

## **Lady Chatterley's Lover**

*By drs. J.A.Goris*

Lawrence wrote *Lady Chatterley's Lover* while he was in Italy, under the umbrella pines of an Italian wood where he liked to sit writing. It is his last novel. He had put himself as far as possible 'outside the made world' in order to deliver his last judgement upon it, and yet, writing his condemnation of industrial society in the peace of his Tuscan refuge, he was also closing a circle. The story is among the simplest that Lawrence devised: Constance Chatterley, the frustrated wife of an aristocratic mine owner who has been wounded in the war and left paralysed and impotent, is drawn to his gamekeeper, the misanthropic son of a miner, becomes pregnant by him, and hopes at the end of the book to be able to divorce her husband and leave her class for a life with the other man. Throughout his career Lawrence had been concerned with the general theme of the book: the fulfillment of individuality in a relationship - or its violation. Its fulfillment, in Lawrence's works, often involves the crossing of class and cultural lines, whereas absence of fulfillment is often the result of resisting this. The familiar construction, then, is of a woman in a relatively superior social situation who is drawn to a man of lower social rank, or a foreigner; and the choice is between resisting her impulse or yielding to it. The two possibilities are embodied respectively in the situation into which Lawrence himself was born, and in the situation into which he married. Inevitably, it became a favourite situation in his fiction.

To the man in the street *Lady Chatterley's Lover* still arouses the sniggers that surrounded it in 1960 when its publishers were taken to court on a charge of obscenity. The novel made D.H.Lawrence a household name for the wrong reasons. He became identified with 'free love', 'permissiveness', and 'four-letter words', trends in the 1960s which might well have appalled the morally serious Lawrence; indeed, he was against pornography himself and saw it as an unpardonable attempt to insult sex and the human spirit, which even he would censor rigorously. In his essay 'À Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover'<sup>1</sup> he writes: 'I want men and women to be able to think sex, fully, completely, honestly, and cleanly ... Far be it from me to suggest that all women should go running after gamekeepers for lovers. Far be it from me to suggest that they should be running after anybody.' He explains that there has been so much sexual action in the past, without a corresponding thought; people 'do it because they think it is expected of them' reducing the sexual act to 'a weary repetition over and over'. After centuries of such 'acting up', Lawrence says, it is now our business 'to realize sex'. By this he

means that the mind, being left behind, unevolved, has to catch up; not only in sex, but also in all physical acts, as his essay makes clear<sup>1</sup>:

Now we have to catch up, and make a balance between the consciousness of the body's sensations and experiences, and these sensations and experiences themselves. Balance up the consciousness of the act, and the act itself. Get the two in harmony. It means having a proper reverence for sex, and a proper awe of the body's strange experience. It means being able to use the so-called obscene words, because these are a natural part of the mind's consciousness of the body. Obscenity only comes in when the mind despises and fears the body, and the body hates and resists the mind.

As a penalty for his new frame he became wrongly linked with sexual emancipation and often trivialized by people who did not understand his work. Interpretations varied, and there were also positive reactions. Contemporary novelist Bernard Shaw wrote of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*: 'Lady Chatterley' should be on the shelves of every college for budding girls. They should be forced to read it on pain of being refused a marriage licence'<sup>2</sup>. The story does not say what exactly Shaw had in mind, but it is true that certain fragments read like a present-day sex education lesson.

There are three versions of the novel. *The First Lady Chatterley*, as William Heinemann Ltd named it when it was published for the first time in England in 1972, is the shortest; Lawrence wrote it between October 1926 and March 1927. His next version, completed in the summer of 1927, is much longer. It is now known as *John Thomas and Lady Jane*. These are both earlier versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, and all three versions were first printed abroad, the first one appearing in America in 1944, the second in an Italian translation in 1954. No version was legally available in Britain before 1960, when the uncut Florence edition of 1928 was re-published after the verdict of the 'Lady Chatterley' trial had come out. The three versions are cast in different ways, which reflects the self-questioning attitude with which Lawrence approached his subject. He had always been an avid reviser of his own work and he clearly intended *Lady Chatterley's Lover* to be both satisfactory in form and explicit in meaning. The central theme in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is that of loyalty in human relationships in an industrial England that has blotted out the agricultural, and in which nature and industry exist side by side in an unharmonious whole. The novel was published in

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<sup>1</sup> See endnote xix

<sup>2</sup> See endnote xiv, p.39

1928, the year in which Thomas Hardy died. As we have seen, Lawrence found Hardy a most useful teacher. Michael Squires explains in his introduction how one of the major differences between Lawrence's and Hardy's characters lies in their response to their society.<sup>ii</sup> Like Lawrence, Hardy was fascinated by characters who become enmeshed in a destiny they cannot control, are ensnared by social convention and let guilt sap their energy. In his *Study of Thomas Hardy* Lawrence wrote that Hardy's 'passionate, individual, willful' characters find conventional security a walled prison and die, either from lack of strength to bear their isolation or from their community's revenge on them. But whereas Hardy's characters usually acquiesce, yield, submit or succumb, Lawrence's rarely do: they struggle.

'Ours is essentially a tragic age', the novel begins (p.5). The war had done a lot of harm; people had to 'scramble over the obstacles' and live, 'no matter how many skies have fallen'. Modern life has brought alienation and hostility between people and industrial ugliness to their surroundings, reminding us of the soulless atmosphere of *The Waste Land*. There is Wragby Hall and its upper class occupants, separated from the industrial mining village of Tevershall by Wragby Wood. At the beginning of the story Constance Chatterley belongs to the first. She married Clifford Chatterley in 1917, when after a month he had to return to Flanders to fight. He came back from the war as an invalid, the lower half of his body paralysed forever. In 1920 the young couple returned to Wragby Hall, the family 'seat'. After the death of his father Clifford became a baronet, Sir Clifford, representing the propertied class, which made his wife Lady Chatterley. She is 'a ruddy, country-looking girl' (p.6), looking as if she had just come from her native village, but this is not so at all. She and her sister belong to the new group of privileged emancipated women following on from the 1890s movement of emancipation. They were brought up among artists and cultured socialists, and had had what might be called 'an aesthetically unconventional upbringing'. They had been in Paris, Florence, Rome for art, and in the other direction, to The Hague and Berlin to great socialist conventions. At a young age the sisters had studied music at Dresden, living freely and on equal terms among students, where they 'were just as good as men themselves: only better, because they were women' (p.6). As women of the world they are sexually experienced in the 'modern' way. Their love affairs are presented as unwished for but inevitable. In the sense of doing their male friends a favour they had 'given the gift of themselves' to the youth with whom they had had the most intimate and subtle argument. Sex is considered as degrading and basically something for men, who 'insisted on the sex thing like dogs' (p.7). For women sex is at best a tool which gives her power over her husband, as long as she makes sure that she does not really become involved: 'she had only to hold herself

back, in the sexual intercourse' (p.7). A relationship that is worthwhile involves being verbally near; 'talking to one another' (p.8) as we have seen in Paul and Miriam of *Sons and Lovers*. There is a parallel with the old Victorian morals, 'women had always known there was something better, something higher' (p.7): the beautiful pure freedom of a woman, an unassailable strength of being above men and their sexuality.

Physical intimacy is completely absent between Connie and her husband. They are portrayed as two people who communicate on an intellectual level. He is paralysed and sexually impotent, causing the marriage to be sterile. Clifford is not a sensuous being. Unlike Connie he was a virgin when they married, and during their brief honeymoon the sex part did not mean much to him. In the eyes of his era he is lifted to the pedestal of women: he is 'beyond sex and a man's 'satisfaction' (p.12), and their marital bond is of a higher, spiritual level. His needs are elsewhere: 'A man needed support and comfort. A man needed to have an anchor in the safe world. A man needed a wife.' Clifford and Connie are dedicated to each other, 'they were so close, he and she, apart from that', but in a rather aloof way, which Lawrence calls 'modern'; an undesirable qualification in his scheme. As we will see in the last part of the novel, Lawrence has come to attach great value to 'tenderness' between partners. There is no tenderness between the spouses. Connie feels protective, but not tender. She tries to put his life together; her husband is 'a hurt thing', who needs her more than anyone. His situation fills her with a sense of commitment, yet at the same time it emotionally exhausts her. She gets nothing in return, for Clifford is not tender either. He is a crippled person, not only physically, but also emotionally. His sense of being involved in life is damaged, something in him has died. He has 'little connection with people' (p.15) and leans heavily on his wife as his only link to life. Connie has the comfort of being 'so much more mistress of herself in that outer world of chaos, than he was master of himself'; Clifford is in every conceivable respect completely dependent on his wife (p.10). It reminds us of the way Gerald depends on Gudrun after his father died, considering his life to be in her hands. Gudrun feels this to be an intolerable burden and cannot wait to get rid of him. In Clifford's case, his physical handicap adds considerably to the appeal to Connie's compassion.

The couple come to be more and more isolated, as on a desert island. To begin with, there is a wide gap of hostile class differences between Wragby Hall and Tevershall village. The Tevershall inhabitants are mainly colliers, a different class, and in the scarce contacts there is so much reserve, unease and artificialness that the gulf is felt as 'impassable'. Clifford's handicap raises sympathy, but only in the abstract; 'in the flesh, it was - You leave me alone! - on either side' (p.14 ff.). He himself has become extremely shy and self-conscious

since he was lamed, more and more avoiding contact with people other than his personal servants. He is such a shattered person that he appears to be empty at the core, 'perhaps there was nothing to get at, ultimately: just a negation of human contact' (p.16), needing Connie to assure him that he still exists. Connie vegetates like a plant in the mansion with all its endless rooms that nobody uses, in 'the Midlands routine, the mechanical cleanliness and mechanical order' (p.17). Devoid of human contacts she loses herself in absorption in her husband and his need of her, and in helping him with his work, the composition and writing of stories which, however, is merely a means to an end. In the relationship we recognize Lawrence's concept of duality: it gives intimacy in their minds, but bodily they are non-existent to one another, a situation that inevitably leads to a breakdown. The partners themselves represent dualism, too, Clifford being the intellectual, the spiritual and Connie gradually turning away from the spiritual to the physical, the sensual. Ultimately it is the instinct that knows best and refuses to go on in denial. Connie becomes pale and thin and finally starts to suffer from severe bouts of depression. In his fear of losing her Clifford conjures up a mental solution by suggesting that she might take on a lover and have a child, which in the end makes the denial worse: 'Logic might be unanswerable, because it was so absolutely wrong.' (p.45)

On the whole Clifford is captivated by his burning desire to have success with his work, his passion 'for making a display' (p.51). He hopes to find a promoter in Michaelis, who has had temporary success as a playwright with the smart London set and made a fortune in America, but was cast out again and at a low point in his career. Drowned in 'fathomless disillusion' he is happy with Clifford's invitation to Wragby Hall. (p.23). It is mainly because of his useful connections that Clifford invites him, as a tool to recognition and success (p.21). To Connie he represents a more exciting, alien world, just as Lydia did to Tom, but unlike Tom she is not looking for a partner. She wants to fill the gap of her own restlessness, of her life in a void. The three of them get caught in a dreary, lifeless triangle in which none of them gets what he or she wants. Being a disillusioned outcast himself, Michaelis does not bring any luck. He has been kicked so much that he cannot get rid of his 'tail-between-the-legs' look; he consists of 'layers of disillusion' from which nothing new is to be expected. He persists in the 'desperate bravery of his rat-like existence'; he knows he has been asked down to Wragby to be made use of, and is willing to prostitute himself for attention from the better classes. In her own isolation Connie recognizes the 'lonely bird' in him; 'the infant crying in the night was crying out of his breast to her, in a way that affected her very womb' (p.25). There is no warmth or involvement in their love affair; emotional commitment is not what either of them wants. Michaelis wants to remain an outsider to life and even though he proposes a marriage

of convenience, deep-down he keeps clear of Connie: 'his isolation was a necessity to him' (p.28). Connie wants to see her longing for sexual contact fulfilled, at the same time keep her sterile marriage to Clifford intact: but ultimately she cannot have it both ways, no more than it is possible to be dead and alive at the same time.

Unlike in his previous works, Lawrence is very explicit about sexual matters in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Even though his explicit language is one of the reasons why the book was forbidden at the time, his description of how the woman can reach her orgasm 'by her own activity' (p.29) is, in its vulgarity, a portrayal of 'sex as a sensation' rather than a shared intimacy. Lawrence himself does not believe in 'the modern sex activity', the effect of which he sees as merely disintegrative. In her affair with Michaelis Connie has shed old values and adopted 'the standard of the young: what there was in the moment, was everything' (p.17). Once aware of the fact that 'she runs the show' and he is being 'used' as a tool for sexual satisfaction, Michaelis deals the final blow to their union, which essentially is no more than a 'house of cards' (p.54). However, having to do without the sexual thrill means 'the end of living' to Connie. She finds herself condemned to a life at Wragby Hall, a life of nothingness with her physically, emotionally and spiritually empty husband, in the squalor of class-divided, industrialized England, symbolized as a home that is lost to its occupants (p.62):

'Home!' It was a warm word to use for that great weary warren. But then it was a word that had had its day. It was, somehow, cancelled. All the great words, it seemed to Connie, were cancelled for her generation: love, joy, happiness, home, mother, father, husband, all these great dynamic words were half-dead now, and dying from day to day.

Since her degrading experience with Michaelis she has decided she wants nothing: 'nothing more than what she'd got'. But it is a choice out of impotence, not a fresh attempt at renewal; she does not succeed in making more of her marriage than what it is, there is no growth or inspiration. The world around her conveys a sense of deadness, of mechanical living. At the horizon she sees no rainbow, but masses of 'grey-black, distorted' colliers, 'incarnate ugliness, and yet alive', all of this even worse than what Lawrence describes in the chapter 'Coal-Dust' in *Women in Love*. It scares Connie; she is 'absolutely afraid' (p.159). There is Clifford with his intellectual ambitions, in the habit of being in the same house with her, but nothing more. There are Clifford's friends, 'these highly-mental gentlemen' who think and talk a lot about politics and the industrial ideal, revealing their minds in sociological talk, but it does occur to Connie that these minds are rather cold and look upon love and sex as

commodities to be used. It is not at all like 'men kissing you and touching you with their bodies' (p.35), which, as Connie now remembers, only the German boy had done ten years ago. At the time she was scornful at his 'clumsy sensuality'; now she realizes that 'healthy, human sensuality that warms the blood and freshens the whole being' is something precious that has gone out of men (p.71), which reflects Lawrence's own point of view. It seems that he was growing disillusioned with the idea of sex as a salvation at the end of his life. It has died, like the German boy. 'Love, sex, all that sort of stuff, just water-ices. Lick it up and forget it' (p.64). Harmony and tenderness between the sexes is inconceivable, with on one side the fashionable women who keep their bodies bright, 'like delicate porcelain, by external attention', but with no inner substance, and on the other men with 'their pathetic, two-seconds spasms', like Michaelis (p.71). Industrial civilization offers 'death in life', a life of increasing wealth, not of rewarding fulfilment. It brings to mind Gudrun's remark in the opening pages of *Women in Love*: 'everything withers in the bud'. And this is how Connie looks, at twenty-seven: old, with no gleam and sparkle in the flesh, getting thinner and crumpled. She is growing old before she has ever really lived; in the end so worn out by 'modern life' that she can bear the burden of herself no more, 'to be had for the taking', which makes the choice of 'lowering herself' understandable and somehow more legitimate.

As early as in his first novel *The White Peacock* Lawrence introduced Annable, the gamekeeper, who like Mellors rejects modern civilized society as insane. In her aversion of the class she belongs to Connie finds a soul mate in him: they are both set apart from their backgrounds. Connie is a lady with property and education, daughter of the well-to-do intelligentsia, but her husband belongs to the aristocracy, and is more upper class than his wife. She has come to despise the class that is hers by marriage, and sees them as sterile sycophants, parasites who are deep down afraid of the 'vast hordes of the middle and lower classes', prostituting themselves for the bitch goddess of Success mainly to raise them to a higher level. Together in their feelings of loneliness, Connie and Mellors are separated by their respective statuses. Mellors is the son of a collier, a gamekeeper in Sir Clifford's service, yet different from the masses. Scott Sanders explains in his study about Eros and Civilization in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* how the portrayal of Mellors has evolved in the three different versions of the novel<sup>3</sup>. In the first version, *The First Lady Chatterley*, the gulf between Connie and her lover yawns widest. Parkin, as the gamekeeper is called, seems a purely physical creature. In Connie's eyes he represents the missing physical half of Clifford, but he lacks the

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<sup>3</sup> See endnote xiv, p.177/181

educated consciousness which she values in a man. The class barrier becomes more rather than less obvious as the novel unfolds. In the second version, *John Thomas and Lady Jane*, the gamekeeper Parkin is higher on the social scale, not the son of a miner but of a professional cricketer, and is thus marked out by birth as well as temperament from the tribes of the miners. He does not resent the upper classes as bitterly as does the first Parkins. Yet there are the differences of power, education and wealth that separate them, which Connie brushes aside in an unconvincing way. For the final version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* Parkin is transformed into Mellors, who has all the credentials of a gentleman except genteel birth. An officer in the army, educated, travelled, Mellors is very much a man of the world. He uses his dialect - which sounds awfully false, not like any of Lawrence's genuine dialect at all - mainly as a shield, since in the military he had grown accustomed to upper-class speech together with upper-class manners. Lawrence thus portrays his return to the working classes as willed and artificial, and for that reason only temporary. Feeling resentment to society, Mellors has retreated into the woods, with distaste for both the materialistic, narrow-minded working class and the parasitic, sterile propertied class.

The theme of passion overlapping classes, modelled on Lawrence's childhood situation, is found in several of his works. As early as in his first novel *The White Peacock* there is the example of Lettie and George, the lady of higher rank feeling drawn to a farmer's son. Passion and desire do not stop at class barriers, as Mellors and Connie show us in Wragby wood. Set between the lifeless Wragby mansion and the squalid mining village, its unspoilt nature is the breeding place of young life and romance. Whereas Clifford is a man of words and abstract relations Oliver Mellors is the symbol of sensuousness and the physical, the natural man who is at one with nature and at home in his hut in the woods where he looks after the pheasants and hens. In his essay titled 'Lady Chatterley's Lover: The Deed of Life'<sup>iii</sup> Julian Moynahan explains how Connie's trip into Wragby Wood is a journey from death into life. Wragby is dominated by abstract discussions, and as Lawrence remarks in a passage of 'Apropos of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*', words are insufficient to establish that 'vivid and nourishing relation to the cosmos and the universe' which is man's only hope of sustaining himself fulfilled in the midst of life. In her love relationship with Mellors, particularly in their sexual encounters Connie experiences a renewal of her life. As Moynahan's essay points out, it would be foolish to deny that from another perspective Constance Chatterley is merely a bored society woman of rather low moral character, who is swept forward into dubious fulfilment in spite of herself. From a moral point of view she has many of the evils of a common adulteress, who makes light of her commitment in marriage. However, one can also

feel sympathy for the choice she makes. Her staying with Clifford merely out of a sense of duty and pity would in the end be more degrading to both of them than ending the marriage.

Lawrence portrays Connie's being restored to the 'life of the body' in the description of her 'sudden helpless orgasm' (p.133), which is quite different from what she used to bring about 'with her own activity'. Pregnancy as conceived in such an intimacy with a lover, 'having a child to a man whom one's bowels yearned towards', (p.135) is worlds apart from Clifford's dry conversation about the need for an heir to Wragby, which in comparison is 'ordinary', merely 'having a child to oneself'. It brings to life Connie's vitally female dimension: 'it made her feel she was very different from her old self, and as if she was sinking deep, deep to the centre of all womanhood, and the sleep of creation' (p.135). In the portrayal of the love affair between Connie and the gamekeeper there is much of Lawrence's own experience with Frieda, his wife. In her account of the women in Lawrence's life <sup>4</sup> Elaine Feinstein points out that *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is in several ways Lawrence's sexual autobiography, chiefly because it is told through the sensibility of Constance Chatterley, and not only because Mellors resembles Lawrence in being a miner's son who is well educated and assured. The portrait of Connie, Feinstein says, is unmistakably based on Lawrence's wife Frieda; she resembles Frieda in their early days. The many scenes of nakedness illustrate the author's elation at having found intimacy with a sensuous woman, and symbolize his concept of creation in 'the living universe' as opposed to industrial deadness and lifeless aristocracy. Seen in this light Lawrence's descriptions of what goes on between two lovers in sexual intimacy are honest and sincere, even though in the eyes of the reader his elaborations tend to go over the top. We do not really need to know every single detail about the naked couple adorning each other with forget-me-nots or making their private parts actors in a play.

The dialogues serve to convey Lawrence's own experience and ideas to the reader rather than present the characters' development convincingly. Mellors' story about his first love affair with the spiritual schoolmaster's daughter at Ollerton reminds us of Paul Morel and Miriam, when 'the serpent in the grass was sex' (p.200). His subsequent talk about his sorry love life and sexual experiences reads like an interview in the wrong context. Any sensible lover would not normally draw up a list of all kinds of reprehensible female orgasms in front of his girlfriend. Quite out of character Connie plays the naive schoolgirl, happy to be singled out for such intimations and explanations of four-letter words (p.200/4). In a letter of 1928 Lawrence explains his use of language in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* to Lady Ottoline Morell <sup>iv</sup>:

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<sup>4</sup> See endnote xvii, p.222/3

'you mustn't think that I advocate perpetual sex. Far from it. Nothing nauseates me more than promiscuous sex in and out of season. But I want, with *Lady C.*, to make an *adjustment in consciousness* to the basic physical realities.' He goes on to explain that the use of four-letter words can be seen as an asset, chiefly known to the working class, 'the common people': 'I realise that one of the reasons why the common people often keep - or kept - the good *natural glow* of life, just warm life, longer than educated people, was because it was still possible for them to say fuck! or shit without either a shudder or a sensation.' This is, of course, debatable; not many people will think Lawrence has really got this point right. But it does indicate the author's sincerity. In his attempts to convey the unsentimental nature of sex Lawrence becomes over-dramatic (p.247): 'Shame, which is fear: the deep organic shame, the old, old physical fear which crouches in the bodily roots of us' ... 'it was roused up and routed by the phallic hunt of the man' ... 'she had come to the real bedrock of her nature, and was essentially shameless.' His Lawrencean intentness is given a more illustrative, 'Scotch and lewd' interpretation by Connie's father, Sir Malcolm, a 'burly Scottish knight' during his visit to the pub with his soon to be son-in-law (p.283). We are not surprised at his consenting attitude, for as early as the first stages of the novel it is clear he does not believe in Clifford. He has a black and white view of his daughter's marriage, seeing her predicament as a '*demi-vierge*' as the main cause of her wasting away (p.17). His philosophy of life is 'modern' and can largely be put in terms of income and flimsiness: 'Emotions change. You may like one man this year and another next. But Wragby still stands' (p.273).

In between the characters' amorous vicissitudes the reader gets ample accounts of Lawrence's disapproval of modern society with its materialism and hunt for success, the squalor of industrialism which blots out the countryside, the meaningless life in European cities, the Bolsheviks, the jazz generation, the impudence of class and the perversity of industrial leaders. 'He uses the novel as a vehicle for ideas' says Philip Hobsbaum,<sup>5</sup> and this over-affects his characterizations. The portrayal of Clifford's reaction to Connie's leaving him lacks empathy; one cannot help feeling that the man does not get the credit he deserves. As we have seen in *The White Peacock* Lawrence loathes the moneyed classes, an antipathy no doubt aggravated by his own experiences in wartime England. But whether one likes Clifford and the ideas he stands for or not, the reader does not want to see him ridiculed. After all, the man is doomed to lead the life of a cripple as a result of fighting for his country in a war, not as a result of partaking in some upper class hunting game. Apart from that, he has always

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<sup>5</sup> See endnote iii, p.86

been civil to his wife and understanding of her situation. Good or bad, by taking up his writing activities and his interest in the mines he has found a goal in life that many people in his situation could not have attained. His 'imbecile obstinacy' (p.296) at consenting in a divorce is the sad echo of the shattering of the only dream he has dared to entertain: that of raising an heir to Wragby, which is more to him than securing his name and future status. It would also have meant having a young life around him, even though this could never be biologically his own.

Clifford Chatterley is not, of course, a portrait of Lawrence, as Elaine Feinstein points out in her study <sup>6</sup>, but he represents an old and dying class whose impotence is for Lawrence symbolic of all that was wrong with England after the war. However, as the study makes clear his situation does reflect Lawrence's own at the time of writing; by 1928 he was too ill to make love to Frieda, and he guessed she was betraying him with another man. He was afraid to end up like Sir Clifford in his illness, 'letting go his manhood' (p.291), completely depending on Mrs Bolton, the nurse who had taken over his daily care from Connie, and has become like a mother to him. Now that Clifford's world is shattered, his manhood dead, she transforms into a Magna Mater, so ominously prominent in both Lawrence's life and his novels. She is responsible not only for his personal care, but works her way into his emotions, as the therapeutic weeping session suggests. Clifford never recovers from his 'male hysteria', his form of insanity: it has reduced him to a perverse child-man at the mercy of Mrs Bolton's 'Madonna worship'.

Lawrence expresses his ultimate fear of the future, a fear that pervades the novel, by putting the hysterical idiot, the 'real business man' in a position of power to run the world. Even though he thinks such a world unfit for the future generation, he continues to believe in marriage. Not the marriage of Connie's sister, which is burdened by cold sexuality; not the marriage of Sir Malcolm with its Scottish 'clumsiness' and not the sterile marriage of the crippled Clifford. Such marriages lack tenderness and are doomed to end in a void, producing no breeding ground for new life and a new generation. Elaine Feinstein explains:

""Tenderness" was an early title of the novel, and Lawrence was much preoccupied both by what this could mean, and what it should not.' Irrespective of class barriers, the private world of male and female can be made whole by a mingling of sensuality and tenderness, is Lawrence's message in the union of Lady Constance Chatterley with the gamekeeper Oliver Mellors. In spite of their trespassing on forbidden grounds they are the moral winners of the

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<sup>6</sup> See endnote xvii

novel; their happiness has overcome the squalor of the waste land that surrounds them and, like nature has done ever since eternity, they can look forward to a new life in spring: 'a little droopingly, but with a hopeful heart -' (p.302)

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<sup>i</sup> D.H.Lawrence: 'À Propos of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*' and Other Essays. (Penguin Books, 1967) p.89 + 90

<sup>ii</sup> D.H.Lawrence: *Lady Chatterley's Lover.* (Penguin Books, 2000) Edited with an introduction and notes by Michael Squires p. xx

<sup>iii</sup> D.H.Lawrence: *A Collection of Critical Essays /Edited by Mark Spilka.* (Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1963) p.84

<sup>iv</sup> *The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence: Volume Two.* Edited with an introduction by Harry T. Moore (William Heinemann Ltd, 1962) p.1111