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**A Wood Path to the Vital Self.
The Power of Nature in D. H. Lawrence's
Lady Chatterley's Lover**

bakalářská práce

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla v ní veškerou literaturu a ostatní zdroje, které jsem použila.

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1 Introduction

“The hazel thicket was a lacework of half-open leaves, and the last dusty perpendicular of the catkins. Yellow celandines now were in crowds, flat open pressed back in urgency, and the yellow glitter of themselves. It was the yellow, the powerful yellow of early summer. And primroses were broad, and full of pale abandon, thick-clustered primroses no longer shy. The lush, dark green of hyacinths was a sea, with buds rising like pale corn, while in the riding the forget-me-nots were fluffing up, and columbines were unfolding their ink-purple riches, and there were bits of bluebird's eggshell under bush. Everywhere the bud-knots and the leap of life”¹

A wood in spring of such tender and perceptive description would certainly stir a living string not only in Connie Chatterley, the heroine of D. H. Lawrence's novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The vividness and intensity of life that glares out of this ‘picture’ represents a dominant feature of Lawrence's novel which belongs to the last, fifth period of the author's career. It is not a mere coincidence that what later became published as *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was, in fact, a novel Lawrence originally proposed to call *Tenderness*. It is indeed sensibility of extraordinary degree, intense perception of colours, of slight movements and changes that occur in nature and the parallel changes taking place in the characters that play a vital role in this novel. This “extension of consciousness, [...] an ability to experience what it is like to be a tree or a daisy or a breaking wave or what he (A. Huxley) called Lawrence's ‘superior otherness’”² chiefly account for the poetic, soothing, almost pastoral character of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. It seems to be in this novel that Lawrence's long-lasting belief in the revitalizing and revivifying power of nature, the idea of man's contact with and return to nature and the acceptance of his origins therein as the only means of survival for mankind come to their climax and take the clearest shape. The

¹ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (177)

² Grmelová, A. *The Worlds of D.H.Lawrence's Short Fiction*. The Karolinum Press: Praha. 2001 (14)

argument of this work will be based mainly on H. M. Daleski's interpretation of Lawrence's novel in his critical book *The Forked Flame*, his idea of contrast as being the basic structural element of the novel's narrative and further proof that things are far from being idyllic and straightforward in Lawrence's allegedly most simplistic novel, after all. The fact that it is a wood that represents nature in this novel also plays an important role considering the significance of the topos of the wood in Lawrence's work and in literary history in general. For that reason these particular and also dominant features of Lawrence's work with further special focus on the role of the wood should become the main domains of the analysis.

2 Power of Nature in D.H.Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and His Short Stories

2.1 Polarity in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

Connie Chatterley obviously does not, from the very basis of her nature, fit the environment she was allotted with her title of a lady when getting married to Sir Clifford Chatterley. Her being "a ruddy, country-looking girl with soft brown hair and sturdy body, slow movements, full of sensual energy"³ makes her, from the beginning, an ill-matching element at Wragby, "a long low old house in brown stone, [...] a warren of a place without much distinction"⁴, from the windows of which "one could see the chimney of Tavershall pit, with its clouds of steam and smoke."⁵ The ugly Tavershall village with "wilful, blank dreariness"⁶ inhabited by grey nightmarish figures of the miners. This is the depiction of the wasteland England has become after the WWI due to the rapid industrialization that turned the landscape into a mining country with "little houses like little boxes, each with its domestic Englishman and his domestic wife, each ruling the world because all are alike, so alike"⁷. England of such condition incorporated the ugliness Lawrence abhorred intently as it stood in direct opposition to the expression of the beauty and fullness of life he so much praised. The situation depicted at the beginning of the novel, indeed, seems almost hopeless in its bareness and obstacles it poses to any attempts at living a valuable and full life. But "we've got to live"⁸ and as Connie's awakening from this nightmare of total

³ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (2)

⁴ *ibid.* 10

⁵ *ibid.* 10

⁶ *ibid.* 10

⁷ Lawrence, D.H. „The Ladybird“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London. 1934 (375)

⁸ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (1)

fruitlessness and her following tough struggle to finally overcome it suggest man's origins in nature can never be uprooted in its entirety.

Connie, as the novel develops and her acquaintance with nature deepens, has to come to the conscious realization that she too has, just as "we all have our roots in earth" and, moreover, that "it is our roots that now need a little attention."⁹ Just like "the fairest thing in nature, a flower,"¹⁰ has to have space to come into full bloom, Connie also has the right for the true femaleness to take the full shape in her. And at what other place should this significant change and revival take place than in the neighbouring spring wood, the space of greenness and bursting spontaneous life force looming behind every bush and tree?

For Clifford, man of property, the wood he inherited, is just another part of his possession just as the men working in his mines represent for him nothing but dehumanized labour force. Being himself a creature closed shut in an impenetrable shell with no ability to perceive nature fully and appreciate it he can neither feel free nor spontaneous in his own wood. Its several clearings, the reminders of the wood supply during the WWI, intensify his feeling of self-pity and a kind of uneasiness about his fatal wound from the war. Having lost the capacity for suffering after his terrible experience, he actually seems to have lost any capacity of feeling and empathy at all. His conception of a bountiful wood is completely mechanical, the flowers as if coming here into full bloom at order of the British Parliament. As he cannot perceive and live through nature he feels the necessity to verbalise his ideas and even in his choice of destructive words when attempting it he makes all evidence of life sterile. His quote "thou still unravished bride of quietness"¹¹ turns the wide open wood-anemones into an artificial picture of ideal beauty without any trace of a due wholehearted joy over their living spirit. He cannot stand the intrusion of the slightest element of nature within his abode; the hyacinths his wife has plucked for him in the wood have to be taken out because of their intensive odour. Yet, Connie knows better that it is the fresh air that they effuse, reminding Clifford of the life going on outside in the open air, spontaneously, excluding him, that is so unacceptable for

⁹ Lawrence, D.H. „The Privately Printed Edition of Pansies, by D.H.L.”in: *Phoenix I, Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works.*, collected by H.T. Moore, W. Roberts. Penguin Books: NY. 1978 (280)

¹⁰ Lawrence, D.H. „The Privately Printed Edition of Pansies, by D.H.L.”in: *Phoenix I, Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works.*, collected by H.T. Moore, W. Roberts. Penguin Books: NY.1978 (279)

¹¹Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (97)

her husband. The merciless crushing of the bluebells under the wheels of his wheelchair during the walk through the wood aptly expresses his envious and spiteful hatred of anything that does not match his patterned idea of a mechanical life. Clifford's is not only a contact full of destructiveness, he cannot even come into immediate touch with the life he crushes but needs to use the metal wheels of his chair for its annihilation.

It may serve as the first example of the already mentioned Daleski's contrastive principle when we compare this detached, mediated contact of Clifford with nature to Mellors' tender touch of the pheasant chickens and his later inflaming touch of Connie, "his hands" holding "her like flowers, so still and strange."¹² Considering the picture of an industrial magnate, the gamekeeper, living in the hut in the centre of the green forest "where Robin Hood hunted"¹³, the man that cares for little pheasant with tenderness Connie has not met with before must necessarily create a very opposite extreme of the polarity in the novel. Clad in his green corduroy breeches his figure, indeed, to use Daleski's words "epitomizes the man by projecting the 'spirit of place' in which he has his being."¹⁴ Daleski aptly described the specific character of the novel as a polarization of "the two opposed worlds in the novel"¹⁵, Wragby and the wood, while these separate spaces, at the same time, are represented by two figures in opposition- Sir Clifford and the gamekeeper Mellors.

The latter is originally hired by Clifford to protect the forest against poachers and breed new pheasants, a number of which have been killed out during the War. Clifford, living in his ignorance, cannot anticipate that it will be his young unsatisfied wife who will finally become the chief beneficiary of Mellors' care and protection. Thus ironically, yet at the same time luckily, enough Sir Clifford himself represents unconsciously, from the very beginning, the initiator of his wife's final revival. The first encounter of Mellors and Connie takes place unexpectedly in the wood where Connie goes for a walk with Clifford. His sudden appearance almost out of nowhere rather frightens Connie still unacquainted with the environment of the wood and its inhabitants. "He seemed to emerge with such a swift menace [...], like the sudden rush of a threat out of nowhere."¹⁶ He does not seem to come as a protector to Connie, more like an alien element belonging to a different sphere

¹² Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (188)

¹³ *ibid.* 42

¹⁴ Daleski, H.M. *The Forked Flame, a Study of D.H.Lawrence*. Faber and Faber: London. 1965 (282)

¹⁵ *ibid.* 265

¹⁶ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (46)

of life. At the beginning of their acquaintance the gamekeeper represents for Connie wilderness, uncivilized untamed nature, and, moreover, a member of the lower social class. The gestures and movements indicating his formerly being a soldier even intensify this impression of the detached and threatening power.

2.2 Strange Element Coming from the Wood

At this point, when the plot is not yet fully developed, the scene of the novel strikingly resembles Henry, the character of a young soldier in Lawrence's novelette *The Fox*. This young man appears suddenly at the door of the Bailey Farm, standing "alone in the fields by the wood"¹⁷ inhabited by two women, March and Banford. "At the same time they heard the footsteps approach the back door [...] Banford gave a loud cry [...] March stared as spellbound"¹⁸ at the figure coming from outside, from nowhere, the uninvited guest. The initial fright is only confirmed and deepened when March later realizes Henry's striking resemblance of the fox, the most feared enemy of the two women. "Whether it was the thrusting forward of his head, or the glisten of fine whitish hairs on the ruddy cheekbones, or the bright, keen eyes, [...] the boy was to her (March) a fox."¹⁹ Certain parallel between Henry and Mellors can be drawn already in the description of their appearance as Mellors' were also a red face and a red moustache. Nevertheless, one aspect about the character of their 'introduction' into the lives of the women is significantly different. While in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* it is Connie and her husband who are in fact the intruders on the gamekeeper's territory, in *The Fox* it is Henry who appears uninvited and unexpected at the threshold of the farm. Although the wood Mellors is supposed to look after belongs to Clifford's property and Mellors as his employee should have no personal rights on its premises, he still perceives Connie's visits at the pheasant shed as a sort of intrusion and an unpleasant and uninvited disturbance from his work. In the novel the principle of nature must be approached and sought after, while it is the representative of wilderness that must come and literally hunt its prey in *The Fox*. Anna Grmelová's observation in her study of Lawrence's *The Fox* that in this novelette "the vitalistic rapport

¹⁷ Lawrence, D.H. „The Fox“. in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (420)

¹⁸ *ibid.* 422

¹⁹ *ibid.* 425

is established between the character and animal who is the emblem of the life force"²⁰ can help to better understand the principle of the relationship of March and Henry. Unlike Connie who is provided by patient and perceptive Mellors space and time enough to gradually and slowly come to the full realization of her femaleness, March is chosen by Henry as his 'victim' and sought after even in her dreams until she becomes his trophy in the end. For Henry it is a premeditated plan tinged with cunningness of how to get what he wants (a wife with property) as fast and as easily as possible. "You have to be subtle and cunning and absolutely fatally ready."²¹ His action is a matter of will and determination. "It is your own will which carries the bullet into the heart of your quarry."²² March more and more comes to resemble a frightened hare at escape before a wild fox. Even in her dreams the fox appears as a fearful symbol of something frightening, yet, at the same time of something she feels attracted to. As Grmelová points out, the fox, as personified by Henry in the novelette, "startle her (March) as he seems to objectify the part of her nature she has been suppressing."²³

Again, here a significant parallel may be drawn between *The Fox* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as far as the initial condition of the main heroine is concerned. The unusual cohabitation of two women at the Bailey Farm where March with her "man's outfit" and prevailingly "androgynous qualities"²⁴ evidently represents the male part indeed, as Grmelová observes, points to the necessary sterility of their relationship which is only confirmed by the unproductiveness of the farm and their fight against the enemy from the outside. Connie Chatterley similarly is forced to live in a sterile relationship where mind predominates without any perspective of further development or possible change. Her crippled husband offers not even the slightest possibility of a passionate sexual relationship in the future. Although she manages to convince and fool herself for a short period that she can live contentedly in such a sterile bond for the whole of her life, it does not take long for Connie to realize that "we have roots, and our roots are in the

²⁰ Grmelová, A. *The Worlds of D.H. Lawrence's Short Fiction*. The Karolinum Press: Praha. 2001 (147)

²¹ Lawrence, D.H. „The Fox“ in: *The Tales of D.H. Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (434)

²² *ibid.* 434

²³ Grmelová, A. *The Worlds of D.H. Lawrence's Short Fiction*. The Karolinum Press: Praha. 2001 (147)

²⁴ *ibid.* 146

sensual, instinctive, and intuitive body"²⁵ and that the completely dried-out soil at Wragby has been trodden too hard by the mechanical life of her husband to let even an undemanding cactus spring out of it and flourish. What is more, Clifford's approach to this state of affairs is absolutely uninvolved approaching the verge of indifference. Their hypothetical child represents a mere 'it' for him and he is willing to accept arranged affairs of his wife with lovers of acceptable character, according to a scheduled plan just like the visits at the dentist.

Considering this desperate situation Connie finds herself in, it is of no wonder that she is gradually fading away and instead of the "ripe pear"²⁶ of a woman she used to be she bears more and more resemblance to a "plucked apple"²⁷, Lawrence's image of an individual whose mind was forcefully separated from his physical body and senses. This idea of the plucked apple is definitely a very different one from the "apply part of a woman"²⁸ that he so much praised in Cezanne's portraits. This was the applyness of the fruit in its full ripeness, still hanging on the branch of the tree, drawing the vital power through its roots and trunk and branches while simultaneously thriving from the sun in the sky above. It is only the complete connection between the body, feelings and mind that can form one whole complete thing, the apple on the apple tree. Nevertheless, Connie at this stage of her life resembles the fruit dissected from all sources of vitality being held in captivity of marital conventions. Connie's escapes to Mellors' white column of a body, the attraction of a young frustrated woman to "the pistil of a flower"²⁹ of his body is only a necessary consequence of the letting loose of a long-lasting suppression of the female in her and thus vital part of her personality. In contrast to the wasteland of Connie's life with Clifford, Connie's love affair with Mellors representing the idea of Lawrence's phallic relationship, full of passion and vitality stands in the novel for "an organic connection [not

²⁵ Lawrence, D.H. „The Privately Printed Edition of Pansies, by D.H.L.” in: *Phoenix I, Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works.*, collected by H.T. Moore, W. Roberts. Penguin Books: NY. 1978 (280)

²⁶ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (79)

²⁷ *ibid.*38

²⁸ Lawrence, D.H. „Introduction to These Paintings“ in: *Phoenix I, Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works.*, collected by H.T. Moore, W. Roberts. Penguin Books: NY. 1978 (579)

²⁹ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (88)

only] with the past [the old England with its traditions] [but also] a vital rootedness and continuity."³⁰

³⁰ Daleski, H.M. *The Forked Flame, a Study of D.H.Lawrence*. Faber and Faber: London. 1965 (269)

3 Lawrencean Heroine - the Moment of Awakening

The opposition between the two spaces and, at the same time, principles in the novel and in the novelette being distinctly drawn, one can return to the character of the main female protagonist, more specifically, her movements between the two of them. Applying the same pattern to the heroines of other Lawrence's stories one can attempt to sketch a picture of one of the typical Lawrencean heroines. To use the term of John E. Stoll, the woman in these works becomes a character "in quest"³¹ being attracted by the "embodiment of the unconscious life-force"³² from the suppressive dwelling in a mechanized relationship which she in some cases, lulled by mere comfort, perceives as unproblematic. It is also important to specify the exact meaning of the English word 'quest' before one can apply it to the discussion of Lawrence's works.

Michal Peprník's book *Topos lesa v americké literatuře* will help to demarcate the field of meanings of this word so that it can better serve the purpose. Peprník, who in his book describes the topos of the wood in American literature, always connects the quest with a journey. It is the reason for which the character sets out for a journey that broadens the field of significance and where the word offers various slight different interpretations. The first type of a journey is the one where the explorer is tested. This case does not interest us at this moment as it is not relevant for the discussion of Lawrence's heroines. The second type, the journey during which a change of the individual is brought about is, on the contrary, very topical. In this case, Peprník maintains, "the individual elements of the journey are more closely connected with the idea of the change and development. These elements thus enter the thematic plan and nets of significance. Individual details here gradually gain on a symbolic meaning."³³ The strict adherence to Peprník's definition

³¹ Stoll, J.E. *The Novels of DHL*. University of Missouri Press. Columbia: 1976 (225)

³² *ibid.* 225

³³ Peprník, M. *Topos lesa v americké literatuře* Host. Brno:2005 (24). Translation:Kateřina Klosová

would allow us to use Stoll's term 'quest' to describe Connie Chatterley's expeditions into the wood surrounding Wragby Hall, the explorer and active seeker, irrelevant of the degree of the concreteness of her aim. However, it would be rather problematic to seek similar patterns in all other short fictions of Lawrence, no matter how like the theme of the change of the heroine may be. That is why one can call the 'more passive' young women of his fiction 'sleeping beauties'. The characters belonging to this group are either not aware of their sleep at all until the alarming signal comes and they are suddenly roused out of their stereotype, or, although aware of their lethargy, they have not enough courage or strength to carry out this change.

That the moment of awakening represents one of the most important initiating factors in the plot of most of Lawrence's fiction can be proved by finding a very similar principle, naturally mostly in a more simplified form, in many of his short stories. Here, the specific moment of either a woman conscious of the unsatisfactory condition of her life or of one that must be made aware of this deficiency occurs with regularity. One of the unsatisfied ones is Yvette from *The Virgin and the Gipsy*, a novelette that can be considered a preparatory work for *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and where very similar topics are handled. Yvette yearns to "fall violently in love".³⁴ She refuses the persistent and calculated courting of Leo, the mere idea of their marriage being "absolutely impossible"³⁵ for her. At the same time, she is strongly attracted to the gipsy, the dark strange effluence of him, to him as "a dark, complete power."³⁶ Yet, in comparison to Connie, Yvette acts much less indeterminately, being still too much part of her world and way of life. Leo, though ignorant of the exact motives of Yvette, nevertheless, very appropriately describes the contradictoriness in her personality when observing she would best like to "eat her cake and have her bread and butter."³⁷ "She denies the hidden part of herself that responded to the gipsy"³⁸ considering her reactions to him absolutely irrational. This 'hidden part', however, is evidently too strong to be suppressed entirely and it is finally nature itself that persuades Yvette that she must accept the voices of her vital subconsciousness at least for a

³⁴Lawrence, D.H. „Virgin and the Gipsy.“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (1030)

³⁵ ibid. 1063

³⁶ ibid.1067

³⁷ Lawrence, D.H. „Virgin and the Gipsy.“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (1063)

³⁸ibid. 1069

little moment. It is at the moment of utmost danger that Yvette is caught a captive in the house in the middle of the flood. It is the gipsy who takes her safe onto the upper floor of the house and keeps her warm with his own body. In spite of the terrible coldness of the water that drenched them all through, the gipsy's black eyes were "still full of fire of life"³⁹ and he managed to make the frozen Yvette warm. She is found alive and healthy on the following day alone in the house.

3.1 Natural Elements in Lawrence's Imagery

This direct intrusion of the natural element itself in order to bring the individual to his long-ago buried vital subconsciousness is, however, unique in the work of D. H. Lawrence. Still, just as the wood is represented by the gamekeeper in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the river that suddenly floods out of its banks may represent a symbolic victory of the vital principle as represented by the gipsy figure in Yvette's consciousness. Her final giving herself away to his heating arms thus symbolises the submission to her instinctive self.

It is not a mere coincidence that the natural elements and their activity, such as flowing of the river, sea waves, flood, ebb and tide, or flames of fire, heat and other forms of warmth appear as his imagery, one can say, with regularity in Lawrence's fiction in scenes of such character. It is exactly this specific stock of imagery that serves Lawrence mostly to express either the rush of the moment of a sudden attraction to the opposite sex, the intensive response in one's vital subconsciousness to the corresponding principle in the other one, the unexpected stirring of the trodden vital self, or even, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, when trying to mediate the experience of the sexual act as such. Cornelia Schulze's reading of the water imagery in Lawrence's work also brings an interesting point into the discussion. According to this critic, the element of water represents both womanhood and manhood in Lawrence's vision of the relationship between sexes. And just as "the river cannot flow without banks, we cannot flow without each other either."⁴⁰ Nevertheless, these two streams can never flow one into the other and commingle completely as each has

³⁹ Lawrence, D.H. „Virgin and the Gipsy.“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (1093)

⁴⁰ Schulze, C. *The Battle of the Sexes in DHL. 's Prose, Poetry and Paintings*. Universitätsverlag: Heidelberg. 2002 (100)

its specific dynamic and movement of flowing. Woman's is a "living fountain"⁴¹, contented with the state of matters as they are, while man, always restless, the creative potential and active propagator of life, stands for the fountain of life-vibration. Thus, the two streams forever "mingling, then separating again"⁴² and moving forward, side by side, stand for the image of two individuals in a relationship of opposite sexes.

The development of the love affair between Connie and Mellors, which is far from being a steady and straightforward one, is a perfect example to confirm Schulze's hypothesis. As it has been already observed, the first encounter of the two lovers resembles all but an immediate gush of attraction. This strange aversion, mainly at Mellor's part, lasts while Connie repeatedly comes uninvited to the shed to seek an asylum there. Only the first glimpse of Mellors' naked body while he is washing behind the hut stirs the first vibration in Connie as she "receives the shock of vision in her womb".⁴³ Even when their first mutual sexual experience is over Connie is not as happy as she would expect. She finds herself in a strange kind of trance, "her tormented modern-woman's brain"⁴⁴ cannot understand and craves for peace letting the senses come forward and meet the sensations. "The activity, the orgasm was his, all was his."⁴⁵ It is only during their third intercourse, so unexpected under the open sky in the wood, that Connie also reaches her climax as she submits more to the male in him and lets loose her vital self, her vital subconsciousness. It is at this moment that Connie feels the "soft flames rippling, rippling, [...] soft as feathers [...] melting her all molten inside."⁴⁶ And further intensified this "motion that was not really motion, but pure deepening whirlpools of sensation [...]" At another time "the plunger went deeper and deeper", [...] the billows of her rolled away to some shore"[...] "and further, further rolled the waves".⁴⁷ The feelings of elation and ecstasy are changed during the next intercourse into a kind of contempt. Connie's "cold, derisive queer female mind stood apart"⁴⁸ and imagining her self and her lover in her mind she cannot but find

⁴¹ Schulze, C. *The Battle of the Sexes in DHL. 's Prose, Poetry and Paintings*. Universitätsverlag: Heidelberg. 2002 193

⁴² *ibid.* 194

⁴³ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (93)

⁴⁴ *ibid.* 124

⁴⁵ *ibid.* 124

⁴⁶ *ibid.* 187

⁴⁷ *ibid.* 187

⁴⁸ *ibid.* 184

their position ridiculous and, in a way, degrading. A few moments later, Connie is overwhelmed with a feeling of despair, perceiving him “ebbing away” leaving her “like a stone on a shore” and she bitterly weeps over her “double consciousness”.⁴⁹ During the most frequently discussed sexual intercourse before Connie's departure for Italy the use of imagery suddenly turns more aggressive the significance of which change will be discussed later. Mellors with his "sensuality sharp and searing as fire is burning out shames, the deepest oldest shames"⁵⁰ in Connie. However, again it is during her stay in Italy that Connie has space enough for contemplating their relationship from distance. On receiving the news about Mellors' scandal with his former wife, she suddenly becomes scared of the shame and humiliation the discovery of their love affair would bring about.

Lawrence's indistinct and reticent way of mediating sexual scenes has been commented upon and even attacked many times. Daleski may be partially right in his claim that Lawrence does "not know how to present the experience directly in such a way that it will not appear to be 'unnatural' or disgusting or degrading-though he is convinced it is none of these."⁵¹ The delicate passages do, indeed, sometimes resemble the stock-imagery of the romances where these descriptions also not infrequently abound in waves, bursts, melting and other imagery of fluidity. Nevertheless, as Scott Sanders reminds us “read as realism the novel (*Lady Chatterley's Lover*) appears either trivial or simply wrong-headed.”⁵² His remark, in fact, suggests Schulze's idea that *Lady Chatterley's Lover* can be read as “a phallic novel, encompassing religious and artistic dimension of sexuality”⁵³. This idiosyncratic use of sexuality in Lawrence is in its attempt at an all-encompassing character evidently far from being comparable to the pseudo-symbolic descriptions of modern romances where sexuality appears just for its own sake, exhausting itself without any artistic treatment and therefore never overreaching the basic level of mere physical dimension. Blurred and at times almost unintelligible as these passages may seem to Lawrence's readers, his use of natural imagery is surprisingly consistent in the novel and successfully manages to deliver the intensive experience of each single intercourse of the

⁴⁹ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (185)

⁵⁰ *ibid.* 268

⁵¹ Daleski, H.M. *The Forked Flame, a Study of D.H.Lawrence*. Faber and Faber: London. 1965 (308)

⁵² Sanders, Scott. *D.H.Lawrence: The World of the Five Major Novel*. Viking: New York. 1974 (195)

⁵³ Schulze, C. *The Battle of the Sexes in DHL. 's Prose, Poetry and Paintings*. Universitätsverlag: Heidelberg. 2002 (112)

couple. At the same time, it perfectly serves to deliver the already discussed flowing and changing character of a relationship between man and woman, forever in motion, to which to remain static would bring a certain death. It should be evident at this point, that the influence of Heraclitean principle of "attraction and repulsion of opposites in mystical embrace"⁵⁴ is distinctly traceable in this praise of the constant, never-ending movement of two opposing principles, always in a kind of fight with each other that represents the basic element of Lawrence's approach to life. It is portrayed for example in *The Crown* and it also frequently recurs in many different forms and images throughout his literary work.

In the short story *Daughters of the Vicar* one can again trace similar pattern of a young woman who intuitively feels she needs something different in her life and who, in this case, actively seeks this 'something' refusing anything fake that is forced on her by the social environment. Miss Louisa is convinced that "she will have her love"⁵⁵ in spite of the others' trying to convince her it does not exist. She despises her own sister Mary, her hypocrisy and her being "degraded in the body"⁵⁶ when willingly becoming a wife of a man she feels not really attracted to physically. She herself is somehow instinctively aware of her attraction to Alfred Durant, one of the sons of a miner family. The moment of her final realization and the confirmation of this attraction come in the almost ritualistic scene of bathing the young man when his mother is injured. "Her heart ran hot. She had reached some goal in this beautiful, clear, male body."⁵⁷ Again the fiery imagery signals the significant change taking place in Miss Louisa. "She loved him in a white, impersonal heat."⁵⁸ At this unusual moment of strange intimacy he becomes "a person-an intimate being he was to her."⁵⁹ Since this particular scene Miss Louisa is more than certain this young man must be the man of her life. Just as March in *The Fox* cannot resist the strange power of Henry in his presence, Miss Louisa is made motionless, "spellbound, like a creature given up as a prey"⁶⁰ when he finally dares to hold her gripped in his arms.

⁵⁴Innis, K.: *D. H. Lawrence's Bestiary, A Study of His Use of Animal Trope and Symbol*. Mouton & Co.N.V., Publishers: The Hague. 1971 (34)

⁵⁵ Lawrence, D.H.: "Daughters of the Vicar." in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (65)

⁵⁶ *ibid.* 65

⁵⁷ Lawrence, D.H.: "Daughters of the Vicar." in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (79)

⁵⁸ *ibid.* 79

⁵⁹ *ibid.* 79

⁶⁰ *ibid.* 88

3.2 The Significance of the Physical Contact. The Role of the Touch

It is also interesting to note that in these moments of awakening that one could compare to the moments of Joycean epiphany, either of the two individuals rarely utters a single word. "They were afraid of each other, afraid to talk. He could only keep her near to him."⁶¹ This moment of blissful quietness reminds one of Mellors' letter to Connie which actually closes the novel. "Well, so many words, because I can't touch you."⁶² As opposed to Joyce where sudden realization is usually caused by an overheard significant word or unusual combination of words, in Lawrence all is the consequence of the magic power of the physical contact, a touch of two bodies.

However, that it is not necessarily a contact of the human bodies exclusively that plays the crucial role in Lawrence's literary work can be demonstrated on another example of a woman's return to life in a very unusual short story *The Sun*. This story belongs, as Harry T. Moore put it, "again to the variations of the Sleeping Beauty motif of folklore".⁶³ The story is also very topical for the discussion because the role that the moving element coming from nature plays here is as important as in almost no other one of Lawrence's stories. As the title itself suggests it is, indeed, the Sun, the life giver that represents the 'hero' in the story. What is radical about its main idea is the fact that instead of a male with whom the woman comes into contact so that the spark could spring into life, it is the Sun that stirs the living principle in the woman. The main protagonist being sick she is advised to lie in the sun. She thus finds a quiet solitary place to hide at and "offers her bosom to the sun, sighing, even now, with a certain hard pain, against the cruelty of having to give herself."⁶⁴ In spite of this initial reluctance to give herself fully to the curing activity of the Sun she soon observes its beneficial influence on the inside of her body, the ripening of her breasts until they "were like long white grapes in the sun".⁶⁵ Her expeditions to this place where she can be left alone with the Sun begin to resemble dates of two lovers passionately in love with each other. "Here the hedges of thorn that surround the sleeping (sexually

⁶¹ Lawrence, D.H.: "Daughters of the Vicar." in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (89)

⁶² Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (328)

⁶³ Moore, H.T. *The Priest of Love*. Heineman: London. 1974 (413)

⁶⁴ Lawrence, D.H.: „Sun“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London. 1934 (742)

⁶⁵ *ibid.* 742

unawakened) woman are, cacti, the kiss that brings her to life is the kiss of the Sun.”⁶⁶

When her husband arrives, a businessman belonging to the modern world, it is more than obvious that she cannot return with him to her previous life that only made her sick. The allegorical character of the relationship is in the end projected into a sudden, seemingly unmotivated attraction to an Italian peasant she knows hardly anything about. Yet, his radiant apparel is enough for her to fall in love with him at first sight. “His attraction was in his vitality, the peculiar quick energy which gave a charm to his movements.”⁶⁷

However, no happy reunion follows as the peasant is a married man and the woman is left with the perspective of bearing another child to her husband. Her dream of having a child with the hot, shy peasant remains unfulfilled. But thanks to the fact that the woman has already undergone the necessary change, her experience cannot be taken away from her and this gives her strength for the future to carry out whatever change necessary to make herself satisfied and thriving.

Having demonstrated the indisputable fact that in all fiction of D. H. Lawrence for whom the living body was of crucial importance, the physical contact represents something sacred one should, above all, point out another crucial aspect of this characteristics. Prof. M. Hilský in his epilogue to Lawrence's *The Shades of Spring* observes that “it is never a merely superficial contact but something much internal that springs from the very centre of the human being”.⁶⁸ This almost religious importance of the physical contact can perfectly be demonstrated on Lawrence's short story *You Touched Me*. The very title already suggests that basic and seemingly commonest kind of physical contact, the touch, becomes the central incident in the plot. That the touch is not understood as mere touch in Lawrence's fiction and that it can even play a more significant role than the sexual act as such has been observed and dealt with by several critics. Anne Smith attempts to describe the significance of the touch in Lawrence's fiction: “The specific physical nature of erotic action, while it would always be sexual and physical, had no particular importance in itself (it could as easily be a kiss or the touch of fingers as intercourse)”.⁶⁹ In *You Touched Me*, indeed, no mentions or even realization of erotic contact appear between two individuals. A reader, unacquainted with Lawrence's ‘philosophy’ would hardly find any trace of erotic

⁶⁶ Moore, H.T. *The Priest of Love*, Heineman: London. 1974 (413)

⁶⁷ Lawrence, D.H.: „Sun“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (753)

⁶⁸ Hilský, M.: „Lawrencův plamen života“ in: Lawrence, D.H. *Stíny jara a jiné povídky*. Odeon: Praha. 1989 (452). Translation: Kateřina Klosová

⁶⁹ Smith, A. *D.H.Lawrence and Women*. Vision Press: GB. 1978 (207)

in this story. However, as Prof. Hilský fittingly comments on this story, “there is something banal and, at the same time, mystically mysterious in the touch of Matylda’s hand, so slight and yet fatal, completely asexual and still deeply erotic. And it is this very touch that is more eloquent of Lawrence’s metaphysic than all of his critical essays.”⁷⁰ Although the mere idea of the erotic relationship between Matilda and Hadrian who could easily be her son may seem almost absurd, since the night when Matilda, by mistake enters Hadrian’s room and touches his forehead, he becomes restless as a feeling of strange kind of desire has been woken up in him. Hadrian becomes insistent on Matilda getting married to him. There was definitely a material interest at the beginning of his decision to get her, yet things seem to have changed after the ‘ominous’ touch. “What do you persecute me for if it isn’t for the money?”⁷¹ inquires desperate Matilda. “I am old enough to be your mother.”⁷² No matter argument she brings forth, the only retort Hadrian can offer is: “You touched me.” The undeniable righteousness of his claim, discussible as it may seem, is confirmed in the end of the story when Matilda, after all, agrees to marry him. Matilda never reveals or admits her love to Hadrian and the reader can, in fact, never be sure what exactly she feels. Nevertheless, her giving in to the argument of the young man, his insistence on the importance of their physical contact seems to confirm that she, too, is aware of the strange crucial importance of their touch.

In *Daughters of the Vicar* again it is almost a mystical experience for Miss Mary and Alfred when he holds her tight in his arms for the first time: “and he felt himself falling, falling from himself, and whilst she, yielded up, swooned to a kind of death of herself, a moment of utter darkness came over him, and they began to wake up again as if from a long sleep.”⁷³ As this passage demonstrates it is already the mere touch, the embrace which brings the two individuals to life again, as if being woken up from a deep sleep and reconnected to life.

The story *The Blind Man* also offers a specific kind of touch. This story does not deal with a partnership problem to such an extent as most of Lawrence’s fiction does. And yet,

⁷⁰ Hilský, M.: “Lawrencův plamen života“ in: Lawrence, D.H. *Stíny jara a jiné povídky*. Odeon: Praha. 1989 (452). Translation: Kateřina Klosová

⁷¹ Lawrence, D.H. “You Touched Me“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (300)

⁷² *ibid.* 300

⁷³ Lawrence, D.H. „Daughters of the Vicar“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (88)

the triangle: woman - her husband - his potential rival can show some affinity with *Lady Chatterley's Lover* or even with *The Fox*. It is the importance of the sense of listening and, in the end, the crucial and decisive role of the touch as the basic means to enter into the understanding of things that is explored in detail and with wonderful perceptiveness in this text. Pervin, who has lost sight in Flanders, has been married to Isabel for five years. Not surprisingly, the last year, the year of Pervin's blindness, was a time of "unspeakable intimacy".⁷⁴ Nevertheless when Isabel's old friend arrives after a long time of separation, Pervin feels excluded from the intimacy all of which cannot be perceived without the sight. Lawrence's descriptions of the slightest shades and changes in the voices of the speakers, their melody of voice are very thorough and thus convey well Pervin's overdeveloped sense of hearing. His restlessness over the ignorance of what exactly is happening between Isabel and her friend makes Pervin run away and seek an asylum of loneliness in a shed. When the friend comes in search for him Pervin meets him unexpectedly asking him for the permission to touch him. Rather reluctantly, the friend lets Pervin take him "in the soft, travelling grasp".⁷⁵ He can now be satisfied as he got to know to his potential 'rival' as intimately as it is possible between the two men. He even asks the other man to do the same, to also touch him. For Pervin the mutual brief connection does not mean a necessary taking advantage of the other man. This moment of pure intimacy when the two participate in entirely the same sensation, on the contrary, means the beginning of a potential friendship for him. Nevertheless, the other man, a lawyer, "whose mind was much quicker than his emotions, which were not so very fine"⁷⁶, gets scared at the touch, the breach of his solid, detached self. Here again, one can trace Lawrence's stress on the polarity between a representative of the sensitive men and a spiritual man. In this case, the perceptiveness of touch is brought to its extremes due to the lack of another important sense and thus the contrast becomes even more intensive.

This pattern is, as already intimidated, conspicuously reminiscent of the two polar opposites in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, apart from the fact, of course, that Mellors and Clifford never come into immediate contact. Just as Clifford fears almost with paranoid hysteria any kind of physical contact with another human being, the lawyer in *The Blind*

⁷⁴Lawrence, D.H. „The Blind Man“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (243)

⁷⁵Lawrence, D.H. „The Blind Man“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (258)

⁷⁶ *ibid.* 258

Man similarly “could not bear it that he had been touched by the blind man, his insane reserve broken in. He was like a mollusc whose shell is broken”.⁷⁷ Lawrence’s favourite image of a mollusc for people shut close in their shell of ego, hardened against all attempts at contact coming from his surroundings appears frequently in his fiction. His description of Clifford, a representative of this species of men, speaks for itself as the example par excellence: “becoming almost a creature with a hard, efficient shell of an exterior and pulpy interior, one of the amazing crabs and lobsters of the modern, industrial and financial world, invertebrates of the crustacean order, with shells of steel, like machines and inner bodies of soft pulp”.⁷⁸ And just as the shell of the man of the story finally gets broken leaving his softened inside stripped naked the soft inside of Clifford’s ego also gradually disintegrates and he, aware of its vulnerability, becomes “dependent on Connie with terror, like a child, almost like an idiot.”⁷⁹ Nevertheless, it is not the need of touch which makes him cling to her. He only needs her to stand by him, in her social status of ladyship to constantly reassure him that “he existed at all”.⁸⁰

The form of touch in *The Fox* is also worth noticing as in this novelette it is actually a ‘dream touch’ that is one of the significant impulses for the change in March. As has been already mentioned, important premonitions are revealed to the heroine in form of a dream. She can see in her dreams her future as demonstrated in animalistic images - she represented by a hare and Henry as a fox hunting her. In her first dream she approaches a fox and while attempting to approach it, its brush whisks her across her face, “and it seemed his brush was on fire, for it seared and burned her mouth with a great pain.”⁸¹ Again the element of fire is of much significance here, representing the igniting elements for the woman, but, at the same time, a kind of threat, ‘the other’, an alien element.

It is not necessary to analyse other Lawrence’s stories to show what has already been proved on a sufficient number of examples. Let us now concentrate on the role of touch in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* where the word itself appears frequently enough. However, because of more space provided by the genre of the novel for deeper development of the main motif, the touch here does not remain at the level of the initiating breakthrough only.

⁷⁷ Lawrence, D.H. „The Blind Man“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (258)

⁷⁸ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (116)

⁷⁹ *ibid.* 116

⁸⁰ *ibid.* 13

⁸¹ Lawrence, D.H. „The Fox“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (430)

Its significance is carried on and the word touch is used in several other contexts, as something one can become used to and indulge in. Of course, considering the explicitly sexual scenes in the novel, it does not need to be emphasized that here, the touch gains on different, much broader dimensions of meaning.

“My God, what a generation!”⁸² Sir Malcolm exclaims on Connie’s telling him she will consent to become Duncan Forbes’ model without any need to worry about his attempting to touch her. “He only loves me to be near him, but not to touch him.”⁸³ Sir Malcolm, himself still belonging to the generation of the old England, a sturdy Scotsman and, indeed, a father of his daughter, is heartily shocked by this detached attitude to the female body and to any physical contact in general. Duncan Forbes’ reticence perfectly describes the quality of the modern intellectual society Lawrence despised and criticized in many of his essays. “Sexually they were passionless, even dead.”⁸⁴ Clifford’s attitude to Connie is also always such: aloof and detached, they being absolutely apart. This species of men that are only capable of holding theoretical discussions about the relationship between man and woman while, in reality being either virgins themselves or aggressive with their partner soon begin to seem disgusting for Connie. While it might have been a great fun initially for her to listen to their abstract conversation Mellors’ warm-hearted embrace makes her quickly realize “what cold minds!”⁸⁵ Mellors’ protective hands can be surprisingly tender. His hands, “with their curious loose forgottenness of a sleeping animal”⁸⁶, know immediately how to handle the withered flower of Connie who has waited thirsting so long for a refreshing impulse.

The lovers’ gradual getting close to each other is beautifully reflected in Connie’s analogically growing acquaintance with the wood nature. The touch of the wood that would have meant little to her before, now represents a powerful revitalizing experience. She becomes one for a moment with the trees, flowers and is allowed to draw energy out of the mutual contact with them. The feeling of the trunk of a young pine tree, “swaying against her with curious life, [...] the erect alive thing”⁸⁷, one of the numerous phallic shapes in the spring wood, has almost the same effect on her as the warm touch of her

⁸² Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (306)

⁸³ *ibid.* 306

⁸⁴ *ibid.* 52

⁸⁵ *ibid.* 35

⁸⁶ *ibid.* 298

⁸⁷ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (90)

lover's body. Mellors' slow opening of the door to her perceptiveness is nicely projected in her consequent openness to the spring wood ready to embrace her. "Today (i.e. after the first intercourse) she could almost feel it in her own body, the huge heave of the sap in the massive trees, upwards, up, up to the bud-tips, there to push into little flamey oak leaves, bronze as blood."⁸⁸

It is important to realize that just as not everything is simple and straightforward about the natural processes, the giving in to the loving touch is not as spontaneous as that with both of the lovers either. There is, on the contrary, a strong barrier at Mellors' side at the beginning, he attempts to resist the excruciating craving in his loins. However, his natural passion gains over his conscious self finally making him face the fact that "if you keep clear (of the life) you might as well almost die."⁸⁹ It is only natural that the sexual intercourse stands for the culmination of this intimacy of touch between the two lovers. Yet again, this is not the touch in the ordinary sense of the word for both of the participants. In the wood, the physical touch of the deeply intensive intimacy moves to almost a mystical and sacred level. They both become the worshippers of the live beauty of contact that, for them, is much deeper than the beauty of wisdom.

H.M. Daleski's highlighting the significance of the touch of Mellors' and Connie's hands at the back of Clifford's wheel chair also discovers another important aspect of this form of physical contact in the novel. Not only does she for the first time realize the beauty and aliveness of her lover's hand browned by the weather: that it is exactly this hand that caresses her most delicate parts without a trace of shame. This moment, moreover, serves as another demonstration of the already mentioned polarity that runs all through the novel. Their contact "is a silent repudiation of Clifford's inhuman coldness and an affirmation of the saving grace of warmth."⁹⁰ Finally, it is the magical potential that is revealed to her in the touch of Mellors that also makes Connie appreciate its worth and treasure her body as something most important. She confirms this conviction of hers when approving of Forbes' painting her, yet, on the condition that this must happen without any kind of physical contact between the two of them whatever. "I wouldn't have him touch me, not for anything."⁹¹

⁸⁸ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (129)

⁸⁹ *ibid.* 125

⁹⁰ Daleski, H.M. *The Forked Flame, a Study of D.H.Lawrence*. Faber and Faber: London. 1965 (280)

⁹¹ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (312)

3.3 The Initiation Rite in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

Having analysed in detail various realisations of the change-pattern in Lawrence's work we find out that the many cases of special experience and gain of knowledge of his heroines could also possibly be interpreted as a kind of initiation rite. The original idea of initiation, as Michal Peprník understands it, consists in "sending the young boy before reaching adulthood into the wilderness, where the boys, completely deserted, need to fast, practise mental training, or in various ways kill their bodies until, their mission is delivered to them in a vision, that should contain the message about their new role in the community. They left for the wood as boys and returned as men."⁹² This scheme of gaining experience in the wood is, as has been shown, very relevant for the analysis of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and also of some of Lawrence's other short fiction. It is worth noticing that in Lawrence's case they are, in majority, the women who go through the act of initiation and who need to add this new dimension to their lives. This fact may serve as a substantial excuse for the relatively small number of exclusively unpleasant moments his initiates have to go through. Although as Peprník says "experience of evil and suffering is not the single purpose of initiation, but it is rather the means of attaining a higher state of mind and finding one's true identity and social role,"⁹³ still the evil and violence play a crucial role in the rite. The general greater degree of vulnerability of the weaker sex can, however, explain the lesser intensity or even the absence of physical pain in Lawrence's fiction. Moreover, the frequent emotional turmoil that alternates with the moments of bliss or leads to its final achievement in the Lawrencean process of 'initiation' at least partially makes up for this imperfect adherence to the pattern of the rite.

This aspect becomes even more interesting considering the fact that it is the woman's perspective in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (that is Connie's) most of the crucial passages depicting the individual stages of her initiation are delivered from. Connie's is also a special case of initiation that, in an interesting aspect, differs from the traditional ritual. There cannot be any doubt about the fact that Connie does change during her expeditions into the wood. In the natural surroundings and thanks to her fulfilment in the physical contact with a man she rediscovers the lost female that was burdened with the experience of frustrating sexual intercourses with other men. "She, herself, was so forlorn and unused,

⁹² Peprník, M. *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*. Host: Brno. 2005 (24). Translation: Kateřina Klosová

⁹³ *ibid.* 25

not a female at all, just a mere thing of terrors."⁹⁴ Her civilized body, in fact rather a professional corpse, finally turns into a natural body capable of intensive passionate perceiving. And this is exactly where her case is, in a way, 'extraordinary'. Apart from the fact that her change does not take place in complete isolation but in presence of another person, she also, instead of becoming more experienced, returns to the condition of mankind before the ominous tasting of the forbidden fruit. What she and Mellors experience in the wood, indeed, resembles the return to the pre-fall experience of Adam and Eve. In his essay Kenneth Innes compared Mellors to the unfallen Adam, an individual "open to the creative mystery of the universe, with a will in harmony with the divine power on which he knows he depends".⁹⁵ The burning out the shame of Connie during the final intercourse before she departs for Italy also seems to symbolise a certain regain of lost innocence, almost a return to Eve's state of virginity in the paradisiacal garden.

3.4 Pagan Worship of Nature

Nevertheless, it is not so much the Christian God that represents the 'divine power' here. The phallic description of the spring wood, further intensified by the lovers' ritual of decorating their genitals with flowers, indicates rather the pre-Christian, pagan religions, more specifically on the premises of the wood, the worship of the god Pan. Their spontaneous behaviour with a certain tinge of anarchy bears the traces of the rituals "of the early societies that are connected with human existence in the world and in nature, with the mystery of creation, sexuality and death, with the movement of the Sun in the sky, with day and night."⁹⁶ Their dancing in the moonlit night in the wood resembles the archaic rituals of frugality. Just like the spring regeneration follows the death of winter vital spirit also enters the two lovers after a long-lasting period of thirsting and abstinence and they for a while become one with nature, their bodies moving eurythmically in the moonlight. Their dancing shows the pagan belief in the power of the ritual and the potential of purification originating in the cyclic process of changes in nature.

⁹⁴ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (119)

⁹⁵ Innes, K. *D.H.Lawrence's Bestiary, A Study of His Use of Animal Trope and Symbol*. Mouton & Co.N.V., Publishers: The Hague. 1971 (195)

⁹⁶Hilský, M.: „Lawrencův plamen života“ in: Shakespeare, W. *Sen noci svatojánské*. Torst: Praha. 1999 (20). Translation: Kateřina Klosová

Lawrence's wood actually most of all resembles the one of the Arthurian romance in which "pagan elements mix with later Christian norms and values."⁹⁷ As M. Peprník adds, "this is not merely a world of dark wilderness and wild creatures,"⁹⁸ but more a magical space full of "wonderful colours and unexpected adventures."⁹⁹ The wood functions here as an asylum for the lovers, like the Shakespearean magical wood in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* where, due to the intrusion of gods and their servant fairies the barriers of social constraint fall down, taboos are broken and the most daring ideas seem to be realizable. It is the Shakespearean wood representing the human carnality.

Clifford distinguishes the sudden looseness of Connie, above all in the radicalization of her ideas and opinions during their discussions. "Don't be so elated about it"¹⁰⁰, he chides her like a little child, his rebuke being tinged with a certain touch of envy. Clifford observes only with reluctance and feelings of discomfort the blooming of the femaleness in Connie. Even he, the man that has lost the sense of vital touch long time ago (it is a question whether he has ever possessed it at all) can trace in her behaviour the elements of a kind of pagan adoration of nature and observes with disturbance how much good it does her. "Running stark naked in the rain, and playing Bacchante?"¹⁰¹ But Connie is not playing but, indeed, becomes a worshipper of the god of the phallus, feeling "like a Bacchante, fleeing through the woods, to call on Iacchos, the bright phallus that had no independent personality behind it, but was pure god-servant to the woman!"¹⁰² It is of no use attempting to persuade Connie about the ascendance of the humankind to the more spiritual beings. She, already almost a perfected initiate, contradicts Clifford with her conviction: "[...] I feel that whatever God there is has at last wakened up my guts [...] and [is] rippling so happily there like dawn."¹⁰³ While Clifford comes to his conclusions after the long-lasting theorizing and hypothetical calculations Connie feels convinced about her truth as she was enabled to perceive it with her own body.

It is also of great importance to emphasise the fact that what happens in the wood is not merely a one-sided initiation throughout which only Connie would become more

⁹⁷ Peprník, M. *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*. Host: Brno. 2005 (39). Translation: Kateřina Klosová

⁹⁸ *ibid.* 39

⁹⁹ *ibid.* 39

¹⁰⁰ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (254)

¹⁰¹ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (254)

¹⁰² *ibid.* 144

¹⁰³ *ibid.* 254

experienced. Natie Granich confirms this fact when claiming that "Connie's body is also connecting Mellors's body to life again."¹⁰⁴ Considering the initial desperate situation of the two lovers, both of them frustrated by unhappy and degrading experience of the previous relationships, it is obvious that both of them do crave, whether intentionally or more subconsciously, for a significant change in form of a fruitful experience resulting in a final fulfilment. Mellors finally confirms his belief in regeneration of mankind through spontaneity in his letter to Connie. „They (the masses) should be alive and frisky, and acknowledge the great god Pan.”¹⁰⁵ The importance of fire that, again, almost resembles worship also represents one of the elements of pagan rituals. Nevertheless, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* these are, again, mixed with Christian festivities. “It's my Pentecost, the forked flame between me and you [...]. That's what I abide by, and will abide by”.¹⁰⁶

The fact that most of the pagan festivals were usually accompanied with erotic looseness is another significant trait that could prove certain affinity between these and the worship of life of the lovers in the novel. “We fucked the flame into being.”¹⁰⁷ suggests Mellors' final triumph and feeling of justification. The relationship between Connie and Mellors is not based just on “sex in the limited sense of the word but rather the connection that is instinctive relationship to the world, nature and cosmos that denies any rational analysis.”¹⁰⁸ That is why Clifford, a purely rational individual, “the fallen beast, squirming monster”¹⁰⁹ can naturally never, with his limited mind, understand or even accept the possibility of the existence of this extraordinary kind of mutuality. The only thing Clifford is able to worship, and he proves almost a professional at it, is “the mechanical thing, money.”¹¹⁰ The strict materialism and pragmatism, automatically, project themselves into all other fields of his life, even into the most intimate ones. Mellors without scruples characterizes the modern man's approach to sex “What is cunt but machine-fucking!” The

¹⁰⁴ Granich, N. *Stripping off the 'Civilized Body' Essays on Language, Representation, and Sexuality*, ed. Paul Poplawski. Greenwood Press: London. 2001 (161)

¹⁰⁵ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (326)

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.* 327

¹⁰⁷ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (327)

¹⁰⁸ Hilský, M. „Lawrencův plamen života“ in: Lawrence, D.H. *Stíny jara a jiné povídky*. Odeon: Praha. 1989 (438). Translation: Kateřina Klosová

¹⁰⁹ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (317)

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*

warm-hearted fucking is what he is determined to lift up at the expense of the cold-hearted one that only brings destruction to the vital part of both participants.

Connie's and Mellors' specific return to innocence obviously stands in a strict opposition to another kind of return, the one Sir Clifford undergoes. Sir Clifford who cannot face the disappointment over Connie's growing detachment and her final intention to leave him, at the moment of the deepest crisis, would desire to give up the feelings of responsibility, the responsibility for one's own emotions. His degradation to the ruin of a weakling of a man who lets himself be caressed and even kissed by an elderly Mrs Bolton is a brilliant depiction of Lawrence's disgust of fear of maturity he observed among his contemporaries. Certain trait of unnatural childishness is indicated several times by Mrs Bolton herself who is actually convinced that all men are in their principle babies who need constant care and attention. Lawrence describes this phenomenon of the modern society in his essay *The Crown*: "We cannot bear honest maturity. We want to reduce ourselves back, back to the conceptive state of childishness."¹¹¹ Further on he deepens his contempt over people of such inclinations: "But childhood as a goal, for which grown people aim, childishness futile and sentimental for which men and women lust, and which always retreats when grasped, [...]: this is disgusting."¹¹² It is more than obvious that just as nothing can stop the cyclical changes in the nature, the blooming of a flower, its fading away and growing other seeds out of which new life is born, this process being repeated again and again since the creation of the Earth forever, man must also always undergo changes and this process should never be retrogressive. Sir Clifford, who lost any contact whatever with living nature, has nowhere to draw the inspiration from. His insomnia thus also partially symbolises a kind of revenge nature decides to take on him as a punishment for the betrayal of his instincts. Having fallen into the state of utter egotism, he rots from the inside, just like the cabbage the leaves of which hold tight together without letting the centre breathe and grow.

As opposed to the healthy erotic passion that is the manifestation of a strong sexual attraction between Mellors and Connie what develops between Mrs Bolton and Sir Clifford is a "weird passion"¹¹³. "His educating her roused in her a passion of excitement and

¹¹¹Lawrence, D.H. „The Crown“ in: *Phoenix II, Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works.*, collected by H.T.Moore, W. Roberts. Penguin Books: NY. 1978 (395)

¹¹² *ibid.* 396

¹¹³ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (104)

response much deeper than any love affair could have done.”¹¹⁴ Clifford’s convoluted relationship with Mrs Bolton as contrasted with the analogically developing phallic relationship between Mellors and Connie, again points to the binary structure of the novel outlined at the beginning. It only further confirms Lawrence’s vitalistic attitude to life characterized by the belief in the regenerative force of nature as opposed to the destructive influence of the mechanical and sterile modernized world.

3.5 Tenderness of the Wood Embrace in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*

In contrast to the static way of ‘existence’, Connie and Mellors have much to observe and learn in the wood. The mere fact that it is the spring wood that invites Connie for visits is enough for a perceptive woman hungry for sensual experience to perceive this space almost as magical. It is not only flowers in full bloom, the trees with new green sprouts that inspire Connie and supply her with new strength. Observing the growing pheasants, the breeding of the little ones, the tenderness with which the hen cares for her little chickens offer Connie an apt example of the cyclical pattern of reproduction in nature. Observing the tender, weak stalks of chicken legs she becomes more intensively aware of her weakness and vulnerability, perceiving acutely “the agony of her own female forlornness.”¹¹⁵ The handling of them, of course, “touches the thwarted maternal instincts”¹¹⁶ in Connie making her realize her barrenness painfully. And it is Mellors who at this particular moment recognizes Connie’s despair and need for tender handling and approaches her with empathy adequate for such a situation. Regardless of the initial feeling of having been left out during their sexual intercourse, Connie always feels safe when embraced by the protective arms of Mellors.

Connie is a woman with terrible experience in her previous sexual relationships, above all, owing to these being based on the mental level exclusively due to the contemptuous attitude of Connie’s partners to the body. After the humiliating debacle with Michaelis, an utter emotional egoist, Connie hardened her perceptive self and almost eradicated the sensual part out of her life altogether. It is thus more than evident, that, at this point, any manifestation of aggression would naturally frighten Connie and would only

¹¹⁴ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (105)

¹¹⁵ *ibid.* 122

¹¹⁶ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (122)

make her retrieve into a deeper seclusion. Only the man who can show courage and “power of tenderness”¹¹⁷ and prove he desires the woman for the sexual attraction she stirs in him without necessarily considering this a demonstration of his own weakness is what can rekindle the little flame of life in Connie so that she could gain back the lost confidence in her female self. Thus “it is Mellors’ tenderness that wins Connie’s submission”.¹¹⁸ The crucial moment in the novel for Connie to become absolutely sure she can confide in Mellors and without any worries give herself fully to him comes when she, for the first time, escapes the slavery of her mind’s control and lets her sensual self loose completely during their sexual intercourse. “She yielded with a quiver that was like death, she went all open to him. And oh, if he were not tender to her now, how cruel, for she was all open to him and helpless.”¹¹⁹ Although “it (the entry) might come with the thrust of a sword in her softly-opened body, and that would be death”¹²⁰ Mellors disperses all her fears when “it came with a strange slow thrust of peace.”¹²¹ And Connie “dared to let go everything, all herself, and be gone in the flood.”¹²² It is this courage of revealing a specifically feminine trait, the tenderness, that makes Mellors different from a typical man of that modernized time of mechanization and detachment in sexual matters.

¹¹⁷ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (300)

¹¹⁸ Daleski, H.M. *The Forked Flame, a Study of D.H.Lawrence*. Faber and Faber: London. 1965 (294)

¹¹⁹ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (186)

¹²⁰ *ibid.* 186

¹²¹ *ibid.* 187

¹²² *ibid.* 187

4 Romantic Features in the Character of the Male Protagonist

It is worth noticing that in Lawrence the lack of fear of human contact, the touch that modern man replaced by ideas, “which can’t contain bacteria”¹²³ seems to be attached, in majority of cases, to men of the lower social rank without distinct social ambitions or outstanding intellect. At the same time, the very same men are usually ‘responsible’ for the awakening of the vital element in the sleeping heroines of Lawrence’s fiction. It is the gipsy in *The Virgin and the Gipsy*, who, there can be no doubt about it, is an example par excellence, of a man of nature, restless and of incalculable temperament. Indeed, there seems to be something of the wilderness in him, a spirit of an untamed creature: “He looked back into her eyes for a second, with that naked suggestion of desire which acted like a spell, and robbed her of her will.”¹²⁴

An interesting connecting element between the gipsy of the story and Mellors has been brought forward by Daleski in his study. It is the skilful handling of animals, more specifically, of horses, that is common to both men. “Charles earlier tells Yvette that the gipsy, during the war, ‘was the best man we had, with horses’.”¹²⁵ Mellors similarly has been the “overhead blacksmith at Tavershall, shoeing horses mostly.”¹²⁶ This extraordinary ability to work with animals emphasized as a characteristic feature of both of the men may serve as another evidence of their close connection with and affinity to nature. Mellors’

¹²³ Lawrence, D.H. „Introduction to These Paintings“ in: *Phoenix I, Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works.*, collected by H.T.Moore, W. Roberts. Penguin Books: NY.1978 (558)

¹²⁴ Lawrence, D.H. „The Virgin and the Gipsy“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence.* Martin Secker: London . 1934 (1044)

¹²⁵ Daleski, H.M. *The Forked Flame, a Study of D.H.Lawrence.* Faber and Faber: London. 1965 (280)

¹²⁶ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover.* Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (215)

inability to assist Clifford by repairing his “foaming steed”¹²⁷ serves here as a fitting contradiction. It clearly indicates the sphere Mellors belongs to, the human, natural and animal one, whereas his aversion to the world of mechanization projects into his: “I am afraid I know nothing about these mechanical things, Sir Clifford.”¹²⁸ The physical strain in the contact with anything mechanical seems to be drawing energy out of him rapidly: “he went to sit on the bank, his heart beating and his face white with effort, semi-conscious [...] she saw his hands trembling on his thighs.”¹²⁹

Alfred of *Daughters of the Vicar* seems to carry many autobiographical features as the story deals with the coal-mining environment Lawrence grew up in. In this story again, it is young Dalton, a miner, to whom Miss Mary becomes attracted, though being herself of a higher social status. The story *The Sun* where in the end the woman secretly craves to bear a child to an Italian peasant is another representative of the ordinary-man-as-a-hero group. This tendency in Lawrence’s fiction is probably not a mere coincidence regarding the lower social class Lawrence himself originated from. Nevertheless, it, at the same time, confirms the essentially romantic tendency that underlines Lawrence’s ‘philosophy of life’, especially in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. It is the glorification of the members of the lower class as unspoiled, naive, in whom, most significantly, their contact with nature has not been severed and for whom it thus still serves as a kind of source of vital energy.

Had it not been for his bad experience with civilization and his purposeful withdrawal from society, Mellors, at moments, almost reminds one of the ‘noble savage’, a creature unspoiled by civilization, living in the condition of the pre-rational unity between man and nature independent of moral values where the individual is naturally good. Nevertheless, his contact and relatively long-lasting sojourn with the colonel, a representative of the higher class, make him extremely embittered. Mellors’ soliloquies on his hatred of the contemporary civilization are, indeed, full of contempt and aversion to the “greedy, greedy mechanism, sparkling with lights and gushing hot metal and roaring with traffic, [...] the vast evil thing.”¹³⁰ Nevertheless, he is, at the same time, painfully aware of the fact that “a man could no longer be withdrawn and secluded [...]. All vulnerable things must perish under the rolling and running iron.”¹³¹ The double consciousness of Mellors is,

¹²⁷ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (192)

¹²⁸ *ibid.* 202

¹²⁹ *ibid.* 205

¹³⁰ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (126)

¹³¹ *ibid.* 126

as Daleski again cleverly observed, also reflected in his ability to switch the language he speaks from colloquial to formal English with regard to what seems more appropriate for a particular situation.

The unstable character of a man, forever changing without any possibility of strict delineation is typical of all Lawrence's characters that are, in any way, worth deeper analysis. It actually, at the same time, describes Lawrence's technique of characterization. This consists chiefly in situating the characters in different environments and letting them react against various external or internal impulses. The reactions of the stiff and mechanical character thus prove almost identical, they forever resting in a static inertia. In contrast to this, the characters that possess the vital spirit within exhibit a high degree of flexibility, reacting according to their momentary mood and with an admirable empathy. As Prof. Hilský observed the body language is thus an important element of Lawrence's characterization: "He often describes his characters by their way of moving, as for instance a natural way of walking as opposed to a stiff one."¹³² To sum up, one can again point out the underlying Heraclitean principle that actually roofs all these different realizations of one tendency.

However, the application of this typical feature of Lawrence's characterization to *Lady Chatterley's Lover* with special regard to the romantic tendencies in this novel brings one to further revealing observations. The split of Mellors' personality, torn between his instinctive drives and passion to a woman and, on the other hand, reluctance to let loose his self fully feeling limited by the external hostile ambience and rules of society, rather than being suggestive of the figure of a noble savage resembles the hero torn by his inner conflicts so typical of romantic literature. Lawrence's indebtedness to the romantic attitude to nature becomes thus clearer and gains on significance during further analysis of the novel. What is more, in adherence to the romantic ideas, this specific feature of the hero of romantic literature that can be recognized in Mellors can further be applied to the characterization of nature, i.e. the wood. Just as the nature is believed to be the projection of the hero's inner self by the romantics, we can also observe certain connectedness between Mellors' personality and the character of the wood.

¹³² Hilský, M.: „Lawrencův plamen života“ in: Lawrence, D.H. *Stíny jara a jiné povídky*. Odeon: Praha. 1989 (423). Translation: Kateřina Klosová

5 The Character of the Wood in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

5.1 The 'Imperfect' Pastoral in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

Kenneth Innis discerned two faces of wood in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* that are alternately held out to Connie. The one is the "idyllic, pastoral"¹³³ wood, the one in which the ghost of the romantic hero of Robin Hood still broods. The other dimension of the wood is the jungle-like one, full of dark nooks where the Bacchae figures can run freely with no limits to their spontaneous life. It is definitely the former dimension that predominates and that is why further analysis will concentrate on the former face of the Wragby wood and describe the pastoral element in the novel.

It should be made clear that it is definitely not the intention of the author of this work to call *Lady Chatterley's Lover* a pastoral or try to search for the original classical pastoral in the novel. There are no conventional prescriptions about setting, characters or diction recognizable in the novel, all of which belong to the necessary characteristic features of the pastoral poetry. Kenneth Innis attempted to rectify the matter when he defined *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as a "modern pastoral which derives much of its imaginative force from Lawrence's vision of the green world we have lost by our fall into abstraction and mechanization."¹³⁴ Simplistic as this definition may seem, this statement can serve as a useful general summing up of one of the main features of the novel. R. F. Hardin's definition of the experience of the pastoral hero as a kind of initiation seems to fit perfectly Connie's experience in the wood. "Pastoral requires illumination: in touch with nature, man is instructed in her way, always opposed to the artificial way of the city or court [...] the initiate finds peace and simplicity embodied within himself."¹³⁵ It is exactly this

¹³³ Innis, K. *D.H.L.'s Bestiary, A Study of His Use of Animal Trope and Symbol*. Mouton & Co. N.V., Publishers: The Hague. 1971 (35)

¹³⁴ *ibid.* 193

¹³⁵ Hardin, R.F. *Survivals of Pastoral*. University of Kansas Publications: Lawrence, Kansas. 1979 (2)

'peace' that Mellors finds when entering Connie for the first time and which she, also, thanks to their mutual contact, gradually recovers in her body and her inner self. Having thus restored the lost stability within herself she becomes stronger and more confident to face the real world and even the possible 'shame' of disgrace she, for a fleeting moment, felt on finding out about Mellors' scandal. Connie and Mellors thus represent the proofs in the modern world of the regenerative and enforcing ability of nature that in the pastoral remains only at the level of allegorical suggestion which the reader himself has to apply to his life. It seems to have been Lawrence's intention to turn the „hypothetical state of love and peace“¹³⁶ into possible reality in his novel instead of looking back with nostalgia for the ideal past, which is so typical of the classical pastoral.

Nevertheless, the first problem one must face when trying to claim the pastoral influence in the novel is its structure as such, i.e. its polarity that has been already commented upon. As opposed to a classical pastoral where “idyllic country provides an ideal stand point from which we may judge the abnormalities of court and city life”¹³⁷, in Lawrence's novel the wood as a representative of nature is from the very beginning put into strong contrast to Wragby Hall and Tavershall village that here represent the mechanical modern world. Thus what is only latently perceived in or suggested as being the message of the pastoral, is almost physically present in the novel and, what is more, actively participates in conveying the main idea. This opposition of the territory of nature to the city world is further emphasized in the novel by the already mentioned Lawrence's frequent open comments, mostly in form of Mellors' soliloquies, verging sometimes on hatred to the modern society. “Lawrence's pastoral, the rhetoric of an outlaw, is informed by a radical hatred for the evil modern city, an intense desire to stir up his readers.”¹³⁸ While certain nostalgia can be recognized as the underlying mood in the classical pastorals, it is Lawrence's intention to make his readers aware of the miserable state they find themselves in and even possibly to make them active in attempting to bring about a certain change into their lives.

Lawrence in fact managed to convey in his picture of 'imperfect' pastoral exactly the feature that can become a general disadvantage of the genre itself and that also seems to be

¹³⁶ Cuddon, J.A. *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. Penguin Group: London. 1992 (689)

¹³⁷ Innis, K. *D.H.L.'s Bestiary, A Study of His Use of Animal Trope and Symbol*. Mouton & Co. N.V., Publishers: The Hague. 1971 (193)

¹³⁸ *ibid.* 193

relevant to his discussion of the state of nature in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. It is the strong idealisation in the pastoral of the life of shepherds that strikes one in the first place. "But in reality, the life of the fields is never without its undertone of sadness."¹³⁹ It is not difficult to apply this feature to the characterization of the wood in the novel, the space, although revitalizing where spring shows its beauty at almost every step, all things are still not as simple as an idealist would expect. "Put yourself into touch with the great-heart of things, and the primal tragedies of existence, [...] and in the hush of woods and pastures the still sad music of humanity is plainly audible."¹⁴⁰ Not even in the green shelter of the wood can Mellors hide from the dreadful memories and reflections on the injustice he had to meet in the civilized world. It is only a question of time when an element of the other world, here represented by Connie, finds him out again and wakes "the sleeping dogs of old voracious anger in him."¹⁴¹ Not even at the centre of this greenness where Connie hesitates to pluck flowers so as not to break the sacred peace that reigns here, can the relationship between the two lovers develop without any doubts and feelings of shame. There is a constant reminder of the modern world the fussy borderline between the two worlds being demarcated by the moving of the branches of the last trees in the wood. The two lovers, two individuals living in the modern world, obviously must face the fact that their return into, or at least sustenance of the contact with the civilization is inevitable. The return to the primitive condition of man is impossible, total severance from the body mechanical is out of question.

5.2 The Influence of Rousseau's Ideas in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

Mellors and Connie need to bear the necessary occasional (and the final as well) return into the society and its norms in their minds and cannot thus resign on their responsibilities completely. Lawrence's world in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is not the place for the escapists. The character of the development of Connie's and Mellor's relationship confirms their ability to accept the fact that "man as a social being cannot live according to

¹³⁹ Hardin, R.F. *Survivals of Pastoral*. University of Kansas Publications: Lawrence, Kansas. 1979 (174)

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.* 174

¹⁴¹ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (94)

the laws of nature only”¹⁴² and, at the same time, shows their gradually becoming reconciled with the final necessary process of re-socialization. Though open-ended, the novel in the end offers, at least as a potentiality, the hope of the two lovers for being accepted as the full-value members of society in the future. Connie admits her true feelings to her husband and is then ready to face the possible scandal that the admission of her uneven bond with Mellors may raise. This bold and straightforward encounter with the prevailing negative attitude of society is what, at the same time, casts certain doubt on *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* being of the classical pastoral genre. The pastoral hero never needs to make his belief in the vitalistic principle legitimate in front of his modern counterparts. Connie, on the contrary, rightly perceives it crucial to make her new-found perspective on the relationship between man and woman acceptable for others as well.

This fact can help to further specify the character of the romantic strain that has been discerned in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. It is not the condition of utter primitivism uncontaminated by any contact with civilization Lawrence intends his characters to return to. In accordance with J.J.Rousseau's ideas, Lawrence refuses complete seclusion of the individual from the society. “Best condition of mankind was [...] the product of art, i.e., of a conscious exercise of man’s contriving intelligence, in its slow and arduous development.”¹⁴³

Civilization and nature must reconcile to certain degree in the novel, and according to Lawrence’s ‘philosophy’, the same applies to the real life. The experience of the heroes with civilization and modern society cannot be eradicated and, in correspondence with the Rousseauesque approach to the man - nature relation, this reduction would rather bring an undesired loss instead of wished-for complete revitalization. Mellors’ wish for his being quite alone in the whole universe with Connie, naturally proves a mere dream of a man disappointed with society. “If only he would make her a world.”¹⁴⁴ The iron world of smoke, however, will not disappear and even though Connie belongs originally to this ‘other’ world, it is she who manages to bring Mellors back to life. This successful match seems to be the proof in the novel of the possible positive effect on the individual of the confluence of natural and civilized elements. Nevertheless, it is not an easy task to find a balance between the two, almost opposing elements in one’s self and those who get stuck

¹⁴² Peprník, M. *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*. Host: Brno. 2005 (200). Translation: Kateřina Klosová

¹⁴³ Lovejoy, A.O. *Essays in the History of Ideas*. The John Hopkins Press: Baltimore. 1948 (31)

¹⁴⁴ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (229)

in a stereotypical vicious circle of the modern mechanized world may, according to Lawrence, never get the chance to discover the desirable life in equilibrium. "If, on the other hand," as Rousseau preaches, "I choose to live by the authority of my own nature, then I have chosen the path that leads to authenticity. As an authentic individual I have authoritative verification of myself which is derived from the foundations of my origin, that is, my nature."¹⁴⁵

That this path is far from being a simple one is more than obvious considering the modern individual's condition of being stuck in the beaten track of his/her stereotypical life that often leads almost to the identification with his/her mask of social conventions. It is by far one of the most complicated tasks in one's life to face, explore and even finally accept, facts that have long been buried, unfamiliar to him/her and till then not encountered. Moreover, to find the courage to search for these in one's own soul seems to be a performance of almost superhuman quality. Similarly, Connie, though by some unknown force attracted by the mysteries of the wood, still considers its territory, for a relatively long time, as 'the other', the strange part of the world she cannot become intimate with. Yet, letting her own self gradually loose, her actions and attitude to life, spontaneously, with ever growing frequency signal her instinctive inclination to love and protect all that is natural, in her surroundings, herself being no exception.

Thus, at the very beginning, though still relatively ignorant of the meaning of nature and its eternal validity, she "likes the inwardness of the remnant of forest".¹⁴⁶ Already at this moment she is instinctively attracted by the reticence of the old trees, "their silence, yet a vital presence."¹⁴⁷ Only later does she realize the immense importance of this peaceful silence that can give more than thousands of empty words ever do. Being the lady and employer of the gamekeeper she still does not "like bringing him orders."¹⁴⁸ Obviously, in the wood she instinctively feels the relativity of her superior position the validity of which can be justified in the context of modern, strictly class-divided society only. Moreover, Connie's reluctance to 'rule' Mellors, may partially reflect her instinctive reverence for the traditional upbringing based on the woman's respect to man's deeds and decisions as opposed to the progressive, yet amorphous idea of the relationship with a very vague delineation and lack of rules whatsoever. The respect, however, should not originate

¹⁴⁵ http://www.hku.hk/philodep/courses/ac/phil2027/jess_presentation.html (18.12.2005)

¹⁴⁶ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (67)

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.* 67

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.* 67

from the suppression of the woman and her obedience of man's autocratic orders. It is the willingly accepted respect for the individual that she feels she can fully trust and rely on. It is the recognition of the "curious kind of protective authority"¹⁴⁹ in Mellors that makes Connie obey him at once voluntarily. Her experience with the gamekeeper teaches her to reverence nature and instinctively protect it, to perceive the wood as a space of peace and tranquillity that she finally "hated breaking the flowers"¹⁵⁰ on its premises and even refuses to argue with Clifford here either. Thus Connie, quite spontaneously, her conclusions being based on her own experience takes "the authority of that state of nature that inheres in [her], over the authority of social conventions."¹⁵¹ Nevertheless, so that her initiation could be fully completed and total acceptance of her other self fully realized she has to go through another, by far, the most radical experience so far encountered.

¹⁴⁹ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (91)

¹⁵⁰ *ibid.*90

¹⁵¹ http://www.hku.hk/philodep/courses/ac/phil2027/jess_presentation.html(18.12.2005)

6 'Relation of Two'

The relatively 'optimistic' ending of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* offering potential hope for the future is a result of a long-lasting inner struggle in Lawrence's view of the human relationships that found its reflection in his fiction. Daleski, after the close analysis of D. H. Lawrence's major fiction, comes to the conclusion that it is in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* where Lawrence comes the nearest to the desired reconciliation of sexes, "the relation of two"¹⁵² in one rather than his earlier necessary "unison in separateness"¹⁵³. As it has been already shown on the short analysis of *The Fox* this story belongs to the period of Lawrence's career marked by the necessity of the superior role of the male principle in the relationship. Thus, although nature (i.e. wood) from which the creative element that presupposes the wished-for equilibrium of two partners of opposite sexes should originate comes to March in form of Henry, it does not provide the final peace for her. Just as the protagonists of other Lawrence's stories, Henry succeeds in waking up March's sleeping unconsciousness and thus an ensuing feeling of happiness is expected. Nevertheless, Grmelová comes to the conclusion that in this novelette "the joy is in the necessity of the leap - nothing more."¹⁵⁴ March's expectations are not met, "her unconscious has not been redemptive or regenerative"¹⁵⁵ as she might have hoped for. She was not contented in her relationship with Banford because she knew she could never make her happy either. March expresses her pessimism and her losing of any belief in the fulfilment of one's dreams after Banford is killed by the tree fallen by Henry: "She was glad Jill was dead. For she realized she could never make her happy. [...] It would be so forever."¹⁵⁶ Henry, who represents the

¹⁵²Daleski, H.M. *The Forked Flame, a Study of D.H.Lawrence*. Faber and Faber: London. 1965 (295)

¹⁵³ *ibid.* 295

¹⁵⁴ Grmelová, A. *The Worlds of D.H.Lawrence's Short Fiction*. The Karolinum Press: Praha. 2001 (151)

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.* 151

¹⁵⁶ Lawrence, D.H. „The Fox.“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (475)

natural element in the novelette thus, with his insistence on making March happy in his own way (i.e. being the leading element in their relationship), fails to bring happiness into March's life.

6.1 Assertion of the Male Principle

Connie's and Mellors' love based on equality and empathic attitude to each other represents a contrastive later stage in Lawrence's writing. It is the active participation of both individuals in the construction of the full-valued partnership that can only lead to a relatively happy relation. That this demands hard work and patience has also been shown on the unsteadiness, unexpected events and changes on the movement to the attainment of a full reciprocity. It will thus surprise hardly anyone that the tendency to prove the maleness in him and, moreover, to show the ensuing predominance, does finally surface in Mellors at one point in the novel. At this particular moment, Lawrence's fear of female assertiveness that marked most of his earlier work again becomes, for a short moment, the point of his preoccupation. In the novel Mellors himself admits: „They used to say I had too much of the woman in me.”¹⁵⁷ The predominance in the main male hero of features characteristically attributed to women is nothing unusual in Lawrence. Durant from *Daughters of the Vicar* or, after all, Birkin in *Women in Love* are definitely not the typical representatives of the strong and assertive manhood. A momentous full realisation of this trait in his character and its perception as a sort of weakness may be considered one of the impulses for Mellors to suddenly desire an open assertion of his predominance in the relationship with Connie. This unexpected turn comes during their last intercourse before Connie's departure for Venice that belongs to one of the most fervently debated passages of the novel. Realizing that 'tenderness' is not a male quality Mellors decides for an untraditional, and rather painful for Connie, anal intercourse.

Disputable as the appropriateness of his act may seem, Daleski manages to find a deserved excuse for and, moreover, a reasonable explanation of its presence for the deliverance of the main message of the novel. The scene discussed is, from his point of view, depicted in the novel as a “necessary purification”¹⁵⁸, an attempt to show that

¹⁵⁷Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (299)

¹⁵⁸Daleski, H.M. *The Forked Flame, a Study of D.H.Lawrence*. Faber and Faber: London. 1965 (305)

“nothing to do with the body is ‘low’ and ‘beastly’, that where there is love between a man and a woman, everything is permissible.”¹⁵⁹ Typically of Lawrence and in accordance with his use of natural imagery, the shames, the oldest, deepest shames need to be “burned in the most secret places”¹⁶⁰ out of Connie. Thus the final purification is achieved, “the sensual flame of the passion pressed through her bowels and breast, she really thought she was dying.”¹⁶¹ Yet, this is not a final death for Connie, it is only the process of killing the last traces of her social pretence and superficiality and it was for her “a poignant, marvellous death.”¹⁶² Exclusive as the two selves of Mellors may seem, the flame that heals and the fire that sears and consumes, Lawrence attempts to demonstrate here in practice his belief that “love between a man and a woman must be both ‘sensual’ and ‘tender’.”¹⁶³ Regarding Mellors’ decision to prove that it is his task “to preserve the wild life of the wood”¹⁶⁴, the unfamiliar territory with unexpected changes, unexplored nooks and lack of any rules whatever, the wood of almost Dantean character of a questionable moral quality, is actually perfectly impaired by the character of the intercourse which shocks Connie.

Certain doubt may be raised about the righteousness of Mellors’ aggression that seems to burn the shame out of Connie exclusively. Nevertheless, the experience is not one-sided, as, to use Daleski’s words “similar fear on his (i.e. Mellors’) part is responsible for the departure from the more usual form of intercourse.”¹⁶⁵ Just as Connie fears the final loss of her own identity, complete melting in her partner, Mellors at the same time experiences fear, in his case it is the fear of the total loss of manhood in him. Connie’s feeling of sharing her “ultimate nakedness with a man, another being”¹⁶⁶ seems to suggest finally the Lawrencean necessity of final separation that follows the enlivening intermingling of the opposite sexes. At the same time, the state of utter nakedness they can share, again points to the pre-fall condition of Adam and Eve, naked in the blissful happiness that has been already commented upon at one point.

¹⁵⁹ Daleski, H.M. *The Forked Flame, a Study of D.H.Lawrence*. Faber and Faber: London. 1965 (305)

¹⁶⁰ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (268)

¹⁶¹ *ibid.* 268

¹⁶² *ibid.* 267

¹⁶³ Daleski, H.M. *The Forked Flame, a Study of D.H.Lawrence*. Faber and Faber: London. 1965 (309)

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.* 306

¹⁶⁵ *ibid.* 309

¹⁶⁶ Lawrence, D.H. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Bantam Books: NY. 1983 (269)

7 Discovery of the Instinctive Self

The significance of the unusual type of intercourse, probably even a prohibited one at Lawrence's time, is even emphasized by the fact that among some pagan tribes it once used to represent an important part of the sacred rituals. The untypical experience was supposed to open a new perspective in the life of the initiate, it should have broadened his/her perspective on his/her self. Certain likeness in the lovers' intercourse with the practices belonging to the pagan rituals seems to indicate that this partially humiliating moment that almost verges on exorcizing was absolutely necessary for Connie not only to face her soul and rid it of the least trace of shame but, at the same time, to realize conscience is either a fear of society, or often of oneself. Mellors, here the representative of the natural principle, must make Connie reach her deepest and uttermost self, the dark soil of the primal darkness, the source of the underworld, unfamiliar powers. This space may resemble the territory of the dead but it is here, on the other hand, where the necessary renewal must take place. He in a way makes Connie realize the Lawrencean

"That I am I."

"That my soul is a dark forest."

"That my known self will never be more than a little clearing in the forest."

"That gods, strange gods, come forth from the forest into the clearing of my known self, and then go back."

"That I must have the courage to let them come and go."

"That I will never let mankind put anything over me, but that I will try always to recognize and submit to the gods in me and the gods in other men and women."¹⁶⁷

It is the very heart of the jungle of Connie's self, the unexpected impact of the dark body of the gipsy on Yvette's inexperienced self, it is the feeling of the burn-mark on

¹⁶⁷ Lawrence, D.H. *Studies in Classic American Literature*, Doubleday & Company, Inc: Garden City, NY. 1951 (26)

Matylda's hand when it touches Hadryan's forehead, it is the true Juliet, "this dark flow from her deep body to the sun"¹⁶⁸, it is the darkness that overwhelms Miss Mary when held tight in the embrace of Alfred, straining her till she almost loses consciousness. It is the power inside her, deeper than her familiar consciousness and will that she must come into contact with if the deepest sensuousness is to be experienced. Only after this crucial encounter with the darkest core of her body - both mental and physical in the state of equilibrium - can Connie start to live by the authority of her own nature, that is to take counsel in her true feelings and be in accord with her soul. She thus confirms Rousseau's conviction that „my soul and true feelings exist prior to the sophistication of civilisation“.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸ Lawrence, D.H. „The Sun“ in: *The Tales of D.H.Lawrence*. Martin Secker: London . 1934 (742)

¹⁶⁹ http://www.hku.hk/philodep/courses/ac/phil2027/jess_presentation.html (18.12.2005)

8 Nature Embraced by Society

That this acceptance of one's origins does not automatically mean complete return to the condition of the 'man primitif' and the main reasons for this fact has already been made clear. Nevertheless, that the newly born individual will have to face resistance in civil society must also be emphasised as a necessary logical consequence. To use Rousseau's analogy of societies currents, „the resistance that the authentic person must endure is that of moving against such a current.“¹⁷⁰ Connie's attraction alone to the 'other' already demanded a great amount of personal involvement and stamina enough at her side. That the process of reconciliation between her newly-gained own nature and her role in modern society will represent a task of much greater intensity does not probably need to be proved here any more just as this phase of Connie's life is not included in the novel's text either. However, Connie's victory in the battle with her fake self as reflected in her ability to cast off the mask put on her natural face by society is a sufficient evidence of her strength and determination. Connie, already a completed initiate at the end of the novel, offers enough hopes for the successful reaching of happiness. Nevertheless, the reader is only left with the wished-for relationship of Connie and Mellors holding „firm to the roots of their nature like those walking up a river grasp the roots of the bank in order to resist the current“¹⁷¹ and imagine their future life, hopefully of a fully-accepted couple, in mutual happiness.

¹⁷⁰ http://www.hku.hk/philodep/courses/ac/phil2027/jess_presentation.html (18.12.2005)

¹⁷¹ http://www.hku.hk/philodep/courses/ac/phil2027/jess_presentation.html (18.12.2005)

Resumé

Jako výchozí text k této bakalářské práci posloužil román *Milenec Lady Chatterleyové* D. H. Lawrence. Při rozboru konkrétních motivů v románu bylo použito také několika Lawrencových povídek a esejů, které měly dále potvrdit autorův trvalý zájem o daný okruh témat a jeho tendenci k jejich opakované analýze, jež se ve většině případů liší pouze danou situací a protagonisty. Předmětem práce se stal především motiv probuzení jedince k plnohodnotnému citovému životu a okolnosti, které Lawrence akcentuje při uskutečnění takové proměny, obzvláště pak se speciálním zaměřením na úlohu lesa a roli přírodních motivů v jeho díle.

Na začátku je poukázáno na výstavbu děje románu založené na polaritě, kontrastu jednotlivých lokalit, které jako by byly zosobněny ve dvou nejdůležitějších mužských postavách románu. Clifford, majitel panství Wragby, zastupuje pro Lawrence tak nenáviděný, chladný, mechanický přístup k životu a k partnerskému vztahu, který se dále projevuje také v jeho přístupu k tavershalským horníkům, pro něj pouze prostředkům k získání financí. Naproti tomu Mellors, hajný žijící v lese obklopující panství Wragby Hall, představuje živoucí element schopný čerpat energii z přírody, u něhož přirozený instinkt nebyl ještě nadobro zničen. Cliffordova mladá žena Connie, čím dál více strádající v prostředí, kde převládá rozum a kalkul nad smyslností tak poměrně záhy zjišťuje, že les obklopující Wragby Hall, místo přírodních přirozených sil, obrodné, zosobňující starou Anglii doby Robina Hooda, se jí nabízí jako kýžené útočiště.

Les pro nezasvěceného člověka (Connie) zpočátku představuje temné, neznámé teritorium, zosobňující cizí a neprozkoumané místo. Během postupného prozkoumávání tohoto prostoru však jarní pučící les nabídne Connie nutný azyl, inspirativní místo, kde je téměř vše možné, prostor ideální pro vznik nového života, obrodnou sílu. Rozkvétající les může tak být považován za paralelu rodící se lásky mezi Connie a hajným. Zároveň je zde však les místem, kde se odehrávají pohanské rituály, kde vládcem je stále bůh Pan, místem temné obrodné síly, o čemž svědčí množství falických symbolů použitých při popisu přírody a obřadné zdobení genitálií květinami. Hrdinčiny výpravy do zeleného lesa a její

sbližování s hajným připomínají iniciační rituál, zasvěcená žena jako by se probouzela z nehybnosti svého stereotypního živoření k plnohodnotnému prožívání v naplněném partnerském vztahu poskytujícím dostatek prostoru pro smyslové a fyzické prožitky způsobené mnohdy i náhodným a letným dotekem.

Z tohoto důvodu je také část práce věnována zkoumání významu doteku, ne vždy nutně sexuálního styku jako takového, ale jakéhokoli fyzického kontaktu pro již zmíněné "znovuobživnutí" jedince v povídkách *You Touched Me*, *The Blind Man*, *The Daughters of the Vicar*, *Virgin and the Gipsy*, *The Sun*. Ve všech těchto textech můžeme sledovat identický moment jakéhosi „probuzení“ spící dívky k plnohodnotnému životu naplněnému smyslovými a fyzickými prožitky způsobeného mnohdy i náhodným a letným dotekem. Jde nejen o uvědomění si toho druhého, ale také o objevení vlastního podvědomí, zdroje obrodné a vitální síly v člověku. Následně také autorka této práce považovala za užitečné poukázat na vliv Herakleitovy myšlenky o neustálém pohybu a fluktuaci jako nutnosti pro život, již Lawrence aplikoval především na svou ‚filozofii‘ partnerských vztahů. Pro popis nejintimnějších momentů tak Lawrence nejčastěji používá obrazů činnosti přírodních elementů, jako pohybu mořských vln, proudění vody, sálání plamenů apod.

Text se dále soustřeďuje na popis jisté analogie mezi charakterem hajného a procesy probíhajícími v jarním lese. Mellors žijící téměř v naprosté izolaci lesa obklopující sídlo Wragby může místy připomínat postavu ‚vznešeného divocha‘, jedince neposkvrněného stykem s civilizací žijícího pouze dle zákonů přírody. Jeho hořká zkušenost z armády a frustrující zážitky z předchozích partnerských vztahů, které filtruje v mnohých ze svých monologů na téma: civilizace drtící přirozeného jedince, spíše poukazují na rozervaného romantického hrdinu nespokojeného se svým osudem. I přes mnohé pastorální a idilické prvky románu, se tak v textu jako dominantní projevuje především romantická tendence, konkrétně pak myšlenky J.J. Rousseaua o vztahu jedince k přírodě. Rousseauova představa nutnosti prolnutí přirozenosti člověka s civilizačním vlivem je tak potvrzena ve vývoji vztahu mezi dvěma milenci. Po dosažení kýžené oázy v azylu zeleného lesa jsou tak oba konfrontováni s nutností resocializace, odhalení své lásky před společností s nadějí na budoucí akceptování jejich pro danou společnost nerovného svazku.

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