet their main preoccupation is not this isolation, but to find a way through which harmony can be achieved. A way through which a modern man cut adrift, can achieve satisfying relationships.

Each novelist views this problem in his own way, for instance, Lawrence believed that the solution lay in love which recognized the mystical core of otherness in the beloved. Therefore, we see towards the end of the century, the concept of what was significant in human experience changed under the influence of psychology and related fields of knowledge. No longer was a man’s exterior personality or his behaviour in society considered important. Stress was now laid on his internal make up; the working of his mind, his responses to a world that was essentially hostile and his search for an identity in this world. The modern novel is the result of the novelists’ effects to deal with such problems, to define them and suggest a possible solution.

### **Techniques used in the modern novel**

As it has already been discussed the modern novel emerged in altogether a different kind of environment with diverse changes in its themes and techniques, there by defining the very concept of the novel.

**Stream of Consciousness:** it a psychological term that refers to a literary technique in the twentieth century and gained immense popularity within the genre of the modern novel. Leon Edel writes that “between 1913 and 1915 was born the modern psychological novel—what we have come to call in English letters the stream of consciousness novel”. Robert Humphrey defines stream of consciousness fiction as the type, “in which the basic emphasis is placed on the exploration of the free speech levels of consciousness for the purpose, primarily of revealing the “psychic being of characters”. The use of this technique is coincidental with the turning inward process of the English novel; it is a technique to document authentically the mental process or to capture “the atmosphere of the mind”. Many writers find this technique highly realistic and facilitating greater truthfulness in the presentation of the character. It is important to note that stream of consciousness is not the same as the “point of view”. The latter aims at analyzing the character from various perspectives or angles. Neither can stream of consciousness technique be equated with impressionism because the object under consideration is static. The origin of the term lies with the psychologist, William James, who believed that an individual’s consciousness is continuous but constantly changing: “Consciousness does not appear to itself chopped up bits. Such words as ‘chain’ and ‘train’ do not describe it fitly as it presents itself in the first instance. It is nothing that is pointed; rather it flows. A river or a stream is metaphor by which it is most naturally described. On talking about it hereafter, let us call it the stream of thought or consciousness, or subjective life.” In other words, one understands from the above explanation that the consciousness of a person is always in a flux and the task of the novelist is to arrest this flux.

There are certain techniques used in the presentation of stream of consciousness:

**Interior monologue:** Robert Humphrey defines this technique as “the method used in fiction for representing the psychic content and processes of character, partly or entirely just as these processes exist at various levels of the conscious control before they are formulated for deliberate speech”. This is not the same as dramatic monologue, for the latter is the verbalized form of the contents of consciousness. In the direct interior monologue technique, the consciousness of the character is rendered with minimum interference from the author. There are no guidelines or authorial comment, and the actual lecture, the very essence of the character’s consciousness is reported. This is done by the character himself. The classic example is the last forty five pages of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*—the detailed wanderings of the consciousness of Molly Bloom. In these pages the author disappears entirely. The monologue is in the first person and keeps no rule of grammar. The incoherence is emphasized by a total lack of punctuation and the indistinct limitations of time and space. Nor is the monologue

directed to either the reader or any character. Leopold Bloom, the only other character in the scene is asleep. What we have here is a perfect example of the direct monologue technique, represented by the un-inhabited flow of Molly's consciousness. Joyce has gone a step further, by using a variation of this direct interior monologue technique, in trying to depict dream consciousness in *Finnegans Wake*.

Where as direct monologue, the author rarely intrudes, in "**indirect interior monologue**", the continuous presence of the author is implied. So instead of the narration proceeding in the person indirect monologue, the second or third person is used. This naturally lends more coherence and unity to the subject matter. For, while the consciousness of the character is rendered directly, the author is always at hand to guide the reader through it. All the same that basic quality of interior monologue-the direct presentation of a character's consciousness is retained. Virginia Woolf's novels are based mainly on this technique, particularly, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*. Edward Dujardin was however the first novelist to use this technique of interior monologue in his novel *Les Lauriers Sont Coupes* (1881).

There are certain techniques (uniquely twentieth century) used by nearly all stream of consciousness writers, which Humphrey terms '**cinematic**' devices. As the very name implies these are borrowed from the cinema. One of these devices is the **time and space montage**. Montage, as Humphrey explains is essentially a technique to show different views of a single subject. This forms an important aspect of stream of consciousness fiction, for in depicting the consciousness of a character, the novelist has to break all barriers of time and space. This technique works in two ways. One is that in which the character remains fixed in space and his consciousness moves freely intermingling the past, present and future. This has been freely used by Virginia Woolf and there are many instances of it in *To the Lighthouse*.

The second method of montage is that in which the time element is fixed and the spatial element changes. This is known as space montage. For example of this in literature, the famous "'Wandering Rocks"' episode in *Ulysses*. This technique is also known as 'multiple-view, for at a given time, the consciousness of several characters can be described-their individual responses to the same stimulus'

### **Aspects that Characterize the Modern Experimental Novel**

**Purpose of the Novel:** Before twentieth century the novelists were primarily concerned with the creation of memorable characters. The experimental novel asks instead "What is the experience of living?" The focus, unlike the previous writers, was not so much on the social and economic pressures that dictate the occurrences of one's life. In fact, the emphasis is laid on the critical reappraisal. For instance, Henry James intentionally made the characters of his novel financially self-sufficient so that the economic demands do not become an over riding factor in the novel. The novel, therefore, no longer remains as a mere source of entertainment and pastime.

**Withering away of the external plot:** the readers of 20<sup>th</sup> century novel would usually complain that not much happened in the novels. The novelists in this age were more concerned about the inner life of the characters rather than highlighting the outside or the external events of one's life. The conflict therefore, moved to the warring elements within the character. As M.H. Abrams writes: "Since 1920s, a number of writers of prose fiction and drama have deliberately designed their works to frustrate the expectations that the reader or auditor has formed by habituation to traditional plots."

**Absence of the Hero:** the experimental novel has discarded the concept of heroism and the reader would seldom find a truly likable character. In the earlier novels the hero and the villain were obvious but now the no character is all good or all bad rather they have shades of grey.

**Complexity:** Seeking to portray not so much what people do or say as what they actually are, the experimental novelist finds none of the old ethical simplicity but discovers a vast and chaotic world within even the outwardly mundane character. Change and alteration produce within a personality a ceaseless fluidity that destroys the old rigidity of character and reveals disturbing contradictions and complexities.

**Irrationality:** Increasingly, the experimental novel in exploring the inner life, has found that man does not act from reason, as earlier novels assumed, but rather is motivated by deep unconscious sources of primordial origin.

Modern novelists can be divided into those who continue within a broad tradition of realism and those who experiment far more with the form of the novel. Writers like John Glasworthy, Arnold Bennett, Graham Greene, Iris Murdoch, Doris Lessing, Earnest Hemingway are essentially realists. They are less intrusive than 19<sup>th</sup> century realists, presenting a credible picture in which we are not particularly aware of the narrator's presence. They deal with social, personal and ethical problems and offer us an entertaining, but at the same time, an instructive look at how people cope with life in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The outstanding novelist within the tradition is D.H. Lawrence whose novels conform to the usual model of presenting characters at odds with the society, but Lawrence goes much further than the other writers in a romantic quest for an alternative way of life. Lawrence's writing is committed to exploring fresh areas of experience, and writes in an emotional style that suits his subject matter, never forgetting that his characters are bound by demands of ordinary existence. The most striking feature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century novel is the extraordinary degree of formal experiment and innovation. This begins with the works of Joseph Conrad and Henry James. The reasons for such testing and originality were the disappearance of shared values and beliefs. A new awareness of individual psychology came into existence. It was realized that each individual has a unique perception of the world and life, thus calling for more emphasis on the mind of the individual.

### **Important writers of this age**

**Thomas Hardy:** He was not only the last of the great Victorians but also the forerunner of the modern novel. Hardy's writings show human beings facing up to the assaults of a destructive power. He accepted the theory of evolution and as a result had little hope left for individuals. He was always trying to depict human condition in general rather than narrating a story of a particular individual's life. Through his serious fiction Hardy presented his view of life that was quite different from his contemporaries like Tennyson and Browning. He is very often called a pessimist as is at the end of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*: "happiness was but the occasional episode in the general drama of pain".

Hardy's preoccupation with his "philosophy of life is seen in the way in which he pierces into his novels to point an accusing finger at destiny or to take the side of his protagonists, and in the very often use of coincidence of accidents which he looks for to his case. Too often his plots center upon a sequence of accidents which have the most grim consequences, and, therefore, while he rarely fails to inspire in his readers his own deep pity for the sufferings of his characters, he frequently fails to attain the highest tragic levels. Allied with this use of coincidence are a fondness for the fantastic or unusual and a weakness for the melodramatic. Yet he handles striking situations with great firmness of touch and a telling realism, and all his best novels contain individual scenes, which are unforgettable.

The characters of his novels are mostly ordinary men and women not forming a part of the higher strata of the society. The individuality of some is sacrificed to Hardy's view of life' but while he is, by more modern standards, not really deep in his psychological analysis, characters like Jude and Sue, Tess, Henchard, and Eustacia Vye show considerable intricacy of interpretation. Such figures as Gabriel Oak (*Far from the Madding Crowd*) and Diggory Venn (*The Return of the Native*) are finely realized, country types blending with the countryside to which they belong, while the minor rustics, who are briefly sketched but readily visualized, are a frequent source of pithy humour, and act as a chorus commenting on the actions of the chief protagonists.

Hardy's boyhood was spent mainly in the country, and he had an acute and sensitive observation of natural phenomena: "Without overwhelming you with his intimate knowledge of natural phenomena, he can make you feel, by his delicate and multifold allusiveness, the significance of country's life". As a unifying influence in his novels, the Wessex scene, which he immortalized, is second only to his philosophy. But nature provides more than just a background and many times it takes the role of a protagonist in the story, an unfeeling impersonal

force exerting its influence upon the life of the characters. Interestingly, his understanding and perception of nature gives the reader inkling into his view about men and women.

**Henry James:** Born in New York, Henry James was educated in America and Europe. He became a prolific writer with novels, short stories, travel sketches, literary criticism, autobiography and was also a friend of the New England group of writers—among them were James Russell Lowell, H.W. Longfellow and William Dean Howells. A study of James is important for the analysis of the modern novel for the reason that he was the first to view it as an artistic form. To him novel was primarily an art form to be judged solely by artistic canons, concerned, not with moral purpose, but with the objective and impartial presentation of the reality of life. In this picture there is no place for the extravagance of romance or the distortions of sentimentality. He was not much concerned with the external or with detailed and elaborate study of the subtlest shades of human reactions to the situations which he conceived. Moreover, his work shows the steady evolution of technique to replace the outworn convention. He saw unlimited possibilities of artistic achievement for the novelist: “the advantage, the luxury as well as the torment and responsibility of the novelist, is that there is no limit to what he may attempt as an executant—no limit to his possible experiments, efforts, discoveries, successes.”

The key to James’s choice of subject is to be found in his own life. An American fascinated by the charm of an older civilization, he finds a great many of his themes in the impact of one type of society upon the product of another, in the study of the processes of adjustment and their effect upon the development of an individual character. An intellectual and a member of an intellectual family, James through out his novels portrays life of the people such as himself. He is concerned with the man as a social being, not with the deeper relations of man with his God. There is not much of elemental passion in his novels because the chosen field is a sophisticated, intellectual society, except in so far as they are shown under the influence of mind. Identifying the good with the beautiful, he regards taste, artistic sensibility, and individual integrity as the prime virtues. On the other hand he sees ugliness and meanness of spirit as the great evils. James is often concerned in the development of a character as apart of the social group. He is absolutely not interested in the poor or in the unintelligent. His characters and figures are usually sensitive, refined, sophisticated, controlling impulse by reason, and endowed with faculty for acute self-analysis. They are capable of viewing their own motives and reactions with a remarkable detachment and an equal degree of subtlety.

**Joseph Conrad:** He was a sailor and an adventurer and his works reflect this character of the author. He presents situations that cannot be really explained through the conventional and accepted notions: “the world of significance that he creates is far removed from the Victorian worlds of public significance and this is what makes him the first important modern novelist in English”. His method of writing a novel is best found in his preface to *The Nigger of Narcissus*—“My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel—it is before all, to make you see”. The characters of Conrad’s novels did not convey just a single point of view but a variety of them. His technique of writing novels involved shifts of time as well as double narrator scheme. His novel *Heart of Darkness* is an excellent example of this.

### Lawrence’s Fiction

Lawrence’s theory of novel takes, unswervingly, from his notion of man and his relationship to the universe. Lawrence ardently believed that man was not an isolated being rather he was well integrated within the cosmos. “There is in his novels a furious struggle between those who live, or more appropriately, seek to live in their soul and those who translate a mental concept of life into the process of living. The novel for him seeks to establish the perennial, man-universe relationship. This essential quality is, as Lawrence calls it, the fourth dimension, like a myth the Lawrentian type of novel present these truths about the man-universe relationship that are above the limiting boundaries of time and circumstance. The human plane of the novel thus is a paradigm of the mythical plane because the interaction of character and action repeats the mythical aspect of experience. The mythopoetic vision express itself in a rhythmical movement of the prose”.

It will be useful to learn what a great literary figure like T.S. Eliot has to say about Lawrence: “he was an impatient and impulsive man (or so I imagine him to have been; for, like the author of this book I never knew him). He was a man of fitful and profound insights, rather than of ratiocinative powers; and therefore he was an impatient man; he expressed some of the insights in the form least likely to make them acceptable to most of his contemporaries, and sometimes in a form which almost willfully encouraged misunderstanding... wrong he often was (I think) from ignorance, prejudice, or, drawing the wrong conclusion in his conscious mind from the insights which came to him from below consciousness: it will take time to dissociate the superficial error from the fundamental truth. To me, also, he seems often to write badly; but to be writer who had to write often badly in order to write sometimes well.”

Lawrence did not believe in following the conventions of his time and his work is thus regarded as a revolt against the values and ideals of the nineteenth century. “Lawrence, in that ultimate spark of spontaneity, the essential untouchable naivety at the centre of all true human beings, rejects both the false ‘individuality’ of the liberal tradition and the increasing socialization of his times. His triumph was to see them as joint manifestations of the same basic outlook, involving the evaluation of the ego or spurious self the conscious entity with which every individual is saddled’—the conceptualizing self, not the unified sensibility. In essence too this was his case against the positive assault. In reaction against the abstraction of the intellect, the failure of reason to capture adequately the sheer flux and flow of experience, there has been a counter assertion of the need to convey emotional immediacy, a grasping after the moment, a subjective insistence on the force of inner feeling.”

During the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901), England was going through a difficult phase. As a result of industrialization, life had become very mechanical and the vibrancy and vivacity had given way to artificiality and uniformity. Moreover, the society was compartmentalized into classes and these class barriers curtailed the growth of relationships between people. Above all, the state religion, Christianity, was turning cold with its restraints and prohibitions. Individuals were feeling suffocated as simple passions were repressed and the natural course of things were always interfered and arbitrated. Lawrence was in opposition to all these things and tried to rebel against the standards dictated by the social authorities, especially those dealing with personal lives of individuals. As a result, we find Lawrence’s inclination towards the psyche of a person, which has control over the behaviour and to some extent on the character of an individual. But Lawrence did not concern himself with the regular feelings and commotions experienced by an individual; rather his aim was to open the doors to the restricted areas of the human psyche and sexual experience was one of those areas that were forbidden from being openly discussed.

An essential feature of his fiction is that the central character is always proceeding from a partial or mechanical existence into organic wholeness. Lawrence used the novel as a carrier of his own interpretation of life, very much concerned with the basic problems of human existence and relationships among human beings. Therefore, the relationship between man and woman and their sexual conflict became a major part of his study. Lawrence had once declared: “I can write what I feel strongly about; and, that at present, is the relation between men and women. After all, it is the problem of today. The establishment of new relations, or the adjustment of the old ones, between men and women...”. For Lawrence complete happiness in life is not possible unless sexual harmony is attained. Modernity for Lawrence meant free and frank treatment of sex and his attitude towards life was deeply rooted in sexual mysticism. It is not just a physical process meant for only pleasure or reproduction but is capable of much more as a critic has commented: “To him [Lawrence]...sexual experience was a door to new realms of consciousness, and initiation into divine mysteries, the mysteries of the other world that is close behind us.” He tried to highlight the contrast between the modern mechanized world and the natural living.

He was quite inclined towards the study of the development of one’s individuality but this study was not based merely on the intellectual abilities of an individual but also on the impulses and senses that play a significant role in shaping the personality of a person. Apparently, Lawrence’s themes are concerned about the passions and instincts of the heart rather than the working of the mind. As F.R. Leavis puts it: “Life is fulfilled in the

individual or nowhere; but without a true marital relation, which is creative in more than the sense of producing children, there can be no fulfillment; that is the burden of Lawrence's art". He allotted a superior position to the impulses and believed that intellect is responsible for annihilation of life's excitement and destroys the liveliness. In his own words: "Life and action take rise actually at the great centres of dynamic consciousness". He fully agreed with modern psychologists who argued that there are layers of consciousness—the conscious, the subconscious and the unconscious—and Lawrence felt that if one lapses back into the unconscious self "only then will you act straight from the dark sources of life, outwards, which is creative life".

Lawrence ardently believed in the presence of "dark mystery" of life and he saw all living forms instilled with it. Lawrence was, in fact, of the opinion that the "dark mystery" could not be known through intellect. Moreover, natural and untamed ideas are cannot be accessible through intellect but may be known through the instincts and intuitions. He had once written to Katherine Mansfield: "We must grow from our deepest underground roots, out of the unconscious, not from the conscious concepts which we falsely call ourselves". For reasons like this Lawrence and his writings have often been criticized and condemned for being immoral and obscene by many but on the other hand F. R. Leavis defend him against such charges and E.M. Forster regards him as "the greatest imaginative novelist of our generation".

From a literary point of view also Lawrence can be looked upon as a radical in the sense that he did not constrict his writing to the pre-laid rules or models. He questioned the traditional methods of novel writing: "he felt that the novel could become more personal and less objective if he saw the possibility that language could describe in detail the personal experiences of emotion and passion as it were from the inside". Lawrence was to a great extent influenced by Thomas Hardy. Hardy's novels are usually set against natural background which play an important role in the development of action instead of being just a background for the story. In case of Lawrence also the imagery is significant to bring out the essence of the scene and enhance the emotions and sentiments of the characters. For Lawrence a novel was a religious art in which he could speak of and to the whole man.

An autobiographical note runs through most of Lawrence's novel. As Middleton Murry believes: "Lawrence was a tortured soul for full forty-five years of his life, and his writings are an expression of his inner suffering, frustration and emotional complexes. They are all in the nature of personal revelations, some more, some less, but the autobiographical note runs through them all"; another commentator feels that "the most striking feature of Lawrence's characters is the resemblance they bear to their creator". Lawrence's writings seem quite impulsive and natural and he reader feels that the writings are the result of author's inner compulsion coming out with all the force.

Lawrence with his protests against "idealization" and his assertion of the poetry of "the immediate present" which has "no perfection, no consummation, nothing finished" questions, thus: "The ideal—what is the ideal? A figment. An abstraction... It is a figment of before and after. It is a crystallized aspiration, or a crystallized remembrance: crystallized, set, finished. It is a thing set apart, in the great storehouse of eternity, the storehouse of finished things." (Preface to Poems)

The reason for all the misery and turmoil, for Lawrence, was the fact that human beings were becoming more and more dependent on reason rather than their impulses and emotions. The so-called modern age was emphasizing on the intellectualization of life and discarding the spontaneous and instinctive response to life. Lawrence had written to his friend Ernest Collings: "My own religion is the belief in blood, the flesh as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But whatever blood feels and says is always true. The intellect is only bit and bridle. What do I care about knowledge? All I want is to answer to my blood, direct, without fribbling intervention of mind, on moral or what not." Also, with industrialization, there was an overwhelming change in the attitude of people. The society had shifted to a materialistic approach towards life and detachment from emotional sentiments resulted in killing of natural instincts.

Lawrence's philosophy can be defined in the following words: "throughout his career he had been anti-materialistic, since materialism for him blunts sensibility, he is for shearing away the relics of dead faiths, of philosophies that

clog the free play of the impulses and he rejects Christianity and Platonism with equal scorn". One way of seeking escape from this materialism was living among nature and thus he traveled to places like Italy, Australia and Mexico. Lawrence was filled with horror at the growing materialism and selfishness, the increasing ugliness, sordidness and meanness, consequent upon the rapid industrialization of the country. Lawrence is nostalgic for the bright sensory life that town civilization is steadily destroying and like a neo-romantic craves for contact with the earth.

David Daiches, commenting on Lawrence's philosophy of life, feels: "he soon came to feel the deadness of modern industrial civilization with the mechanizing of personality, the corruption of the will, and the dominance of sterile intellect over the authentic inward passions of men, which he saw as the inevitable accompaniment of modern life. But he has no patience with political or social panaceas. Sometimes he talked as a wild anarchist asserting that everything must be pulled down or blown up so that a new start might be made. But the vision conveyed by his characteristic novels is not political in any way, even in a destructive anarchist way. He is concerned always with human relationships, with the relation of the self to other selves, with the possibilities of fulfillment of personality, and with exposing all the dead formulas—about romantic love, about friendship, about marriage, about the good life which can cause so much deadness of frustration or distortion in the life of the individual. There is nearly always a strong autobiographical element in his novels; he never attempts, as Joyce does (and Joyce uses autobiography too, but in a wholly different way), to construct a self-contained world outside himself and his readers with its own structure and its own *livableness*. He projects his novels from the very centre of his own passionate experience so that they act out, sometimes tentatively, sometimes fiercely, sometimes desperately, his own deepest insights and forms of awareness, and the lyric and the dramatic modes interpenetrate each other." On the other hand Aldous Huxley sums up his philosophy in the following words: "Lawrence could never forget, as most of us almost continuously forget the dark presence of the "otherness" that lies beyond the boundaries of man's conscious mind. This special sensibility was accompanied by a prodigious power of rendering the immediately experienced others in terms of literary art".

### Principal Works

**Novels:** The White Peacock (1911), The Trespasser (1912), Sons and Lovers (1913), The Rainbow (1915), Women in Love (1920), The Lost Girl (1920), Aaron's Rod (1922) Kangaroo (1923), The Boy in the Bush (1924), The Plumed Serpent (1926), Lady Chatterley's Lover (1928), The Virgin and The Gypsy (1930).

**Poems:** Love Poems and Others (1913), Amores (1916), Look! We Have Come Through (1917), New Poems (1918), Bay (1919), Tortoises (1921), Birds, Beasts and Flowers (1923), Pansies (1929), Nettles (1930), Last Poems (1932), Fire and Other Poems (1940).

**Short Stories:** The Prussian Officer and Other Stories (1914), England, My England (1922), The Ladybird (1923), St. Mawr, together with the Princess (1925), The Woman Who Rode Away (1928), Love Among the Haystacks (1930), The Lovely Lady and Other Stories (1933), A Modern Lover (1934).

**Essays:** Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (1921), Fantasia of the Unconscious (1922), Studies in Classic American Literature (1923), Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine (1925), Phoenix (1936).

**Plays:** The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd (1914), Touch and Go (1920), David (1926), A Collier's Friday Night (1934).

**Travel Sketches:** Twilight in Italy (1916), Sea and Sardinia (1921), Mornings in Mexico (1927), Eiruscan places (1932).

### Bildungsroman

"Bildung" is a German word that means "formation" or "shaping" and "Roman" in German language means a "novel". Thus, Bildungsroman is a novel that describes the youthful development of the protagonist who normally attempts to integrate his/her experience by the end of the novel. It is a novel which tends to draw more directly and heavily on the writer's memory of his/her own life than do most other forms of fiction. With

this goes the tendency for the author and narrator to identify more closely with the protagonist of the novel than is usually the case. Such a genre has both the feeling of authenticity associated with an autobiographical work and the integrity and detachment of the fictional writer. Within the tradition of “Bildungsroman” there is the further genre of “Künstlerroman”. In German Künstler means an “artist”. Therefore, “Künstlerroman” is a novel that shows the development of an artist. Paul’s description of the kind of painting he aspires to directs the reader to the kind of writing Lawrence is attempting to write. Paul claims to be painting not “the stiffness of the shape” but “the shimmeriness” which is “the real living” and “which is inside really”. For Lawrence the self is:

a thing of kisses and strife  
 a lit-up shaft of rain  
 a calling column of blood  
 a rose tree bronzed with thorns  
 a mixture of yea and nay  
 a rainbow of love and hate  
 a wind that blows back and forth  
 a creature of beautiful peace, like a river  
 and a creature of conflict, like a cataract.”

(Death is not Evil, Evil is Mechanical)

### Summary

The novel opens with the description of mines and related activities. The cottages of the miners formed the village of Bestwood. The industrialization had just begun with coal and iron fields at Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire being discovered. Within the new set-up there are two residential units—the Squares and the Bottoms. Initially Mrs. Morel was not interested to move into the Bottoms, but when she got an end house with an extra strip of garden, she moved in. Mrs. Gertrude Morel had a refined taste and an intellectual background. She is a mother of two children—William and Annie—and is expecting her third baby. A wife of a miner, she is now disappointed and dejected with her life. She had met her husband at a Christmas party and taken to like him for the mere reason that she found him different from others. It was not very long before love and affection begins to diminish from their conjugal relationship. Frequent quarrels and clashes disrupt the peace of the family life. Two unhappy episodes accelerate the widening of the gap between husband and wife. The first is the clipping of William’s hair by Morel and then one night Morel comes home drunk and a very violent quarrel ensues. Thus, the antagonism between the two opposites—husband and wife—goes on increasing. As the sons grow, first William and then Paul, they replace the husband in Mrs. Morel’s life. She continues to have arguments with her husband, some of which have painful results: on separate occasions, she is locked out of the house and hit in the head with a drawer. Estranged from her husband, Mrs. Morel takes comfort in her children, especially her sons.

Paul, the third child and the second son, is born and Mrs. Morel’s affections begin to transfer from the eldest son to Paul and a special bond seems to develop between Paul and his mother. Meanwhile Morel falls ill which brings which results in some peaceful period in the house and makes Mrs. Morel a little tolerant towards her husband. Another baby, named Arthur is born as a result of this cordial period. However, as the children grow old, Morel is reduced to a non-entity in the house and with time feels alienated. The children grow up hating their father and Paul goes to the extent of praying for his father’s death. William moves to London and Paul becomes the centre of his mother’s love and attention.

Mrs. Morel, over the years, gets very possessive about her sons. She cannot tolerate any other woman in their lives. The sons also, on the other hand, feel uncomfortable in making new relations especially with girls and are



not able to come to terms with their growing sexual instincts. William, however, manages to free himself from this mother-son bond when he is engaged to Lily. He brings her home on Christmas to introduce her to his family. On another visit, without Lily, he seems completely worn out and sad. He even harps about the theme of death and wonders if Lily would ever visit his grave. Unfortunately, on returning back to London, William falls seriously ill and never recovers. The family is completely shattered with William's death and then Paul also falls ill but to Mrs. Morel's consolation, gets better. After William's death and Paul's recovery from serious illness, Mrs. Morel's "life now rooted itself in Paul". From that point on, Paul becomes the focus of her life, and the two seem to live for each other.

With the arrival of Miriam the novel enters into new complexities. Paul falls in love with Miriam Leivers, who lives on a farm not too far from the Morel family. They carry on a very intimate, but purely platonic, relationship for many years. The suppression or denial of physical pleasure results in tension and conflict, not only between the couple but also inside them individually. Also, Paul is unable to free himself from the strong mother-pull. And the mother never leaves an opportunity to convey her dislike for Miriam and her disapproval of any kind of relationship that Paul might be thinking of developing with Miriam. The burning of bread incident reveals a couple of facts. First, Paul feels passionately for Miriam and is aware that Miriam has similar feelings for him, yet their love cannot culminate. Something is always holding them back.

Mrs. Morel is very annoyed over the burnt bread and blames Miriam for it and is angry with Paul for neglecting her. Paul consoles and reassures his mother about his devotion for her. Furthermore, he asserts that he did not really love Miriam and that nothing can distract his attention from his mother and his home. Mrs. Morel, in return, "kissed him a long fervent kiss". Finally, Paul is sure that he feels very strongly for his mother and thus, decides to break off with Miriam. They come to the conclusion that perhaps they did not love each other enough to get married. However, within himself Paul was going through feeling of turmoil and utter confusion. He still had mixed feelings for Miriam that were very difficult to resolve.

Paul meets Clara Dawes, a suffragette who is separated from her husband, through Miriam. Paul is straight away attracted towards Clara and wants to get closer to her. Meanwhile, Annie is married to Leonard and Arthur returns from army. With Annie gone and Arthur being no better than an outside visitor, it is Paul who is left to be the only companion to Mrs. Morel. However, Paul cannot get rid of the restlessness and the dilemma. On one hand he wants to go back to Miriam while on the other he is drawn strongly towards Clara.

As a painter Paul managed to receive some acclamation and Mrs. Morel is very pleased with her son's success. Paul begins to socialize and meet new people but is never at peace with himself. He, once, goes to Clara's place and comes to know about her poor condition. He manages to get a job for her at Jordan's but Clara is not welcomed by some of the old employees. The girls at the work place celebrate Paul's birthday but do not involve Clara in the celebrations. Later, when the secret is disclosed, Clara makes up by sending a volume of verse to Paul. As he becomes closer with Clara and they begin to discuss their relationships. When Paul complains about Miriam's attitude towards him, Clara does not hesitate to declare that Miriam had always desired him and not any kind of union of soul. She tells him that he should consider consummating their love and he returns to Miriam to see how she feels. Paul and Miriam sleep together and are briefly happy, but shortly afterward Paul decides that he does not want to marry Miriam, and so he breaks off with her. She still feels that his soul belongs to her, and, in part agrees reluctantly. Even physical consummation is not able to bring the long desired fulfillment. He realizes that he loves his mother most, however.

After breaking off his relationship with Miriam, Paul begins to spend more time with Clara and they begin an extremely passionate affair. Their relationship seems to be free from any sense of guilt or mental reservation; rather there is a sense of freedom and a feeling of delight. However, in spite of the intensity in their relationship, there is something missing. Clara painfully realized it: "together they had received the baptism of life, each through the other; but now their missions were separate. Where he wanted to go she could not come with him. They would have to part sooner or later". Clara seems to prefer Baxter to Paul and does not want to divorce her husband and so Paul and Clara can never be married. Paul's mother falls ill and he devotes much of his

time to caring for her. Paul could not bear to see her mother in so much pain and suffering more and more each day.

At last, Paul decided with his sister Annie to give an over dose of morphine to Mrs. Morel and release her from the pangs and miseries of life. When she finally dies, he is broken-hearted and feels lonely. He senses a kind of vacuum in his life after the support system, his mother, is no more. Everything around him seems to have lost its meaning, it seemed different and unreal, and he moved around aimlessly. Nature also did not have a soothing effect on his mind. He felt a little comfortable only in the darkness of night. One evening he unexpectedly meets Miriam and spends some time with her. He does not react to the news of Miriam's employment, which irritates her a little. Miriam is shocked to find Paul wasting his life. She is so overwhelmed with love and sympathy that she plainly proposes marriage. She felt that only by becoming his wife could she do something to help him. She confesses that she is always thinking about Paul. On this Paul replies, "I know you do. But – you love me so much, you want to put me in your pocket. And I should die there smothered". Miriam falls back with utter pain and frustration. This was the end of their relationship. Miriam was ready to sacrifice herself for their relationship but Paul was not ready for this.

While going back to town, Paul takes note of the country beyond the town and the dark night enveloping the surroundings. He thinks about his mother and feels her presence in his soul. It was time for him to make the choice between darkness and light and finally "turning sharply, he walked towards the city's gold phosphorescence... He would not take that direction, to the darkness, to follow her. He walked towards the faintly humming, glowing town, quickly".

### **Aims and Structure (Sons and Lovers)**

Henry James, writing of Hawthorne's novel *The Scarlet Letter*, said:

"It is simpler and more complete than his other novels; it achieves more perfectly what it attempts, and it has about it that charm, very hard to express, which we find in artist's work the first time he has touched his highest mark—as sort of straightness and naturalness of execution, an unconsciousness of his public, and freshness of interest in his theme."

The same can be commented in case of Lawrence as well. His first two novels, *The Trespasser* (1912) and *The White Peacock* (1911) are quite assuring but slight. Lawrence himself in a letter refers to them disapprovingly as "a florid prose poem [and] a decorated idyll". The opulence and embellishment is replaced in *Sons and Lovers* by "a flexible and economical style, and the implied triviality gives rise to a subject of compelling interest and importance. The openness of the writer makes it easier for the reader to distinguish and counter "the stimulating tenseness that comes from Lawrence's obvious feeling of excitement and self-discovery of the progress from boyhood to manhood". Lawrence, unmistakably, is intensely involved in the situation he is dealing with; the exhilaration conveyed by the novel is that which accompanies the recollection in later years of the significant and formative era of one's life.

*Sons and Lovers* can be viewed as an endeavour to "reconstruct the stages of a movement into understanding and maturity that was still close enough to Lawrence to be remembered passionately, but distant enough to be recorded with objectivity". Lawrence chooses to explore and survey very natural experiences in one's period of life. Topics deal with growth, love in various forms, ever changing ideals resulting in conflicts within the personality, coming out of the secured cocoon of family into the outside world, being aware of one's sexuality and so on and so forth. However, it cannot be denied that the complexity of these experiences is dealt with an approach that is direct but does not, by any chance, over simplifies things. There is a well-defined story that is told in more or less a chronological progression. It is interesting to note that the events and activities are very common but at the same time they are not essentially universal. However the feelings and thoughts that are the result of such experiences can be comprehended even if they have not been experienced in particular by all. Lawrence is only narrating the events and leaving it for the story to speak for itself. Analyses of feeling

and motive rise naturally from recorded events that are presented fairly and squarely for the reader to contemplate and assess for himself/herself.

The characters of *Sons and Lovers* are real people with personal characteristics and are directly related to observable realities of everyday life. They are not abstractions designed to illustrate a theme, or embody an ideal, or enunciate a theory. The novel seems to give an impression that Lawrence has observed humanity as it is and not as it ought to be or as he would like it to be. These accurately observed people are placed in a world that is equally firmly based on a meticulous and often loving perception of the social customs, the habits and the day to day economic realities of the working class, given with such an eye for detail serves to reveal a wealth of unconscious assumptions and beliefs. In fact, if the novel had nothing else to offer, it would still be invaluable to the social historian as an authentic picture of working class life at the beginning of this century. "All this is done in a style that is generally simple, direct and precise, refreshingly free from the over-insistent rhythms of the later work and from words intended to carry a special meaning and portentous significance."

It would be a grave error on the part of the reader to interpret Lawrence's intentions as an attempt towards creation of characters that are either highly likable or highly detestable. Rather his intention is to create "recognizable human beings". It is very important to perceive the characters not as individuals within themselves but in relation to one another. It would appear that the comment made by Mrs. Moore in E.M. Forster's *Passage to India* that "though people are important, the relations between them are not" would not get the approval of Lawrence who believed that the importance of various events is based on the "developing patterns of intertwined lives". This is all the more emphasized in his novels, *The Rainbow* and *Women In Love* where the relations play a very significant role. At the same time, considering the construction of Morel in the first chapter of *Sons and Lovers*, one would realize the paradoxical nature of Lawrence's stance.

However, the focus of Lawrence's writing has predominantly been on the ways in which individuals counter and act in response to one another. In fact, much of his best work is found when he is describing emotions, impulses, reactions and responses or even physical sensations in all their complexities that arise as a result of interaction or mere contact with people. "It is not only that he traces the obvious effects and consequences of such meetings of personalities, showing how a new awareness of life, a new period of growth may follow from a chance meeting or how a life may be made painful by the consequences of a powerful but short lived emotion. This he certainly does, but this is the commonplace activity of any novelist interested at all in the interactions of human beings, the usual subject matter of the majority of novels. This is as it were a part of the iceberg that shows above the water, impressive in itself, but a very small part of the whole; it is the most obvious manifestation of an interest and a process that are much more subtle and penetrate much more deeply into the source of human individuality and behaviour.

Lawrence's great strength, the power that distinguishes him from any other novelist, lies in his capacity to perceive and convey the essential consciousness of each other that exists between two people or a group of people. This consciousness is not always at the level of intellectual awareness and recognition; he is dealing with the stage of awareness that comes before verbal formulation is possible, before it is possible to say to oneself 'That person is here, I am aware of him, he disturbs me', or a stage further, 'I dislike that person' or 'That person is attractive'. Lawrence is more concerned with the instinctive movements of sympathy or revulsion that make ultimately make possible such statements, and particularly those occasions on which sympathy and revulsion are simultaneous and co-existent—as witness the relationship between Paul and Miriam. Such feelings or instincts are the basis not only of attitudes that in a more advanced stage of their development can be recognized as love or hatred or indifference, that can be expressed in words, rationalized and put into neat categories, but of all human awareness of other human beings, and consequently of all human endings of old relationships. This simple scheme is perfectly adequate; the subtleties of *Sons and Lovers* are not in sophisticated organization or a concern with art for art's sake. The unity of the novel is organic in that it records developing lives and people in contact with each other moving from a beginning to the end."

Both thematically and structurally Mrs. Morel is the nucleus of the narrative. This reason for this is very clearly explained by the analysis of *Sons and Lovers*, which Lawrence made in a letter to Edward Garnett, dated November 14, 1912:

A woman of character and refinement goes into the lower class and has no satisfaction in her own life. She has had a passion for her husband, so the children are born of passions, and have heaps of vitality. But as her sons grow, she selects them as lovers—first the eldest, then the second. The sons are urged into life by their reciprocal love of their mother—urged on and on. But when they come to manhood, they can't love because their mother is the strongest power in their lives, and holds them... As soon as the young men come into contact with women there is a split. William gives his sex to a fribble, and his mother holds his soul. But the split kills him because he doesn't know where he is. The next son gets a woman who fights for his soul—fights his mother. The son loves the mother—all the sons hate and are jealous of their father. The battle goes on between the mother and the girl with the son as object. The mother gradually proves the stronger, because of the tie of blood. The son decides to leave his soul in his mother's possession and, like his elder brother, go for passion. He gets passion. Then the split begins to tell again. But, most unconsciously, the mother realizes what the matter is and begins to die. The son casts off his mistress, attends to his mother dying. He is left in the end naked of everything, with a drift towards death.

It is a great tragedy and I tell you that I have written a great book. It's the tragedy of—thousands of young men in England..."

The statement shows the emphasis that Lawrence lays on Mrs. Morel. Apparently, the mother is the "strongest motive force" in the novel, and the other characters are viewed in relation to her. This is made clear from by a very simple fact about the structure of the novel. She and only she is involved in all the relationships dealt with: she is the factor common to all of them.

The novel deals, first of all, with the coming together of Mrs. Morel and her husband. The period of passion and happiness is so brief and is so rapidly replaced by strife and bitterness that the readers tend to overlook the fact that this is the first love affair of the novel, that it is the study of reverse side of love. The state of affairs between the Morels is the basis on which other relationships rest; it dictates their course, and developments that follow are the inevitable consequence of Mrs. Morel's deprivation, disappointment and frustration. Then follows what is best described by the title heading of the third chapter: "The Casting Off of Morel and Taking on of William". "The title assumes the central importance for Mrs. Morel; she removes her attention from her husband and transfers it to her son; she is the agent, the one who acts, and the others are to a certain extent her satellites, important mainly as they relate to her." The love relationship between Mrs. Morel and William does not leave much of an impact on the reader for various reasons and the removal of William to London being one of them. Nevertheless, the theme of maternal possessiveness is reiterated in the next section of the novel. In the relationship with William a concurrent theme, that of mother's hostility towards her son's lover, emerges.

With the death of William, the novel pierces through more intricate and complex sequences. Initially there is a sort of "tranquil mutual love between Mrs. Morel and Paul. This section provides a stirring account of the independence of "an isolated mother and a son who by temperament and circumstances cannot bring himself to play a full part in the outside life of his contemporaries". However this seemingly blissful state of affairs do not last for a very long time, for as Paul grows up he "enters into a strange and ambiguous relationship with Miriam".

The intricacies are further generated with the arrival of Miriam and a period of struggle begins. This is the beginning of a relationship that is not initiated by Mrs. Morel and where the hold and the influence of the mother is threatened. Interestingly, the structure of the novel seems to follow the pattern of life itself: "the son grows up and begins first to seek and then assert emotional independence; the mother resents, and struggle ensues." This struggle is tripartite—there is interlocking tension between Mrs. Morel and Paul, Mrs. Morel and Miriam and between Miriam and Paul. The reader realizes that each character is engaged in more than

one but connected struggle and also, Mrs. Morel is not only concerned with Paul and Miriam as individuals but also as a couple. "It is in the description and the working out of these battles of will and personality that we see Lawrence at his sensitive and intelligent best, as we shall see, at times his grasp weakens, but on the whole the complexities are handled with an assured certainty that keeps all the various developments in continuous play."

This section of the novel can be regarded as the most imperative part not in with regard to the development of the novel but also vital for formulating an impression on the readers. At the same time one cannot come to conclusions as this is only a part of the novel and one of the component of the entire pattern. Thus, to have a balanced view it will not be correct to concentrate any more on this section than is required or asked for. The process of Paul's growth continues with the coming of Clara. It is important to note that Mrs. Morel does not feel all that threatened by Paul's relationship with Clara as she does in case of Miriam. Probably, she thinks that Paul is only physically flirting with Clara that will not last for a very long time and also Clara on the other hand does not seem to be trying to possess Paul. Thus, Mrs. Morel is not afraid of losing Paul. The relationship between Paul and Miriam falls off and due to Mrs. Morel's illness Paul returns back to his mother. This can also be seen as a victory for Mrs. Morel as the son comes back to her. However, the novel ends with Paul "agonizingly free of all entanglements, entering on his own life for the first time alone"

The novel thus deals with; "The relationships themselves, their effect on the participants, the depiction of victories and defeats incidental to the process of growing up, the emergence of a mature man through passion and anguish". But these premises or themes cannot be viewed in isolation. Whether it is analysis of relationships or the description of setting, all are significant in providing a meaning to and understanding of the novel. The picturesque backdrop, including the home, the mine and the village or as small unit as a pub, contributes to the drama of life and has an essential and decisive role in the shaping of the characters and their individual personalities.

On the structure of *Sons and Lovers*, Seymour Betsky writes: " *Sons and Lovers* moves along a structural pattern determined by the nature of its human relationships. A Wave-rhythm distinguishes, in beat and counterbeat the major involvements of the characters: those of Walter and Gertrude Morel, Paul and his mother, Paul and Miriam, and Paul and Clara. In each of these relationships, separate episodes focus—in dramatically enacted dialogue, description, and action—aspects of each character-inter-connection. Each event is a successive wave and, the movement of the relationship is the full tide which is its consummation. After that consummation there are wave like returns to the achieved tension in that relationship, but now each wave shows a diminishing strength and intensity.

The reader of *Sons and Lovers* soon comes to anticipate the rhythmic returns and finds himself attuned to the Lawrence mode. He doesn't ask for the conventional climactic development." Also, comments from Dorothy Van Ghent on the structure of the novel would be helpful in its understanding: "...it is clear that the book is organized not merely on a chronological plan showing the habits and vicissitudes of a Nottinghamshire miner's family, that it has a structure rigorously controlled by an idea: an idea of an organic disturbance in the relationships of men and women—a disturbance of sexual polarities that is first seen in the disaffection of mother and father, then in the mother's attempt to substitute her sons for her husband, finally in the sons' unsuccessful struggle to establish natural manhood.

Lawrence's development of the idea has certain major implications: it implies that his characters have transgressed against the natural life-directed condition of the human animal against the elementary biological rhythm he shares with the rest of biological nature; and it implies that his offence against life has been brought about failure to respect the complete and terminal individuality of persons by a twisted desire to 'possess' other persons as the mother tries to possess her husband, then her sons, and as Miriam tries to 'possess' Paul. Lawrence saw this offence as a disease of modern life in all its manifestations, from sexual relationships to those broad social and political relationships that have changed people from individuals to anonymous economic properties or to military units or to ideological autonomies."

## **Autobiographical Elements in the Novel**

“Lawrence was always an autobiographical writer, and aspects of his personality, his beliefs and his experience in life appear in most of his novels, often more directly and with less modification than is common in imaginative fiction.” Graham Hough, in *The Dark Sun*, says: “*Sons and Lovers* is a catharsis achieved by re-living an actual experience—re-living it over and over again”. There can be no doubts that the novel is not only a record of Lawrence’s early life but it is also believed that the writing of that record was exceedingly important to Lawrence as an individual and thus makes the novel much more than just another accomplishment in his literary career.

*Sons and Lovers* is set in close replica of Lawrence’s native village of Eastwood. The minutely described Bestwood can be seen as the realistic presentation of the place where the author has been brought up. The member’s of the Morel family and the situation that exists in the family is also mirrors Lawrence’s own life at home. Lawrence’s parents never enjoyed a very happy married life and its strains had an adverse effect on his own development. Quite similar to his mother, Lydia Lawrence, Gertrude in the novel is attracted towards Mr. Morel (Arthur Lawrence in case of Lawrence’s mother) initially but the charm began to dwindle away very soon. Moreover, in case of both the woman, Lawrence’s mother and his novel’s Mrs. Morel, dissatisfaction from marriage resulted in transference of affection from husband to sons.

Lawrence born on September 11, 1885 in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, began his education in 1891 from Board School to Nottingham High School and finally teacher’s training at Nottingham University College. Paul of the novel bears a close resemblance with Lawrence. The author, just like the character that he creates, was a weak and sickly boy. Both were affected by the disharmony in the relationship of their parents and as a result became quite introvert and depressed souls. In 1901 began his friendship with Jesse Chambers, which bears the origin of the “Mirriam” of *Sons and Lovers*. It is believed that the parts of the novel related to Paul-Miriam love affair were written and revised under the direction of Jessie Chambers. Lawrence had a love relationship with Jessie but their affair failed to reach a satisfactory point of culmination, just like that of Paul and Miriam. Regarding the character of Clara, critics feel that it does not have its origin in any single but more than one women from Lawrence’s personal life.

It is believed that Lawrence himself was a victim of Oedipus complex as his mother Lydia had a very strong hold him and in return Lawrence had an extraordinarily close relationship, more like that of a lover, with his mother. Lawrence himself confessed to Jessie Chambers: “I’ve loved her like a lover that’s why I could never love you”. Similarly, in *Sons and Lovers*, Mrs. Morel happens to be the central force in Paul’s life. Paul cannot break free from his mother in order to establish some sort of normal relationship with any other woman in his life.

## **Class Consciousness**

The issues of class-consciousness seem to be reflected to quite an extent in the *Sons and Lovers*. Lawrence appears to be offering a foretaste of the social structure prevailing during the early twentieth century in Britain. It has been noted that as the Victorian era came to an end the mothers, especially those belonging to the working class, aspired for higher standards of living and aimed towards higher achievements, both culturally and socially. Also, it was found to be a common practice among mothers to hold their sons close to themselves and inculcate the same notions, values and aspirations. “The expectations of mothers in Lawrence’s days were tempered with a sense of realism, but secretly harbored a desire for he success and happiness of all their offspring. But men were trapped in late Victorian society, frequently by their mothers who unwittingly failed to let go, sometimes by societal constraints and, in spite of educational reform, were constantly struggling to improve their lot, yet generally failed to do so.”

In context of this background Paul, as many critics agree, is restrained by his mother’s prevailing dominance but her influence seems to be ambivalent to an extent. On one hand she wants her son to rise in life and at the

same time does not allow him to be completely on his own. Along with a yearning for economic progress she does not completely disapprove of his desire to pursue a simple living by staying local. Thus, it is important to note that “this ambivalence, mirrored in other relationships throughout the novel, seems to pervade Lawrencean thinking and, defined in terms of social stratification, sets up a predominant dialectic throughout the work, leading to a combination of aspiration, passion, constraint and self-destruction. This progression is almost roller coaster like, as the protagonist hurtles toward a destiny the reader begins to glimpse, but is unable to stop. The inevitability of Paul’s dialectic make-up almost seems to flow naturally into the novel, because the attentive reader readily perceives the introspective musings and the idle speculations which typify Paul’s thinking.”

The emotional impulses that characterize Paul’s personality also have some basis in social aspirations as his life’s adolescence was dominated by an authoritative father and an ambitious mother. The dialectical aspect of Paul’s character “toward growth, yet destruction, and toward eroticism, yet nihilism, cross the barrier from the purely psychological to the socio-economic as the novel unfolds”. During the early nineteenth century England there was a wave of Marxism and egalitarian theories had begun to attract the minds of many people. Lawrence is not trying to endorse the Marxist values through the novel but is trying to reflect the ideological dilemma that the people faced during that period. Lawrence does not cling to pure Marxist philosophy as he does allot the superior position to Paul whereby he is able to make employment available for lower-class people as well. Lawrence seems to be suggesting some sort of hopefulness and at the same time questioning the system of distribution of money in the society. The novel thus deals with issues of class structure, the way class restrictions are imposed and confronted and how they influence the psyche of the individuals.

### Setting

The Countryside and Nature: “Lawrence was very much a village boy although his village was industrial rather than agricultural and throughout his life he kept the intense awareness of natural objects that was fostered in his childhood by the woods and fields that came within a stone’s throw of the house in Eastwood where he was born. His background and the background of *Sons and Lovers* must not be imagined in terms of the vast built up areas of the Northern industrial conurbations; in his childhood and youth, the period of the novel, town and country jostled each other shoulder to shoulder. As Lawrence writes in the very first chapter of the novel: “From Nuttall, high up on the sandstone among the woods, the railway ran, past the ruined priory of the Carthusians and past Robin Hood’s Well, down to Spinney Park then on to Minton, a large mine among corn-fields; from Minton across the farm-lands of the valleyside to Bunker’s Hill, branching off there, and running north to Beggarlee and Selby, that looks over at Crich and the hills of Derbyshire; six mines like black studs on the countryside, linked by a loop of fine chain, the railway.” (Chapter 1)

The countryside is virtually acts as a contrast to the darkness of the burrows of the coalmines that lie underneath. The account of this in the novel is almost secondary and it is not referred to openly and directly, but the reader is all the time reminded of the proximity of and to the world of nature. The people are not entirely detached or removed away from the natural order, rather there is always, although not very explicit, bond with nature. They are living a synthetic life within a mechanized system and there seems to be a repudiation of nature altogether, but there is some kind of closeness with nature that is shared by all.

Thus it is very natural for certain important scenes of the novel to take place in natural surroundings, for instance it can be country walks or farms. Lawrence, in fact, makes use of such junctures to “convey moments of revelation in his characters”. Lawrence had the ability to emphasize the emotional turmoil through the associated background. Nature would help to provide the character with an insight into his/her own thoughts. Mrs. Morel is often comforted by some undefined energy that the nature possess: “She went into the front garden, feeling too heavy to take herself out, yet unable to stay indoors. The heat suffocated her. And looking ahead the prospect of her life made her feel as if she were buried alive. The front garden was a small square with a privet hedge. There she stood trying to soothe herself with the scent of flowers and the fading beautiful evening” (Chapter 1).

Another of Lawrence's description in Chapter 2 needs attention: "The sun was going down. Every open evening, the hills of Derbyshire were blazed over with red sunset. Mrs. Morel watched the sun sink from the glistening sky, leaving a soft flower-blue overhead. . . The mountain-ash berries across the field stood fierily out from the dark leaves, for a moment. A few shocks of corn in a corner of the fallow stood up as if alive; she imagined them bowing, perhaps her son would be a Joseph. . . With Mrs. Morel it was one of those still moments when the small frets vanish, and the beauty of things stands out, and she had the peace and strength to see herself." Not only do these passages demonstrate the observant eye of an artist like Lawrence that captures the minute details of the surroundings but it also shows how the backdrop is so skillfully used to convey the emotions and mood of the character, Mrs. Morel in this particular case.

It has been very truly commented about Lawrence's writing that "it is purely functional writing and its function is within the novel". Perhaps, Lawrence is so well informed about and cherishes a special kind of intimacy with nature that he instinctively uses natural objects to describe human emotions. In the novel he particularly uses flowers and plants to bring to light complex characters like that of Miriam: "The cheeks of the flowers were greenish with cold. But still some had burst, and their gold ruffled and glowed. Miriam went on her knees before one cluster, took a wild-looking daffodil between her hands, turned up its face of gold to her, and bowed down, caressing it with her mouth and cheeks and brow" (Chapter 9). A better understanding of Miriam's personality and temperament can be attained through this visualized action rather than a formal analysis.

The use of flora and plant life, through out the novel, is suggestive of the power of life. Lawrence has taken them as metaphors of vivacity and spontaneity, images of life itself. Thus, when the naturalness around is compared to the relationship between Paul and Miriam, the sterility of this human liaison is highlighted although it has been equally a part of nature. Moreover, Miriam's attitude to the flowers, one of strong, worshipful adoration, mirrors her feelings towards Paul, too idealistic and over-spiritualized.

These observations establish the fact that Lawrence uses the natural surroundings and the countryside in two different ways: "first to particularize the special circumstances of Bestwood and secondly, as a source of imagery and near symbolism that can best convey extremely delicate and intangible emotions and attitudes."

**The Village and Mine:** Lawrence does not provide any formal description of the village and it is left to the reader to grasp the physical properties and appearances and so forth from the many comments that are made in the course of the novel. Just as the existence of a village does not stand outside the lives of its inhabitants, the reader also comes to take it for granted. The focus of the author is not on the external presence of the village as we see in the case of nature. Rather, Lawrence perceives village as a community. "Strangely enough the countryside is most important in defining the village. The constant reminders of the near presence of the countryside gradually give the impression of Bestwood as an island, to some extent cut off, and most certainly self-contained. This creation of a sense of unity in isolation is factual reporting; even today, despite the ubiquity of the motor-car, mining villages tend to be exclusive communities whose members, friends and enemies alike, belong to one another; the village is an extension of the family."

The fine description of this cluster of village people makes the reader acknowledge not only his social accuracy but also sense that he intends to make the community something more than merely a background for his narrative. It becomes significant in the placing of his characters. Morel fits into it while Mrs. Morel does not. Morel belongs to the place as is depicted by scenes at work or pub, going on jaunts with his friends and sharing their habits and so on. He seems to blend naturally and quite easily with his surroundings, whereas Mrs. Morel never feels at home. She is we are told, "not anxious to move into the Bottoms; even when she does get there, she is set apart: "Having an end house, she enjoyed a kind of aristocracy among the other women of the "between" houses" (chapter 1). Mrs. Morel's superiority and her awareness of it is best shown in a trivial incident. Mrs. Morel is "having a word" with her neighbour; a short conversation follows about Hose, the agent who collects the stockings that the housewives have seamed at home. Hose arrives: "Hose was



coming along, ringing his bell. Women were waiting at the yard-ends with their seamed stockings hanging over their arms. The man, a common fellow made jokes with them, tried to swindle them, and bullied them. Mrs. Morel went up her yard disdainfully” (chapter 2). Two functions are being carried out here simultaneously: First, the reader is acquainted with one of the many facets of community life and secondly, the reader is informed about Mrs. Morel’s attitude towards this life, which is undoubtedly that of superiority.

Lawrence is more concerned and curious about human life and experience rather than being interested in physical appearance of the surroundings. This is to be seen in Lawrence’s handling of the pub that happens to be an important place in the life of the Morels. The building and its rooms or even the furniture is barely touched upon, but its importance to the men and especially to Morel, is presented in a couple of scenes. The first is when early in the novel he comes in after ‘waiting’ all day at the ‘Moon and the Stars’, and described his day, mainly the conversation centred on a coconut (chapter 1): “This is very far removed from stage dialect; Lawrence with his accurate ear for language and his close acquaintance with the common tongue of north Nottinghamshire, captures the rhythm and cadence of uneducated and lively speech, achieving an authenticity that takes us into the heart of working class talk and thought”. Another incident demonstrates the social function of the pub in the community, and quite precisely reveals Morel. The incident takes place after a quarrel between him and Mrs. Morel when he has thrown a table drawer at her and is resentful and feels guilty. More than words could ever describe the character of Morel; his action speaks all about his personality. Lawrence’s writing is commendable for such dramatic economy of high order.

Numerous incidents in the novel—the chapel, shopping, market, etc.—firmly base the actions and activities of the characters in actuality with immense authenticity and from these substantial insights of daily life, not very obvious facts about the economic life of the working class begin to surface. “Through out the first half of the novel there is a constant awareness of money, and there is a deeply sympathetic depiction of the unremitting pressure of near poverty, and of the planning and small economies made necessary by a small and uncertain income.” Lawrence seems to be very ardently engaged in the depiction of the feelings and thoughts and apprehensions of a working class man. The result is quite realistic because Lawrence is writing, based on his instincts and experience, from inside. The details are meticulous: “If he earned forty shilling to pay his debts” (chapter 1). These figures remind the readers that Morels could have been comfortably placed; coal getters were among the aristocracy of labour; we discover from Robert Tressell’s *The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists*, for example, that at this time skilled painters and decorators were earning barely a pound a week. Mrs. Morel, thus, has a genuine and real grievance against her husband apart from emotional aversion. From another perspective, the reader is made to sympathize with the poor housewife’s condition.

Economics bring together two of the predominant issues in this precisely recorded background: the mine and the home. The mine dictates the village life as it happens to be the economic basis for the existence of the village people. Moreover, its physical presence is persistently felt: the winding gear at the pit-head, the lives of miners walking to and from work, the whistle, the trucks, the mine offices, though not described ostentatiously but very convincingly show the influence of mine on the lives of the characters. Morel’s tales about mine episodes adds a lot of veracity to the idea of mine being central to the village life. In addition to this, mine has its place in the home as well: Morel getting his ‘snap’ ready, laying out his singlet, having his back scrubbed, drying himself and changing his clothes in front of the fire. Incidents, though trivial, enable the reader to peep into the daily life of the Morels and realize the extent to which mine infiltrates into the domestic life.

There can be no doubts about the fact that mine is central to the life of the family in general but it is only Morel who actually goes down the mine. There is a large and significant part of his life that is inaccessible to his family. While he is relaxing with his mates or is at the pub, he is very distant and secluded from his family. He withdraws into a world of his own which although “shapes their lives but is impenetrable to them, and which they cannot, even if they wanted to, share”. The novel does not emphasize on this feature of “separateness” but it is very much there. For Morel the idea of home and family is not the same as for Mrs. Morel, and they seem to have different perceptions of life itself. For Mrs. Morel mine is only a means to an end; she is rather

astonished to know that Morel is a miner: “ ‘And you are a miner?’ she exclaimed in surprise. ‘Yes. I went down when I was ten.’ She looked at him in wondering dismay.”(Chapter 1) But for Morel, mine is much more than just a source of food and shelter for the family. One may regard this as a cause of alienation of Morel from the family or as a factor that emphasizes this alienation. With time mine begins to lose its importance for the family but remains centre of Morel’s life. The sons look elsewhere for their livelihood, William to London, Paul to Nottingham, Arthur to the army and Annie gets married. As Paul starts earning, Mrs. Morel is no longer solely dependent on Mr. Morel’s income and thus the mine becomes less important. As is mine important and part of Morel, the work that Paul takes up to earn his living is not essentially a part of Paul or his life.

**The Home and the Home Life:** The mine and community are very important in the development of the novel. And, to quite an extent, they also seem to have influenced the home life of the characters. There are two main aspects to these: the physical actuality of the house and the normal daily domestic economy on one hand, and on the other the kind of life that is led there. The relationship between Morel and his wife are largely expressed in terms of their home life, the way in which they live and get on together, and it is impossible to talk of the home without talking of the relationship.

“There is a vivid description of the appearance of the Morel’s home, impressionistic rather than photographic; it is not until fairly late in the novel that we are given anything like a literal description of the interior, and even here the effect sought is one of coziness rather than detailed description.” Home and domesticity had always been very important for Lawrence and therefore happens to be noticeably present in the novel. For Paul also, a home with its comforts and simplicity is vital for existence. Even amidst strife and during difficult times home with its homeliness has a very calming effect for Paul. It offers not only comfort but becomes a refuge and a kind of safe haven for Paul. There is a desperate need for this security that the home provides and thus no longer remains merely as a vignette of domestic life.

The home is not only seen in still pictures as a stagnant object or is never referred to as a mere building/house but always as a place of activity. The things are going on and happening in this place and it is not deprived of life. There are descriptions of the daily routine of domestic life with such revealing detail that authenticity is assured. There is a kind of genuineness and realism about the account of the household affairs that are carried out by the characters. Paul blanching almonds, Mrs. Morel ironing, Paul baking bread, and letting it burn in his preoccupation with Miriam, all these show a home as a place where things happen; they give the impression not of a dead setting but a living environment; they are completely accurate in tone and convincingly strike the note of a real home.

The home is of course the scene of special occasions of various kinds. The description of Christmas preparations before William’s first return home brings to mind Dickens’s skilled art of portraiture. Imbedded with comic element, Lawrence uses his observation powers are able to show very accurately the working class manners and other social traits through the scene. Later, the preparations for the reception of William’s coffin are described with equal rightness and solemnity. There are still many more scenes that bring out different shades of life lived in a house by a working class family ranging from tense and tortured moments to some happy and cheerful flashes: “These doings and occasions, happy and sad alike, are the stuff of domestic life, and Lawrence carefully shows the ordinariness in the life of Morels; this is no demonic family set apart from the general run of humanity by monstrous and gigantic passions; the Morels home is no Wuthering Heights; but the ordinariness is valuable in stressing those elements in the life of the family that differentiate it from others and make it distinctive.”

Another important thing to note is that it is only at home that Morel is shown drunk. In other words, the novelist wants to show how his drunkenness affects the domestic and the family life while at the pub Morel is shown very briefly. It can be said that Morel’s drunkenness is of two types. On one hand it is used to construct scenes of violence and anger between Morel and his wife, thereby highlighting the existing tension and strife between the couple. On the other hand, it shows the feelings that arise as a consequence. It gives rise to a

sense of uncertainty and a feeling of wretchedness. At the same time there is a constant fear about the future of the children and the adverse affect it has on them and, furthermore, it brings an extended misery for everyone in the family. Thus, the home is more than just a background for Lawrence's narrative. It, in fact, plays an important role in bringing out the suppressed feelings and impulses in the family members.

Gradually, Mrs. Morel's love and adoration for her husband depreciates with each quarrel and every outburst. The clashes of personalities resulting in quarrels are depicted with lot of dramatic vim and vigor. "Lawrence perfectly catches the vocabulary and rhythms of embittered speech designed solely to hurt; they are powerful presentations of viciousness, of blind unthinking antagonism; the reader is made to realize that they are the eruptions of passions that for most of time lie dormant and repressed, only to break out on provocation with destruction and irresistible violence." The initial quarrels have only Morel and his wife as participants. In the first chapter of the novel we find the couple shouting at one another

### Symbolism:

There is an extensive use of symbols in the novel but it, in no way, hampers the development of the plot or the flow of action. The symbols are so well knitted that it is difficult to regard them as something outside the structure. With regard to symbolism Jung remarks: "A symbol is alive in so far as it is pregnant with meaning..." and that symbol "is the expression of a thing not to be characterized in any other better way". According to M.H. Abrams "The modern period, in the decades after world war I, was a notable era of symbolism in literature. Many of the major writers of the period exploit symbols which are in part drawn from religious and esoteric traditions and in part from their own invention. Some of the works of the age are symbolist in their settings, their agents, and their actions, as well as in the objects they refer to."

One of the major symbols in the novel is that of flowers. Mrs. Morel seems to have a special relationship with them. They are not only offered to her by her son, Paul, but also have a very soothing and calming effect. Apart from the usual symbolism of innocence, beauty and freshness they also show the varying attitudes of three individuals—Paul, Miriam and Clara—in the scene when the three are walking in the open field. While Paul seems to have a very spontaneous respond toward them, Miriam seems to drive life out of them though she picks them quite lovingly and on the other hand Clara does not pick them at all. Then there is the swing at Willey Farm is symbolic of the ambivalence that Paul experiences with regard to his feelings for Miriam. Just as the swing moves to and fro, Paul is all the time oscillating between the feelings of love to that of hate. It also symbolizes the transitory nature of the two extreme feelings. Moreover, the dilemma within Paul is highlighted. When Miriam is not able to achieve the same height as Paul does on the swing, it shows the incompatibility between them.

**The Concept of Oedipus Complex:** Freud's theory of the Oedipal Complex takes its name from the title character of Sophocles' *Oedipus*. In this legendary Greek drama, Oedipus comes to kill his father and marry his mother. The Oedipus/Electra complex is the foundation for many of Freud's theories. He argued that every child was faced with the task of mastering the id's urges for the incestual relations of the Oedipal Complex, and that a failure to master the tendencies resulted in a basis for neurosis.

In a letter to Wilhelm Fliess, Freud explains how he developed the concept of the Oedipus complex: "Being entirely honest with oneself is a good exercise. Only one idea of general value has occurred to me. I have found love of the mother and jealousy of the father in my own case too, and now believe it to be general phenomena of early childhood, even if it does not always occur so early as in children who have been made hysterics... If that is the case, the gripping power of Oedipus Rex in spite of all the rational objections to the inexorable fate that the story presupposes, becomes intelligible and, one can understand why later fate dramas were such failures. Our feeling rise against any arbitrary individual fate... but the Greek myth seizes on a compulsion which everyone recognizes because he has felt traces of it in himself. Every member of the audience was once a budding Oedipus in fantasy, and this dream fulfillment played out in reality causes everyone to recoil in horror, with the full measure of repression which separates his fantasy from his parent state."

As explained by Arthur Asa Berger: For Freud, the Oedipus complex is the central or nuclear core of neurosis, and how we resolve our Oedipus complexes effect the way we develop and whether we are relatively normal or become neurotic. And, as we have seen, it affects the way our children develop also.

Freud argued that the Oedipus complex is found in everyone because it is natural and not environmental. There is a divergence of opinion among anthropologists as to whether this is correct, but there is evidence that seems to suggest it is and that the Oedipus complex is found everywhere. (there is also an inverse or negative Oedipus complex, which involves fantasies of incest with the parent of the same sex and murderous wishes towards the parent of the opposite sex.)

The Oedipus complex is normally resolved or mastered; in little boys. This is done through the agency of castration anxiety (the fear that the father will castrate the boy) and in little girls through penis envy (the fantasy girls have that they have lost their penises). Castration, anxiety, so the theory goes, leads boys to identify with their fathers' masculinity and to renounce their love for their mothers. This masculinity is then channeled into love outside of the confines of the family and toward other women. Penis envy leads girls to reidentify with their mothers and turn to males (other than their fathers) to obtain babies, and, indirectly, their lost 'penises'.

The female equivalent of Oedipus complex is often called the Electra complex, after the myth of Electra, daughter of Agamemnon. Electra induced her brother Orestes to kill their mother and her new husband, in retribution for their having killed Agamemnon. Electra refused to marry and brooded over the death of her father

Many are of the opinion that Oedipus complex is at the heart of all literature: "for a literary work to have a strong, or, even more, a lasting appeal, its plot must arouse and gratify some important aspect of the unconscious oedipal wishes of the members of its audience". Furthermore it is suggested that Oedipus complex is "the cornerstone of all culture as we know it". In other words "it informs our expressive works, both tragic and comic. It helps us work through out the unconscious problems and conflicts, both as individuals and as collectivities; as such, it plays a much more profound role in our lives than we may possibly imagine".

Not only Lawrence but also the age itself was swayed by the theories of Freud and Oedipus complex was a major one. However, it cannot be assumed that this theory determined the composition of *Sons and Lovers*. If one believes that Lawrence was trying to present his personal experiences in the novel then it can be concluded that he was a victim of this complex. His mother, Lydia, had a great influence and a strong on him and he had once confessed to Jessie Chambers, the girl he loved: "I loved my mother-like a lover and that is why I could never love you". Graham Hough (*The Dark Sun: A Study of D.H. Lawrence*) asserts the psychological importance of *Sons and Lovers* and claims it to be 'the first Freudian novel in English'. The Freudianism is not only explored through the life of the main character in the novel but it also hints at the "Oedipus imbroglio" of the author. Harold Massingham wrote in a review published in the *Daily Chronicle*: "We suspect that Paul is a projection of the writer's own personality".

**Characters and Relationships:** In this chapter we shall be considering the various relationships and interrelationships that make up the main part of SL. It will not be often necessary to give character sketches because Lawrence does not work that way, and it will not be possible to deal with situations in as neat and orderly fashion as the sub heading might rather deceptively indicate. For example it is obviously impossible to talk of Mr. And Mrs. Morel without talking of their children; it is even more impossible to talk about Miriam and Paul without talking about Mrs. Morel. But the sub – headings will at least serve to indicate the main lines of emphasis.

**MOREL AND MRS. MOREL:** When the reader is first introduced to Mrs. Morel, she has been married for eight years; she is seen immediately as housewife and mother. In the scene at the wakes, there is the first slight statement of the Principle theme of the novel, the attachment between the mother and the sons. Williams, a child of about seven years old, has won two eggcups from a stall. He is pleased with them, and shows them

to his mother. ‘ She knew he wanted them for her. ‘ Lawrence goes on to describe briefly the little boy’s pride in his mother, and in his possessiveness of her: He would not leave her. All the time he stuck close to her, bustling with a small boy’s pride of her. (chapter1). The note that resounds through the novel is here struck gently and unobtrusively. When the children have gone to bed, Mrs. Morel, alone, reflects on her life: Mrs. Morel was alone, but she was used to it. Her son and her little girl slept up stairs; so, it seemed, her home was there behind her, fixed and stable. But she felt wretched with the coming child. The world seemed a dreary place, where nothing else would happen for her—at least until William grew up. But for herself, nothing but this dreary endurance—till the children grew up. And the children! She could not afford to have this third. She did not want it. The father was serving beer in a public house, swilling himself drunk. She despised him, and was tied to him. This coming child was too much for her. If it were not for William and Annie, she was sick of it, the struggle with poverty and ugliness and meanness. She went into the front garden, feeling too heavy to take herself out, yet unable to stay indoors. The heat suffocated her. And looking ahead, the prospect of her life made her feel as if she were buried alive” (Chapter1).

Thus we are introduced to the central figure of the Morel, a woman depressed and tired, no longer loving her husband, and sustained only by her children. Then follows a retrospective account of her early life, and what emerges from it is her superiority, both personal, and, by decent at least, social: ‘She came of good old burger family.’ A measure of ‘forgiveness’ is indicated, too, though of Nottingham stock, she had spent her childhood and youth in the south, and had been educated there. Lawrence establishes from the beginning those qualities of temperament and make it unlikely that, she being as she is, her marriage can be a success with the sort of man she married; this is hinted at by the mention of the young man whom she had known at Sheerness and (She still had the Bible that John Field had given her) who we gather would have been suitable.

Mr. Morel who attracted her into marriage is introduced in the course of this reminiscence; and throughout the emphasis is on his simple abundant vitality. A list of the words and phrases used to describe him is revealing: well set up, erect and very smart, vigorous, ruddy, red mist mouth, rich ringing laugh, color and animation, ready, pleasant, non – intellectual, warm, natural, joyous, exaltation, glamour, the flower of his body, the dusky golden softness of this man’s sensuous flame of life. These all occur in the course of a page and a half and speak for themselves; (Chapter1 pg 10) they show us the spontaneous, instinctive and simple sensuous man who appeals to his antithesis: “She was a Puritan, like her father, high-minded and stern” (Chapter1 pg11). This fundamental sensuous attractiveness is a real and in some ways lasting influence on the relationship between them. It is left for Paul to comment on it late in the novel: Yes; but my mother got real joy and satisfaction ... lasts three months (chapter12).

Though Paul’s subsequent attempts to define this kind of passion are not realize what is meant; there must be an experience of passion and fulfillment which however brief it may have been, can illuminate a whole life, a moment or period of complete and spontaneous union that can never be forgotten, where existence serves as a bond between those who shared it even when the passion itself is long dead. And this experience Morel and Mrs. Morel had; brief through the statement of their short married happiness, it is enough. It should be set against the innumerable statement of Mrs. Morel’s contempt for her husband, the vivid description of the hatred between them, and the reiterated theme of Mrs. Morel’s economic dependence on the Morel ‘ for the children’s sake.’ The economic reason and the passionate reason can assimilate, just as a sense of union can co – exist with, just as a sense of union can co – exist with hatred and contempt. Lawrence, dealing with the emotions, is aware of their complexity, and refuses to simplify into terms of black and white, right and wrong, happy and miserable; antitheses can co – exist.

When we first see the Morel, however, the period of disillusionment had lasted years, and a fifth of the novel is largely given to tracing the last stages of spiritual intimacy between them. We are shown the various crucial moments; Mrs. Morel’s discovery of her husband’s deceitfulness about money is the first; the second and crucial one is the cutting of the year old Williams’s hair – an event trivial enough, one which is earlier and lesser novels could have been an excuse for vintage domestic sentimentality; here it here it becomes really important:

“But she knew and Morel knew, that that act had caused something momentous to take place in her soul. She remembered the scene all her life, as one in which she had suffered the most intensely. This act of masculine clumsiness was the spear through the side of her love for Morel” (Chapter1). This is worthy of close attention, and the details must be noted carefully. The reference in the metaphor is of course to the crucifixion. Mrs. Morel’s love for her husband is the implied Christ of the image; but Christ’s side was pierced only after his death.

The cutting of William’s hair is the act that proves the death of that first love; after this – that is, for practically the whole novel – Mrs. Morel has ceased to love her husband vitally: “Before, while she had striven against him bitterly, she had fretted after him, as if he had gone astray from her. Now she ceased to fret for his love: he was and outsider to her. This made life much more bearable” (Chapter1). But Mrs. Morel cannot lapse in to the easy going indifference that could have made their lives so much more tolerable, and which would have been so welcome to Morel: “Nevertheless, she still continued to strive with him. She still had her high moral sense inherited from generations of Puritans. It was now a religious instinct, and she was almost a fanatic with him, because she loved him, or had loved him. If he sinned, she tortured him. If he drank, and lied, was often a poltroon, sometimes a knave, she wielded the lash unmercifully” (Chapter1).

At this stage, it is Possible to feel some sympathy for Morel, and it is even possible that Lawrence feels some. But, basically his approval and sympathy lie with Mrs. Morel, His mother – figure; she is an expression of his even Puritanism. In the scenes that follow the casting off of Morel, there is very little sympathy, and Morel is presented, reasonably enough, in a bad light, since his actions are disgusting. Besides being an account of the transference of Mrs. Morel’s love from her husband to her son, the first quarter of the novel is also an account of the degeneration of Morel, and of Mrs. Morel’s bitter triumph in the middle of misery. “The pity was, that she was too much his opposite. She could not be content with the little he might be; she would have him the much that he ought to be. So, in seeking to make him nobler than he could be she destroyed him. She injured and hurt and scared herself, but she lost none of her worth. She also had the children” (Chapter1).

In this objective summary of the situation, the responsibility for Morel’s decline is ascribed unequivocally to Mrs. Morel, even though the provocation comes from Morel. But in the presentation of Morel’s process of degeneration, Lawrence seems to be intellectually aware of the pathos of his gradually diminishing vitality, but does not seem to be moved by it: he is much more moved to indignation and sympathy by the misery it causes to Mrs. Morel (who he has said is responsible) and her children. This withdrawal of comparison is particularly interesting when we consider the sympathy by which he treats Paul’s struggle to resist being eaten up by his mother, and when we consider Lawrence’s own bitterly expressed resentment of possessive love as it appears in Birkin’s attitude in *Women In Love*. Morel loses most, but quite simply Lawrence does not seem to care; Morel only matters to Lawrence in so far as he affects Mrs. Morel and the children. However this does not prevent Lawrence from recording the process accurately and sensitively. There is a direct statement; after the incident in which Morel locks his wife out of doors, Lawrence comments: “After such a scene as the last, Walter Morel was for some days abashed and ashamed, but he soon regained his old bullying indifference. Yet there was a slight shrinking, a diminishing in his assurance. Physically even, he shrank, and his fine full presence waned. He never grew in the least stout, so that, as he sank from his erect, assertive bearing, his physique seemed to contract along with hid pride and moral strength” (Chapter2).

He is seen as increasingly empty, and increasingly futile in action; there is a shaming anticlimax of his blustering departure from the house with his little blue bundle and his ignominious return the same evening, on which there is this comment: As Mrs. Morel saw him slink... because she had loved him (chapter2). It is shortly after this that her love for him finally dies. In his illness ‘she never quite wanted him to die... wanted him for herself’ (chapter3) but the the birth of Paul asserts itself and brings about the final change and Mrs. Morel realizes the direction in which her feelings are set: Now with the birth ...she scarcely desired him (chapter3). And with this with enunciation comes on measure of indifference; Morel has last to heart her; from this time on her concern is with the children, and Morel’s behaviour is only important to her if it affects the children. The effect

on Morel's inner life is disastrous, even though, after his return to strength he goes on very much as before, working, drinking and bullying his family. But, as far as his personal life is concerned, he is a beaten man: His life was casting him off...to their children (chapter3).

He has ceased to be of any account in the life of his family, and when this is remembered, his violence inside the home, and his search elsewhere for comfort and consultation can be seen as empty gestures of assertiveness, attempts to impose his presence on these withdrawn people of his flesh as a reality. These pathetic attempts make his children hate him, as they fear him and are made uncomfortable by him; in this section of the novel we see him and his relationship with his wife through the children's eyes, not through Mrs. Morel's – he is no longer important to her: Paul hated his father so...and nasty temper (chapter4).

This is a figure very far removed from the young man of super abundant life and charm and vitality that we saw at the beginning of the novel, and at least part of the change is done to a change in Lawrence's attitude: his sympathy for Morel diminishes as the novel progresses, until here we have something that is very near caricature. Lawrence's involvement of Paul's feeling is clearly shown in the use of the word 'soiled' of Morel's patches of grey – it is an emotional weighting. Lawrence at this stage does not seem to see anything pathetic in this situation, indeed, Morel is stated to be where and what he is by an act of his own will, as a consequence of his own choice: He was an outsider. He had denied the god in him (chapter4). There is no recognition of the fact that it takes two to make an incompatibility, no sense of regret at the prevention and near extinction of a personality. Lawrence is too deeply committed to the mother and children. This is one of the occasions when we are most acutely aware of Lawrence's personal employment with the characters of the novel, when we remember that Walter Morel is Lawrence's vision of his father, and Paul his vision of himself. Dramatically, this bias has its compensations: it certainly gives urgency and intense feeling to the scenes in which Morel is behaving intolerably, but its presence must be acknowledged if we are to see the novel clearly.

By the time William is entering early manhood, and Paul is a boy, the relationship between Morel and his wife has reached its final static stage. Mrs. Morel is by now largely indifferent to her husband; he became less and less important in the home and more ineffectual, lapsing in to mare "an ugly irritant". Not only in Mrs. Morel's life but also in the novel he is replaced by his sons, and in the second half of the novel he seldom makes an appearance of any importance.

It has been dealt at some length with this relationship partly because it is only easy to take it for granted, and partly because of his dual complexity; first the complexity of the relationship itself, the study of incompatible people moving from passion through hatred to indifference; and secondly, the complexity of Lawrence's attitude towards Morel; he starts off with some measure of sympathy for him, and some objective realization of the intractability of Mrs. Morel; these disappear as the story moves into the more conscious period of Paul's childhood; that is, as turns to the part that Lawrence himself can more vividly remember experiencing. It well illustrates the very special place of this novel in Lawrence's work and life: it is at once of personal record and an objective work of art.

**MRS. MOREL AND HER SONS:** Mr. Morel is discarded off as a dominant factor fairly early in the novel, and Mrs. Morel "turns for love and life" to her children. The first relationship with William is not as powerful as it could probably have been or as Lawrence might have wanted it to be. It is the coming of Paul that is responsible for the impetuous end of her love for her husband; it is Paul who is symbolically baptized with her blood. William is to be seen as a temporary substitution. Mrs. Morel turns to him first because he is older; he is nearer to a manhood; she saw him as a man, young full of vigour, making the world glow again for her" (chapter 3). In him she sees the chance of fulfilling all those aspirations—social, intellectual, and emotional—that her marriage with Morel had crushed. William, unlike his father is clever, ambitious, and intelligent and he has the intellectual qualities of his mother: he can enter the outside world from which she has been excluded by her unsuitable marriage. He begins to move in social circles nearer to those of his mother's youth.

As he enters this world inaccessible to his parents there is inevitably tension between him and his mother on one side and his father on the other. In a scene such as has been enacted in countless working class homes, Morel voices the resentment and antagonism that exist alongside his pride in his son. In an argument about William's choice of a job, Morel suggests the pit, but Mrs. Morel is strictly against it and says that it is not good enough for him. More important is the first development of tension between Mrs. Morel and William. His modest social climbing takes them to dances, of which the puritan of Mrs. Morel disapproves, and brings him into contact with girls, of whom she disapproves even more strongly. Lawrence very effectively catches Mrs. Morel's forbidding antagonism and these girls' painful embarrassment. The incident is trivial, as are the affairs; but it shows Mrs. Morel's protective possessiveness, and the direction in which Williams' downfall is to lie; he has a predilection for, in Lawrence's word, "fribbles" – pretty, feckless, shallow girls. His departure to London is mingled pain and pleasure to Mr. Morel's; "she loved him so much! - ... as well out of her heart" (chapter 3). She not only misses him but worries for him as well, fears that his susceptibility will lead him to make a choice, as in the event it does. His removal to London accelerates a process that had already begun: Mrs. Morel had already begun to turn to Paul for comfort. When William was kept more from whom by his work in Nottingham, and this moment is intensified; but at this stage we are told "William occupied her chiefly... not so passionate as with her eldest" (chapter 4).

However, William's first visit home on Christmas brings the family together and a. and to reanimate it for the time being: "Home was home, and they loved it with a passion of love, whatever the suffering had been" (chapter 4) and we are told again that Mrs. Morel still "loved him passionately" but this is the last time that such a feeling is conveyed for William. On his next Christmas visit Williams 'arrived with a lady, but no presents', The mother, in spite of her reservations and dislike, is kind and hospitable towards the girl, who is hopelessly feather-headed, but Williams is quite unsettled and insecure. When he brings the girl home again, he is all the more disturbed and unhappy. He is shown as feeling himself committed to the girl, yet not loving her, capable even of detesting her, and despising her. There is one sentence that perhaps reveals the true reason: "Lily could understand nothing... he hate his betrothed (chapter 6). Lily, in fact, is not his mother and the intimacy that is between him and his mother is not to be found with her and he hates her for it. He is at first attracted to her by her prettiness, her gaiety, and what he sees as her lively social life, but these prove insufficient: what ever gives, it is not in the pattern that has been established by his mother as the one necessary for his personality. He has chosen lightly and wrongly, on an ultimate basis of appetite, and cannot escape and the situation is draining him of life. Mrs. Morel is sensible and kind, but seeing him heading for a marriage of incompatibles, and seeing him suffering she suffers too "her heart was heavy as it had never been... it was her hope that was struck (chapter 6). She sees her son destroying himself and part of her self in her hopes of him: he, in whom she had hoped to live and to achieve by deputy what she had never had in person, is moving towards a union as certain of failure as her own turned out to be. His depth, in tolerably painful as it is to her, is only as it was a realization of her fears.

Shortly after William's death the final stage of Mrs. Morel's final shift of her central love to Paul takes place. Mrs. Morel, since the funeral, has withdrawn from life and begins to lose the will to live. But Paul falls ill: his mother lies in bed with him. He wakes, feeling him that he is dying: "I s'll die mother! He cried... oh my son, my son" (chapter 6). The mother's words are those, which she uttered repeatedly at Williams' funeral; now she applies to her living son; she comes back in to the world of life, and at last Paul has completely taken of his brother who had already taken the father's place in the mother's heart. The relationship between Paul and his mother runs through the whole novel; it has various stages and various degrees of intensity and stress; all other relationships are brought in to contact with it. Not only is it most exhaustively treated and the most feeling rendered of the relationships, but it is also the central expression of the theme of sons and lovers; every thing is ultimately referred to it.

The study of William and his mother is presented to a large extent in terms of direct statement – the reader is told that GM loved her elder son; the study of Mrs. Morel and Paul is presented dramatically and on a large



scale. From the very beginning we are shown the development the love and its manifestations, and are also shown the circumstances outside it that contribute in making it all the more strong. Its fluctuations are noted and demonstrated; it is always seen as a living thing, kept constant by the fixity of Mrs. Morel's emotional dedication to it, and wavering only because of the inevitable changes caused by Paul's growing up, and the consequent diffusion of his interest and affections. The course that it takes is one from the unquestioning intimacy of his boy hood and early adolescence through the period of trouble and problems that is caused by Miriam to the realization by Paul of his mother's central and dominant position in his life, ending only with her death.

It is very obvious that Lawrence is more concerned with the relationship rather than the individual is clear picture of Gertrude Morel here, a firm inflexible little woman, suffering and embittered, but indomitable and determined to achieve a personal life of fulfilled emotion; we see her as a woman passionately determined not to be beaten down by life. But Paul as an individual seldom emerges with any definite clarity. We are told from time to time what he looks like (chapter5. He was not a very good debater and the reader is told about his interests – his painting, his intellectuals questioning, and his life at work. Yet, comparatively slight as the formal description is of him and his personality is, we became acutely and intimately aware of him. This comes about by reason of the very subtle way in which Lawrence takes us inside Paul; we are made to share his receptiveness; we feel the impact of events and people as they come into his consciousness. And Paul is most usually seen in a state of response to the personalities and doings of others, of his mother, of Miriam, of Clara, of Banter Dawes.

In a sense it is true to say that Paul is a hero of the novel, in that it is mainly to him that things happen, and we experience them with him. This is not to say that we are invited to identify naively with him, as we are invited to identify with James Bond; Lawrence in giving Paul's experiences, generally has given us enough to see the whole picture, and this evaluates and places Paul's reactions, thereby qualifying ours. A good example of this is to be seen in Lawrence's treatment of Paul's intense experiences of passion; everything is centred on Paul's awareness of it; it is described subjectively, not objectively; but we are also made aware of the other person's reactions; we know more than Paul, though at the time we can see through his eyes. In these cases Lawrence achieves a singular fusion of author, character and reader. This, of course, has its dangers; sometimes we feel that we are being forced to endorse the judgment, which we cannot accept, but this is rare.

Although Paul is so much at the centre, and so much the register of other people and events, and though we are shown so much of his mind, he is not presented as a thoroughgoing introspective; this is precisely because he is concerned so much more with other people and his reactions to them than he is with the details of his personality. Paul, in fact—and this is one of the great strengths of the novel—is for most of time in state of ignorance and bewilderment about himself; in capturing this confusion, Lawrence has captured the very essence of adolescence and early manhood. He seldom tries to explain the inexplicable; after all, it can be argued that the novelist's talk is to present the problems, not to give the answers. So Paul emerges as a sensitive and intelligent boy and young man, immensely responsive to the world and people round him, confused and uncertain, often unhappy, but determined like his mother to live, though, unlike her, he does not consciously expect happiness.

It will be useful to look in some detail at the way in which the relationship between these two is presented. Descriptions of affectionate companionships begin very early in the novel; there is the trip to Nottingham to get him his job; the mother's uninhibited eagerness and the boy's embarrassment at it are delightfully caught, and the simple completeness of their happiness is summed up: "He had spent a perfect afternoon... and tired (chapter5)

Also, the description of their first visit to the Leiver's farm shows well Lawrence's technique of presenting the incident in simple, straightforward prose, and then clinching the meaning with an unobtrusive statement: Here is a bit of new mown hay...she was perfectly happy" (chapter6). It is worthy to note that Lawrence here, in a situation of great emotional delicacy, manages to avoid any suggestion of the sentimentality it would be so

easy to fall into, the occasion has been put before the reader with too much authority, and the comment is too austere in expression to allow any falsity of feeling to creep in.

These occasions show the activity of the relationship at its most free and happy, the spontaneous expressions of the intense fundamental love that is dealt within the period of the strife and unhappiness that follows the idyllic untroubled phase. They are reinforced by occasions of even more explicit significance; the following passage is one of the few occasions on which Lawrence actually states the importance of this quiet communion to both mother and son. "He was studying for his painting...they almost ignored" (chapter7).

The first sign of a flaming of this happy companionship comes only three pages later, when Paul is late home after spending an evening with Miriam. We are first told directly of the mother's uneasiness. "Always when he went with Miriam...he could not understand" (chp7 pg185)—a statement whose accuracy as a fact of domestic life will no doubt strike many readers but the real force of the incident lies to a much greater intent in the splendid reporting of Mrs. Morel's conversation with Paul. Her antipathy for Miriam, her unwillingness and lack of enthusiasm to admit the reality of Paul's growing up, the antagonism between mother and son, are dramatically before the reader—the more direct comment that has gone before is amply documented and justified. Mrs. Morel's conscious reason for her anxiety has been stated. She could feel Paul being drawn away—she said to herself (chapter7) but the simpler and deeper possessiveness, something not entirely dissimilar from what she fears in Miriam, comes out in the action put before the reader. Equally clearly emerges the fact that this strife is not likely to destroy the love between mother and son at the end of the incident. "Then he went slowly to bed...she was hurt" (chapter7). There are further incidents of a similar kind one, that takes place during the holidays at Marblethorpe, is important because it shows Miriam so plainly as an intruder into the happy intimacy between mother and son. Again, he is rather late; again, there is acid exchange between them. "And she took no further notice of him...she put the blame on Miriam" (chapter7).

Besides showing Gertrude's antagonism to Miriam, it gains force when one remembers the close intimacy shown in the passages quoted earlier. When Paul was at home working at his painting; the intrusion and the resultant discord are shown. It will be noticed that there is no question of right or wrong in this matter; Lawrence merely states the facts as they are and though, as the incidents multiply, we can see that his sympathies are pretty clearly with the mother, yet at this stage of the novel there is no undue writing; the pitifulness of Miriam's character is honestly realized.

Matters reach a crisis when Paul returns from taking Miriam to her home after having burnt the bread; it is this incident that shows the subject of the next chapter—The Defeat Of Miriam—to be inevitable. In the course of a bitter agreement Paul stressed the community of ideas and interests that he shares with Miriam and cannot share with his mother. Mrs. Morel resents his saying so, just as she resents the truth of the statement and Paul blundered into a further stupid truthfulness: "You'r old mother, and we are young...wrong thing" (chapter8). His mother is deeply hurt, and Paul is shocked into realization. Then follows the most revealing passage: "he had taken off his collar...without knowing he gently stroked her face" (chapter8). This is in many ways a fundamental passage. Technically, it shows Lawrence's mastery of the impassioned scene of strong and complex emotions: the mother's desperate fear of losing her son, her sense of a frustrated life, the intensity of her love, the son's misery and his equally strong love for his mother, the complete absorption in feeling and emotion are all conveyed with a straightforward directness that commands assents.

But besides this, it establishes two vitally important elements in the theme of the novel; we see now that Mrs. Morel realizes a similar intensity of possessive emotion in Miriam: she realizes that she and Miriam are fighting for the same thing, the possession of Paul's soul; and it establishes her rare supremacy in Paul; when he is put under pressure, his choice, he realizes, is already made; he must return to his mother. All this is expressed quite deliberately in terms of erotic love (his mouth was on her throat", "long fervent kiss") and Gertrude's explicitly says: "I have never had a husband—not really". This stresses the intensity of the link between mother and son, and shows its completeness; it has within itself a capacity for passion that is generally associated with the

relationship between man and wife, or lovers. Indeed, significance of title, *Sons and Lovers* becomes obvious; there is a way in which the sons are seen as lovers. Though so much of this is expressed in terms of the senses. The total effect is not one of sensuality; the senses and the language of the senses, are used to express a much more complex spiritual position. The completeness of mutual passion between mother and son explains why Mrs. Morel must oppose Miriam, who is seeking the same thing; why she is different to Clara, from whom Paul's soul is safe; why Paul can never love another woman completely while his mother lives—he is too far committed already. Here, as at all key points of the novel, Lawrence's dramatic power and economy are obvious; there is nothing superfluous and nothing wanting, and a vital development has taken place. Paul's complex emotions and his ultimate submission to his mother are summed up at the end of the chapter: "he pressed his face into his pillow in a fury of misery... It was the bitter piece of resignation" (chapter8).

Gertrude Morel's triumph is about an ordinary possessiveness, though that is there. It is recognition of a fundamental mutual need. This central fact of Paul's essential commitment to his mother is established surprisingly early: the above scene takes place exactly half way through the novel. For the rest of the novel both the relationships between Paul and his mother and the relationship between Miriam and Clara must be seen with this acceptance in mind. Of course, the study of the relationship between Paul and his mother does not end here; there is much to come that makes them increasingly solid figures; but the crisis has been passed, and the main course of Paul is already set.

The rest of the relationship between Paul and his mother is concerned first with Mrs. Morel's concern for his son in his love affairs and then with his concern for her in her illness. Although now "he had come back to his mother" (chp9 pg 253) and although Mrs. Morel can say with security "in him was established her life now" (chapter9). There are other demands made on him, first by Miriam, then by Clara. These continue to upset Mrs. Morel and make her suffer, not because she is uncertain of her son's love, but because she is afraid for him. Paul is shown at this stage as in a "state of restless fretting". Unable to break finally with Miriam, and unconsciousness of the strong pull of Clara; her mother in anguish sees this state as dangerous to him: "Mrs. Morel felt as if... which is a form of slow suicide" (chapter10).

**Paul, Miriam and Clara:** "The relationship between Paul and Miriam is in many ways the most difficult in the novel, partly because of the psychological and emotional complexities in it, and partly because of Lawrence's varying and subtle attitude. With the other relationship he seems to have a clear pattern in mind from the beginning, so that in spite of the changes and developments, the dominant point of view remains basically the same. But in this case Lawrence's sympathy and emphasis fluctuates, moving between Paul, Miriam and Mrs. Morel in such a way as to leave a measure of uncertainty. This effect is artistically valuable; it expresses the confusion of Paul, and the confusion of Lawrence himself, and adds a great deal to the authenticity and immediacy of the account; it is to some extent a reliving of a difficult part of his past by Lawrence, and comes over directly to the reader. By a purist, it might be seen as a weakness in the art of the novel, but most certainly it strengthens the dramatic impact and furthers the humanity."

From the very beginning of the relationship, before Mrs. Morel's hostility is aroused, and before Paul is deeply involved, it is clear that there are going to be difficulties. Many of these lie in the personality and temperament of Miriam herself. When she is first introduced, when she is 'about fourteen' Lawrence is concerned to establish her coyness; her brothers call her 'mardy-kid' and her feeding of the hen states without undue emphasis characteristics which persist through the novel. She finally forces herself to offer grain in her hand to the hen: "At last Miriam let herself... rather pathetic" (chapter6). Fear, pain and grief are to form a large part of Miriam's association with Paul, and, as is foreshadowed here, so much of it comes from her own over-refined sensibilities, her readiness to be hurt. Her timorousness, it is later suggested in a vivid incident, is closely linked with her inability to submit herself to the moment and take a risk. Paul has been swinging: "He was swinging through the air, every bit of him swinging, like a bird that swoops for joy of movement". Miriam reluctantly takes her place on the awing: "She felt the accuracy with which he caught her... hot wave of fear" (chapter7). When she is left to herself, she sways gently, safely, 'scarcely moving'. It is not merely fear: "She

could never lose herself, so, nor could her brothers". Swinging is symbolic of the capacity for instinctive living: Paul can give himself up to the moment, spontaneously; Miriam, though she recognizes this power in Paul, and warms to it, cannot naturally act in the same way. The difference of temperament is fundamental, and much of the difficulty of the relationship is caused by this deep dissimilarity.

This is brought out in the overture to the relationship; when it properly gets underway, in the chapter *Lad-And-Girl-Love*, other characteristics are emphasized. We are told of her romantic nature, her mysticism, of her treasuring religion inside her', of her passion for learning, and of her piqued idealization of Paul, who 'scarcely observed her'. It is relevant to her latter attitude that after Paul's illness (she is now 16) she rejoices in his weakness—"then she would be stronger than he. Then she could love him" (chapter7). In her way she wants to be dominant; it is not Mrs. Morel's way, but there are points of contact. And yet with the desire for dominance goes a shrinking hesitancy, and what Lawrence describes as 'proud humility'; she at once retires, and wishes to assert mastery.

Very early in the course of their acquaintance, characteristic that is to be most important in their life together is introduced. Paul has already noticed the very in which Mrs. Leivers 'exalted every thing to the plane of religious trust; "Miriam resembles her mother in this, many of her early meeting with Paul are concerned with establishing this quality of intensity. Paul starts to teach algebra. He is not a good teacher: He was quick and hasty...he questioned her more, then got not...afraid, apologetic, ashamed. (chapter7).

Irritation with Miriam is an important ingredient in Paul's attitude towards her, irritation that hurts her and makes her cringe. In her earnestness, she makes the learning of algebra more important than it is, and brings to it a disproportionate emotional intensity. Learning is desperately important to Miriam, and she approaches it with a kind of religious fervour, as she approaches everything, yet her fervour, instead of giving her confines and certainty makes her hesitant, unsure and anguished. She makes complex what with happier dispositions is simple, and imposes her complexity on Paul: "Because of the intensity...went with Edgar (chapter7). It is plain that such a relationship can seldom be easy and untroubled; Miriam's very nature demands too much.

Miriam's intensity rises to its peak in her attitude before flowers. Lawrence splendidly suggests the repressed passion behind her spirituality, which is indeed a sublimation of passion. She takes Paul to look at wild rose bush: "they were going to have a communion together—something...holy (chp7 pg 183-184). They stand before the bush which is made to seem a living power—"Point after point the steady roses shone...in their souls". They are united in their response to it, but Paul cannot go the whole way with her; Paul looked into Miriam's eyes...he turned aside as if pained" (chapter7). One need not feel gross and insensitive if one recognizes the fact that, to say the least, such intensity is difficult to with it; it makes easy spontaneity difficult and hazardous, and Lawrence clearly shows the demand it makes on Paul's sensibility. Miriam translates everything into terms of the spiritual, and Paul feels himself, half-reluctantly, half-willingly drawn into it. Significantly, it is just after this incident that Gertrude Morel says of Miriam, she is one of those who will want to suck a man's soul out till he has none of his own left, and though we see Mrs. Morel's possessiveness we must admit there is a considerable justification for her feeling and Miriam's own possessiveness is clearly stated: "he had not seem to belong...would she feel alive again' (chapter7).

By this time, the bond between them is love, love, however, that they will not acknowledge: "He thought himself too same for such sentimentality and she thought herself too lofty." Besides that, there is the important factor of Miriam's attitude towards sexuality. It would be wrong to call her prudish, and certainly we see her capacity for passion, but the passion is etherealized. Miriam is inhibited by her spiritual delicacy: 'but, perhaps because of the continual business of birth...it could never be mentioned that the mare was in the foal" (chapter7). And Miriam, in her bewildered purity, at first prays: "O Lord, let me not love Paul Morel. Keep me from loving him, if I might not to love him" (chapyer7). Inevitably, Paul feels the pull of sensuality, and in dealing with these early stirrings, Lawrence shows his deepest understanding of adolescence. When Paul and Miriam stand among the sand hills gazing at an enormous yellow moon, Paul is tormented: "she was slightly afraid...but

somehow she ignored them” (chapter7). The situation is created and then explicitly commented on, the state described as complex, but the analysis is perfectly clear: “he did not know himself what was the matter... he was too shrinking and sensitive to give it” (chapter7). Miriam’s attitude is not a simple one; it is clear that she is not merely chaste because to be chaste is the right and the moral thing. In her own way, she is intensely aware of him physically: “she loved him absorbedly... she never realized the male he was” (chapter8). The growing tension between them is admirably and surprisingly briefly stated; a few incidents are enough to establish it completely. It is made unmistakably obvious that all the inhibitions are not on Miriam’s side; and that as complex as she is, he is even more so. She is not merely passive: “she seem to want him, and he resisted ... she wanted to draw all of him into her” (chapter8). And immediately afterwards Paul says: “if only you could want me... then its my fault”, he said (chapter8). These passages demonstrate the lovers’ difficulty splendidly: attraction and something near to revolution, desire and inhibition, love and hatred, the sensual and the spiritual, are all confirmed and struggling together; neither of the lovers knows what is the matter. And for Paul there is the added complications of his mother all the time: ‘And why did he hate Miriam, and feel so cruel towards her, at the thought of his mother? ... easily hated her” (chapter8).

This happens just before the scene quoted and commented as above, in which Paul realize primary love for his mother; the one that follows after the realization, and illustrates the increasing bitterness and anger. In a crucial scene in the chapter, “Defeat of Miriam”, all the incompatibilities flare out, and the situation is made as clear as it can ever be. All Paul’s irritation, all his thwarted passion are expressed in savage resentments: “why must you always be fondling things,” he said irritably ... jolted off these sayings like sparks from electricity (chapter9). It should not need Lawrence’s comment to make us realize that this is not an entirely just view of Miriam; it is partial one, seen in anger and frustration, and a hidden consciousness of failure on his part in Paul. Shortly afterwards, he first suggests that they should “breakoff”: “I can only give friendship... let us have done” (chapter9)

Here, Paul recognizes his own share in failure of the relationship, and here I will reiterate what I suggested before. Though Paul is partly Lawrence, and though we see largely through Paul’s eyes, we also see Paul; he cannot understand himself and his situation, but we can; we are shown enough of the situation as a whole to enable us to make our own judgement. Indeed, at this moment in the novel, it is not measure of Lawrence’s involvement with Paul that is remarkable, but it is the coexistence of involvement with fine crucial detachment, it is undoubtedly a rare achievement.

Paul moves from this to his firmest statement of his own incapacity to love. Miriam has said that she cannot understand his attitude towards he: “I know,” he cried, ‘you never will! You will never believe that I can’t- can’t physically, anymore than I can fly up like a skylark-, “what?” she murmured. Now she dreaded. “Love you” (chapter9). Miriam will not believe it: she knew he loved her and both now and later. Miriam continues to love and to hope. This is the moment she recognizes fully that besides fighting Paul, she is fighting his mother: “What have they been saying at home? ... she knew it was” (chapter9).

Immediately afterwards we are shown, he had come back to his mother. Stated badly like that it sounds as if Lawrence were working mechanically to a rigid formula, but the development is by no means coldly schematic. The richness and authority of creation of Paul’s relationship with his mother, display of the difference in his feelings and attitudes when he is with his mother from these with Miriam, the subtlety of the interplay of the two contending pulls on Paul, make this an organic development: it grows naturally out of a complex of feelings, situations and personalities.

Though Paul has gone back to his mother, the struggle in Paul and between his mother and Miriam are not over; rather, even though the ultimate decision has been taken, they are intensified. Miriam goes on fighting for Paul’s love, and Paul, who is shown to have a real need for Miriam’s companionship, unsatisfactory though, it is drift back to her. He can neither take her nor leave her alone. He still needs her. “She alone helped him towards realization... could not do without her” (chapter9). She is necessary to his intellectual life and to his

growing up, but the sexual barrier remains, now acutely self-conscious. When he comes to the verse...scotch in his running with her (chapter9). It is at this time of frustration that Clara really enters Paul's life, and the situation is complicated further. When he meets her at the farm, she is described in terms of the physical and sensuous: Clara sat in a cool parlour reading...muslin at the top her hand" (chapter9).

Since we largely see Clara through Paul's eyes, we are made amply aware of her sexual appeal to him; and because we also see her partly through Lawrence's eyes, we are aware that she is drawn to him. They have points in common. In the scene in which Paul and Clara compete in jumping over a haycock. We are made aware that Clara has same gift of surrendering herself to sensation and the moment that Paul showed in the much earlier scene of the swing; both have the same capacity for instinctive living, however it may have been repressed and thwarted by circumstances. Here, as he breaks again with Miriam and the novel comes to the end of the first phase of Paul's love-affair (chapter9). It is marked by an intensification of his sexuality: The sex-instinct that Miriam had refined...concentration in the breast (chapter9). It is not simply a turning from one woman to another; both are in his consciousness: "Sooner or later he would have to ask...he allowed her right" (chapter9).

His intimacy with Clara grows gradually; for a time he sees little of Miriam, and more and more of Clara. When she comes to Jordan's at his invitation, they are thrown even more together, and Lawrence traces very delicately the growing involvement; he shows their physical awareness of each other and the defensive sexual hostility that accompanies such awareness. The situation is not realized as intimately, as much from inside as the relationship with Miriam; it does seem more to be there in order to confirm preconceived thesis, but it is amply adequate for its purpose; Clara's little attractiveness is enough conveyed for us to accept it as a fact. Again, Paul does not realize the true state of his feelings towards Clara. At the time when the nature of Clara's appeal to Paul is clear to Gertrude Morel and to the reader, 'Paul can still feel: but she was a married woman...it was only a friendship between man and woman" (chapter10). At this point, Lawrence makes one of his clearest definitions of Paul's state: "Sex had become so complicated...yet he did not positively desire her" (chapter10).

Because Paul, preoccupied with sex as he is, has not yet completely focused his desires on a particular woman, it is possible for him to return to Miriam, in spite of the attraction to Clara. Clara has in a way herself encouraged him; she has told him that "Miriam does not want any of your soul communion. That's your own imagination. She wants you"(chapter10). He goes back this time with fully aroused passions, and still finds himself inhibited from any direct approach to Miriam by the 'eternal maidenhood' about her. Paul's return to Miriam causes bitter suffering to his mother. She has not been in the centre of the picture for some time as Paul is absorbed by interests other than her so is the reader but now she comes back. In a passage whose significance is often missed, because the main stress for the time being lies on Paul, we are told of her grief and her feeling of defeat. "She sees Paul as losing warmth and joy in the course of his struggle with Miriam: she realizes he is determined to go to her. Now, for the first time, she cannot fight back. Mrs. Morel was tired...she was in the way" (chapter11). The decision now lies with Paul; his mother no longer has will or power to act.

Paul makes an effort to break the barrier of physical reticence between him and Miriam; he tries to bring sexuality to life between them, so that their union, so close in many ways, can be complete. But Miriam cannot respond; to do so would be alien to her, a violation of her own special integrity. Her timorousness, her inability to yield herself spontaneously to sensation, feeling and passion, come more painfully than ever between them: "He courted her now like a lover... deliberate reflective creature" (chapter11).

They do however achieve physical consummation, but it remains merely physical, it doesn't bring about the union that both Paul and Miriam desire. It has seemed to Paul that only Miriam's physical withdrawal stood between them; he finds that possessing her body makes no essential difference: "They lay as if she had given herself up to sacrifice...But he wanted somehow to cry" (chapter11). They have a week of passionate lovemaking

and the situation is made quite clear. When Paul takes Miriam physically, he had to do so selfishly—he had always almost willfully, to put her out of count; when they are spiritually together, Paul's desire has to be laid aside. The spiritual and the physical sides of their love never fuse together; for Miriam the physical act of love is a voluntary sacrifice of herself. Between them, the physical union gives nothing more than itself; for Miriam it is not even a gratification.

Both feel a sense of failure. Paul realizes that the act he had set so much store on as a means of achieving fulfillment and unity is paradoxically the means of driving them apart: "Gradually, he ceased to ask her to have him...it would never be a success between them" (chapter 11). This is really the end for them. Paul has had Miriam's body, but he has not had her; her spiritual virginity, that has proved to be the barrier, remains. But Miriam is not wholly to blame. In their last meeting as lovers, Miriam, in a scene of great pain and bitterness, says: "It has always been you fighting me off...always the same" (chapter 11).

Paul, in despair, feels that their whole relationship has been a sham; Miriam is 'full of bitterness' and for those who believe that Lawrence wholly and blindly committed to Paul, it is useful to look at Miriam's angry assessment of "his littleness, his meanness, and his folly" we, the readers, knew better than either of them that the relationship was more than a sham, that there is more to PAUL than bitterness, meanness and folly. Their situation is a sad one; but we can see that it is inevitable. They are not 'star-crowd. Lovers; they are crossed by their characters, temperaments' and circumstances.

They go their separate ways, Miriam in patient hope (she remained alone with herself, waiting of Paul's return), Paul to seek fulfillment in Clara. The treatment of the relationship between Paul and Clara is different in tone from that of Paul and Miriam. It is not so minutely seen from the inside, and, vivid as it is, and perfectly adequate to fulfill Lawrence's intentions, it is not so intensely felt; it is reported, and convincingly reported, rather than experienced. The relationship is in itself simpler, and I do not propose to deal with it in such close detail.

It is for Paul, something in the way of an exercise or experiment in passion. This is not to say that Paul's feeling is cold-blooded lust a simple search for gratification, but the reader certainly gets the impression that there is an element of will in it. Paul is deliberately searching for the fulfillment in passion that failed to find with Miriam. That is in love with Clara is made clear enough; Paul's impatience through the long Sunday as he waits for Monday when he will see her again is well done; Clara's physical vitality is thoroughly realized; and we feel Paul's acute awareness of it.

They achieve a simple happiness together at first; both are uninhibited with each other; both are willing to surrender to the moment; both have a capacity for happiness. Ultimately, Paul finds his fulfillment: But then Clara was not there for him, only a woman, warm, something he loved and almost worshiped, there is the dark...the wheel of stars (chapter 13). Their passion is seen to be instinctive and living and natural—it is included in the natural order of the world, the grass, the peewit, the stars. It is a revelation to them, a profound experience: They could let themselves be carried by life (chapter 13). Although, they could see this, Clara is not satisfied: something great was there...but she could not keep the moment (chapter 13). She feels that she has not fully got Paul, that there is some part of him withheld. Not deliberately, but, unattainable because of his very nature. Just as Miriam could not naturally give herself physically, Paul cannot (naturally) give himself spiritually. But their passion and their desire for each other continue, and very soon, Clara recognizes the true state of affairs: She knew she never fully had him...realize what it was" (chapter 3). She feels surer of her estranged husband than she does of Paul. Paul and she have benefited each other, she feels; a necessary function has been performed: Together they had received the baptism of life...but now their missions were separate (chapter 13). She realizes that they will part, and realizes too that they both want a permanent relationship; she knows that they cannot give that to each other.

As time goes on, even the passion begins to fail, and they begin to move from the realm of love to these of lust: Their loving grew more mechanical...some feeling of satisfaction (chapter 13). At this stage, it brings to a head

all Paul's inner dissatisfaction with himself and his life. He becomes inaccessible to Clara and even to his mother. He is in this precarious state when he hears of his mother's tumor, and the process of dissolution is accelerated. It is virtually the end of his relationship with Clara; he still sees her and she can give him some relief from his anguish, but there is no vital link between them, and return to Banter Dawes as it were serves formally to mark the end of the relationship. The relationship has given Paul something; he has come near his fulfillment in passion; but he cannot give himself, and it has ended as the relationship with Miriam did, in failure. And clearly this time, the deficiency is with Paul.

THE LAST PHASE: Many of the important revelations of the relationship of Paul and Clara were made in the course of analysis, often by Clara; now, the novel turns reverts to the more dramatic techniques of the earlier section, the characters are shown in action. Mrs. Morel comes back with Paul into the focus of attention; her illness and suffering are splendidly realized, and again we must admire Lawrence's creative tact in his avoidance of sentimentality and any kind of over-statement; the reality of intolerable suffering is expressed by the heroic stoicism of Mrs. Morel: Her mouth gradually shut hard in a line...tearing from her.

The narrative from the first statement of Mrs. Morel's illness to her death is very compelling. The death itself is vividly realized but it is particularly important because of the immense irony that it exemplifies. We have by now realized for once and all that Paul's life is centred on his mother; yet he hastens her death; in love for her, he gives her an overdose of morphine; he is an agent in killing what he loved most. Paul at his mother's death is very near his own: "His mother had really supported his life...faced the world together". But in spite of what Lawrence said in his letter to Edward Garnett, Paul is not defeated completely: "He did not want to die...he would go on alone" He carries on mechanically and lifelessly, in anguish and puzzlement, but still he carries on; his mother's endurance lives in him. Clara finally goes back to her husband and Paul is alone: 'Always alone, his soul oscillated, first on the side of death then on the side of life, doggedly". When Miriam appears again he offers to marry her but she realizes that, as always he is unable to offer his fuller self. Miriam achieves heroic dignity in her final acceptance of defeat: "she was not to have him, ...self-sacrifice". The path of the whole relationship is summed up and concentrated in this refusal; each desperately wants the other to act, to give; they need each other; but neither can act or give wholly. Nothing in the novel more clearly shows the inevitability of their failure to come together: "He felt, in leaving her... by denying his own."

### Critical Comments on D.H. Lawrence

Virginia Woolf: "His [Lawrence] reputation, which was that of a prophet, the exponent of some mystical theory of sex, the devotee of cryptic terms, the inventor of new terminology which made free use of such words as solar plexus and the like, was not attractive; to follow submissively in his tracks seemed an unthinkable aberration; and as chance would have it, the few pieces of his writing that issued from behind this dark cloud of reputation seemed unable to rouse any sharp curiosity or to dispel the lurid phantom...One of the curious qualities of *Sons and Lovers* is that one feels an unrest, a little quiver and shimmer in his page, as if it were composed of separate gleaming objects, by no means content to stand still and be looked at. There is a scene of course; a character; yes, and people related to each other by a net of sensations; but these are not there—as in Proust—for themselves...The world of *Sons and Lovers* is perpetually in process of cohesion and dissolution. The magnet that tries to draw together the different particles of which the beautiful and vigorous world of Nottingham is made is the incandescent body, this beauty glowing in the flesh, this intense and burning light. Hence whatever we are shown seems to have a moment of its own. Nothing rests secure to be looked at. All is being sucked away by some dissatisfaction, some superior beauty, or desire, or possibility. The book therefore excites, irritates, moves, changes, seems full of stir and unrest and desire for something withheld, like the body of the hero. The whole world—it is a proof of the writer's remarkable strength—is broken and tossed by the magnet of the young man who cannot bring the separate parts into a unity which will satisfy him."

An anonymous critic writes in *The Bookman*, August 1913: "...The book has naturally a place in a list which includes such authors as John Galsworthy, Cunninghame Graham and Charles Doughty, to name only three of



the many who have enriched the literature of today with work which is, in some sense, esoteric. . . It has nothing of urbanity and no trace of the humorous and faintly contemptuous patronage which is common—and probably rather difficult to avoid—in novels dealing with a particular piece of country and class of people. Its descriptions and interpretations are convincing as experience is convincing; Mr. Lawrence is on his own ground and presents it with an assured intimacy of knowledge that never fails or blurs. . . it is a novel of outstanding quality, singular in many respects and in none more so than in the author's constancy to his artistic purpose, which never suffers him to see his people in a dramatic or spectacular light or on a level higher or lower than his own. The fact that they exist suffices him without calling them names, whether good or bad, his business is to show them, dispassionately and accurately. He writes with a nervous pliancy which is a joy to read."

### **Questions for better understanding of the novel**

1. Show with reference to *Sons and Lovers* that Lawrence sees human relationships essentially in terms of conflict.
2. Does the value of *Sons and Lovers* depend wholly or mainly on the validity of the Oedipus complex? Is it possible to make a case for the novel even on the assumption that the theory is false?
3. The clash of his parents in him gets reflected in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. Examine the novel from this perspective.
4. How far would it be appropriate to dub the novel 'a success for making the psychological selves of the characters but an outgrowth of their sociological selves'?
5. Has *Sons and Lovers* any real unity as a novel, or is it at least two separate novels co-existing uneasily in a single book? Give reasons in support of your answers.
6. Is Mrs. Morel the most important woman to Paul throughout the novel, or are there moments at which his relationships with Miriam or Clara take precedence? If so, what is the significance of these moments? Why does he always come back to his mother in the end?
7. What goes wrong between Paul and Miriam? Is it just that she cannot compete with his love for his mother, or is there some other problem?