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**Unconventional Character Relationships in D. H.
Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*: A Feminist-Psychoanalytic
Perspective**

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my beloved parents who are always there with continuing support, morally and financially, my sisters **Soria** and **Leila**, my brothers and my Fiancé **Lotfi** for his love, support and kindness.

My special gratitude goes to all my family members and my dear friends; who always motivate and love me. All in all, it is addressed to everyone who supported me to accomplish this research.

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Abstract

This dissertation is an investigation into Unconventional Character relationships in D.H.Lawrence's *Sons and lovers: A Feminist-Psychoanalytic Perspective*. In the novel, one may detect a sense of unconventionality due to Lawrence's obscured contrast perceived between what we are told about the characters and the way we see them behaving towards each other. Thus, the controversial issue that this dissertation seeks to answer is how a possessive mother could cause a psychic tension for her son and leads him to turn out into hopeless and futile relations with other women in his life, and to what extent these relations are unconventional. In order to answer the previous question, this dissertation implements a qualitative method of investigation, which is descriptive, analytical and open to phenomenological studies in which it will have recourse to theories and insights from literary criticism such as Freud's psychoanalytical theory of Oedipus Complex and the Feminist approach. The interdisciplinary nature of this research aims to study man's love relationship with women and explores the role of each woman in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, and find out the unconventionality in these relationships. The major findings of this research can be summarized as follows: in *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence shows the effect of psychology and one's own emotional and spiritual struggles later in his life, and views that each woman in Lawrence's life provided him with a specific touch of her own and enhanced his contribution to the fictional world.

Keywords: D. H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers*, unconventionality, Modernism, Oedipus Complex, feminism, Sigmund Freud, psychology, psychoanalysis.

ملخص

هذه المذكرة هي عبارة عن تحليل لمفهوم علاقات الشخصية الغير تقليدية في رواية د.ه. لورانس " أبناء وعشاق " من المنظور النسوي والتحليل النفسي. في الرواية يمكن للمرء أن يشعر بنوع من الغير تقليدية وذلك من خلال مقارنة لورانس الغامضة حول ماذا أخبرنا عن الشخصيات وطريقة رؤيتنا لتصرفاتهم نحو بعضهم البعض. بالتالي فإن المسألة المثيرة للجدل التي تسعى هذه المذكرة للإجابة عنها هي كيف بإمكان أم متسلطة أن تسبب توتر نفسي لابنها وتؤدي به الي اللجوء الي علاقات عقيمة وميؤوس منها مع نساء أخريات في حياته، والى أي مدى يمكن اعتبار هذه العلاقات غير تقليدية. للإجابة على السؤال السابق، هذه المذكرة تطبق طريقة البحث النوعي، الذي هو وصفي تحليلي ومفتوح على ظواهر هذه الدراسات حيث سيتم الاستعانة بنظريات ومعارف من النقد الأدبي منها نظرية فرويد للتحليل النفسي فيما يخص عقدة أوديب ومنهج النسوية. طبيعة تنوع حفل الدراسة في هذا البحث تهدف الى دراسة علاقة الحب بالنسبة للرجل مع النساء واستكشاف دور كل امرأة في رواية " أبناء وعشاق " للورانس، وكشف مدى الغير تقليدية في هذه العلاقات. النتائج الرئيسية لهذا البحث يمكن تلخيصها على النحو التالي: في رواية "أبناء وعشاق"، يظهر لورانس تأثير علم النفس والصراعات العاطفية والروحية على الفرد فيما بعد في حياته، ومن الملاحظ أنّ كلّ امرأة في حياة لورانس زوّدتته بلمستها الخاصة التي حسّنت من مساهمته في عالم الخيال.

الكلمات المفتاحية: د.ه. لورانس، أبناء وعشاق، الغير تقليدية، الحداثة، عقدة أوديب، النظرية النسوية، سيجموند فرويد، علم النفس، التحليل النفسي.

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General Introduction

After the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, the Victorian Age marked its end in the world that reflects the pressure of social, religious, economic and intellectual issues and brought up new ideologies and concepts in many fields such as philosophy, physics, biology, especially psychology. Dettmar and Damrosh believe in their book *Masters of British Literature* that if one generalizes things about the Victorians, he will arrive to a kind of contradiction because they were materialistic but very religious, they have a self-esteem but are insecure, they dedicated themselves to human reforms (590). This in turn, marked the emergence of the so-called “modernism”.

The meaning of the term “modern” has differed with the span of time, but it is frequently applied especially to literature written during the World War I in 1914. In Britain, it started in the late of 19th century and early decade of 20th century as the British Empire began to collapse, and where challenging and rebellious ideas from many thinkers like Sigmund Freud and Friedrich Nietzsche challenged many traditional beliefs about the world and human nature to investigate the role of the unconscious in human personality, while they reduced the individuality of the human being to an instinct driven by sex. It was characterized by a systematic lack of power and loss of faith, breaking with social norms by searching for a meaningful ground without God and rejecting literary norms of traditional novels; as Rubbins Ruth argues that the Victorians were the first who confronted with modernity and they were its basis (397). This means that modernism is not a sudden break but a transition and continuity of the past.

In literature, many changes took place in the subject matter, form and style of a given piece of literature focusing on everything that is unconventional even the most basic part of a given novel such as the character which is a prominent element in the story, without it any work of literature would be senseless or serve a purpose; it can be defined as a person, animal

or figure represented in a literary work that tends to convey a message. It has many types that exist in literature each with its own development and function. The development of a character refers to how it progresses in complexity; for instance, realists' stature was largely about moral character and virtuosity, i.e. the stature was based on moral, aesthetic and existential values while the goal is based on judgments of the purpose of life; however, in modernism the character becomes more and more unconventional, alcoholic, murderer and possessive; his stature is not interpreted by moral judgments about his doings, i.e. the stature is less about moral character and more about creativity and fulfillment. Thus, the shifting rootless life of the artist, his separation from the community, the resistance towards materialism and industrialization of the Victorian society all lead to the modern unconventionality of the character's lifestyle.

D.H. Lawrence is one of the representative figures of the modernist era; he came from a hardscrabble, working-class upbringing that made a strong impression on him, and he later wrote extensively about the experience of growing up in a poor mining town. He used a type of unconventionality in his writings, especially in his novel *Sons and Lovers*, in which he carried out many changes in the novel's form and his originality resides in his characterization in order to convey the full image of the society where the characters live and act.

In *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence frequently breaks away from conventions in order to give us a clear image about the protagonist's thoughts and feelings. The controversial issue is how a possessive mother could cause a psychic tension for her son and leads him to turn out into hopeless and futile relations with other women in his life and to what extent are character relationships in D.H. Lawrence's *sons and Lovers* unconventional. Thus, Lawrence's obscured contrast perceived between what we are told about the characters and their

relationships and how we see them behaving towards each other brings us a sense of unconventionality.

Referring to his class-conscious writings, Lawrence developed a kind of hatefulness toward modern civilization and to what it stood for materialism, repression and divorce from nature. Hence, the central idea of Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* is the shame felt by the modern man that paralyzes his impulses and as a solution is to be ascribed to women 'mothers, wives or lovers' who tend to bring about the dissociation between mind and bodies and should therefore be held subordinate; thus, this could bring up the unconventionality that is presented in his novel *Sons and Lovers*.

All along his life, Lawrence received many critics some are positive others are negative in terms of his writings. Rubbins Ruth says that Lawrence like many writer of his generation uses the realist concept of social cause and its social consequence (400). This means that both social causes and consequences are crucially important in seeing the character while the reason of choosing his characters is implied in the different conceptions of the effects of time.

F. R. Leavis champions Lawrence's novels; he affirms that *Sons and Lovers* is a direct treatment of personal problems in a coal mining milieu that suffers from class distinction issues (19-20). That is to say, with a great focus on the autobiographical background, Leavis believes that the concept of class-distinction enters as a major element into Lawrence's themes because he registers class-feeling and emotions as facts that have a major part in human life. Hence, the acute emotional disorder disturbed his personal relationships, while he uses his writings as a creative art to show his intelligence. and the play of his intelligence manifesting and vindicating itself in creative art.

However, Lawrence received negative critics from other writers of his generation especially from T.S.Eliot. Leavis says that T.S.Eliot criticized the 'sexual morbidity' of

Lawrence (23). This means that Eliot believed that Lawrence never succeeded in making a work of art and he draws wrong conclusions in his conscious mind; he spoke about an absence of any moral or social norm in the relations of Lawrence's men and women; here is the same place as that in which he assigns cruelty to Lawrence. Just like for moral and spiritual struggle, the determination of the most important and exacting kind of choice in relationships.

The main goal of this research is to study man's love relationship with women and explore the role of each woman in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* and find out to what extent these relationships are unconventional.

The scope of this research is not exhaustive; it focuses only on the unconventional and abnormal character relationships with reference to the plot, specifically characters and their relationship with each other in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*.

This research will adopt an eclectic approach in which one will have recourse to insights from psychoanalysis with a great emphasis on Freudian theory of Oedipus Complex and Feminist approach with reference to Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. It will be based on data gathered from libraries such as books, articles, magazines, essays, and internet. The procedure of data analysis will focus on qualitative methods which are descriptive, analytical and open to phenomenological studies.

The structure of this research is divided into a General Introduction, three main chapters and a General Conclusion. The General Introduction points out a short background of the theme under study and its main problem. The first chapter includes the theoretical framework and literary background of the research. The second chapter is a biographical perspective on unconventional character relationships in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. The third chapter in turn covers the feminist-psychoanalytic perspective for

different relationships presented in the novel. Finally, the research ends up with a general conclusion that provides an overview and discussion about the findings of the research.

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework and Literary Background

1.1. Introduction

Before studying any work of literature, it is compulsive to investigate about the period and the circumstances of the society where the writer lived while drawing on the events of his work for a better understanding of the general atmosphere of that piece of literature. This chapter will review the historical, social and biographical backgrounds of *Sons and Lovers* to draw the link to its content. Moreover, it shall scrutinize the literary period where the British society used to live during the years of 1910-1913 when the novel was written and published, focusing on the conditions of social life and women's position in England. This chapter would like to figure out the relationship in D. H. Lawrence masterpiece through feminist and psychoanalytical studies.

1.2. Modernism

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, British literature experienced many metamorphoses especially throughout the years of 1900-1915. During that period many changes took place. Lawrence as a major figure of the modern age, witnessed several other periods such as the late Victorian and the Edwardian periods. After the First World War (1914-1918), a widely spread movement has flourished in literature known as modernism.

Modernism is a conscious literary, cultural and artistic movement that emerged in early 1900's; it is characterized by a radical change and significant developments to shift away from Victorian morality and conventions (Levens 220). During that era, many challenging ideas emerged in the world, notably Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, Albert Einstein's theory of relativity and specifically Sigmund Freud's emphasis on the role of the unconscious in human personality, which paved the way to many creative literary works.

Lewis in his book *Modernism, Nationalism and The Novel*, suggests that, “far from abandoning nineteenth-century realists’ concern for politics, the modernists used this emphasis on individual consciousness to address the distinctively political ways in which the modern nation-state shapes the psyche of its subjects” (Preface). This means that modernism responded to the world’s complexity by declaring that the individuals had the potential to achieve a broader standpoint through the putting into practice their own idea in life, rather than the one offered by any society or its history.

Modernist authors such as Lawrence, who proved himself as writer, sought to question and study any fixed relation between men and his social environment and to break away from conventions through experimentation with new forms, devices and style by incorporating the psychoanalytical theories of Freud that were very influential at that time. “It was in 1915 that the old world ended, many of the fruits of the pre-war experiment had come to birth. So had a new world, bitter and empty, made out of cultural disorder and European ruins”(Bradbury 282); this means that after the war modernism became widely spread and very noticeable literary movement that continued through the 1940’s.

Finally, due to his rebellious thoughts, Lawrence became a distinctive iconoclasm in his fiction and a representative figure of modernist era, where modernism sought to accurately portray the world not as it is but as humans actually experience it (Rubbins 398).

1.3. A Short Biography of D.H. Lawrence

David Herbert Richard Lawrence, known as D.H.Lawrence, was born at Eastwood near Nottingham in the English Midlands, in 1885 (Briat and Lh  r  t   302). He was the fourth child of a very poor family; his mother Lydia Beardsall was an educated woman; she gave up her work as a schoolteacher in order to look after her children. His father

Arthur Lawrence was an illiterate coal miner and this leads to many bloody fights between them.

Lawrence did well at school, but at the age of fifteen he gave up his education and started working as a clerk at the Nottingham firm of Haywards, manufacturers of Surgical Appliances to help with the family income. Since 1902, he taught at the British School in Eastwood where he met Jessie Chambers. She became his close friend and intellectual companion. Later, he won a place at Nottingham University College in which he received a teaching certificate in 1908 (Booth X). During these years he was working on his first novels, poems and short stories. He then moved to London to undertake a teaching job in Croydon and completed his first novel *The White Peacock* in 1910. Lawrence was very attached to his mother and was deeply upset by her death describing this period as his sick year and growing up a nostalgic feeling towards her wasted life. He described her as a clever delicately moulded woman of a good descent who married below her his ruddy drunken father. The marriage was one carnal characterized by bloody fight and contradictory ideas, thus, Lawrence was born hating his father which created a kind of bond between him and his mother; they loved each other as a husband and wife in addition to the filial and maternal love. This peculiar fusion of soul made him to a certain extent abnormal. Thus, without his mother, Lawrence felt that he had no identity (Poplawski Paul 11), this means that Lawrence's mother was his supporter in his early career and without her he felt as if he has no identity.

In early 1912, after a period of serious illness, Lawrence left his teaching post at Croydon to return to Nottinghamshire and became a professional writer. Lawrence started working on a story called *Paul Morel*, which later became *Sons and Lovers*. It is an open study of the family, class and early sexual relationships, in which Lawrence was working hard to understand his own experiences throughout the process of self-discovery. In fantasy,

Lawrence used his friends as models for major characters mainly his early lover Jessie Chambers, who was the basis for the character of Miriam in *Sons and Lovers*, and Louie Burrows, who was his fiancée at that time. Lawrence identified a close affinity between the family life and his early experiences of love because they are about the same theme, yet he did not find a model to explain this connection (Booth XI).

Lawrence showed parts of the second version to Jessie Chambers; however, she focused on the triangular relationship between Mrs. Morel, Paul and Miriam; she saw that Mrs. Morel had been a major hurdle in her relation with Lawrence and she advised him to reflect this in the novel, and also wanted him to be faithful to what had actually occurred in his life like the death of his brother Ernest (XI).

In the first six months of 1912, a major event occurred when Lawrence visited his old teacher Professor Ernest Weekley, who eventually introduced him to his wife Frieda Von Richthofen and they immediately fell in love. She left her husband and three children and eloped with Lawrence to Germany and then to Italy. She was seen as Lawrence's woman and collaborator; the couple had a passionate and stormy relationship, which Lawrence described in his fiction. They returned to England in 1914 prior to the outbreak of war and were married.

Moreover, Frieda gave Lawrence an awareness of the German environment, and in their first meeting they talked about the impact of early childhood on later life and about the story of Oedipus because she was very knowledgeable about Freud's theories and insights. For the rest of his life, Lawrence was very ill and the hardship pushed him to a creative process; he completed his two greatest novels *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, published in 1915 and 1920, respectively. In 1928, He wrote his last novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The novel had been banned until 1960 because of its detailed description of sex and use of direct sexual language (Kerr VI).

After a deterioration of his health, Lawrence died in the south of France in 1930, when he was 45 years old (*D. H. Lawrence: Studies in Literature* 1). Despite his short life, many illnesses and constant travelling he produced a lot of works believing that writing is an adventure of the mind; he wrote thirteen novels, several collections of short stories, more than eight hundred poems, nine plays, four travel books and hundreds of short critical pieces for magazines and newspapers (Carter and McRae 184). Lawrence himself considered his writings an attempt to challenge and expose what he saw as the oppressive cultural norms of modern Western culture.

1.4. Freud's Theory of Oedipus Complex

The idea of Oedipus Complex is one of the well known theories proposed by Sigmund Freud in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the field of psychoanalysis; he developed many theories that focus on the unconscious mind, interpretation of dreams, ego and super ego, as well as the theory of psychosexual development which describes how exactly our personality develops over the course of childhood through a series of stages in which life was built around tension and pleasure. All tension was due to the buildup of libido or the sexual energy, and that all pleasure came from its discharge are the driving force behind our behavior later in life. If these stages are well completed, the result is healthy personality, but if not it may lead to fixation and that could not be avoided unless the conflict is resolved; in order to understand this complex, one first has to understand the legend of Oedipus.

In his book *The Greek Myths*, Robert Graves tells that Oedipus was the son of Laius the king of Thebes and his wife queen Jocaste. Once, Laius visited an oracle who prophesied that his son will kill him and marry his wife. For this reason, Laius pierces his child's leg and send him far away to let him die of exposure in Cithaeron's mountain (371). This means that

upon hearing that news, Laius wants to get rid of his son Oedipus by throwing him away as a solution to prevent this incident to happen.

The child was found by a shepherd and raised by King Polybus and Queen Periboea in their city of Corinth. They named him Oedipus, which in Greek means 'swollen footed' due to his leg deformation. Later in his manhood, Oedipus was taunted by Corinthian youth that he did not resemble his supposed parents and visited the Delphic Oracle, who told him that he would kill his father and marry his mother (371). Upon hearing that he will murder his adoptive father and eventually marry his adoptive mother, he decided to leave Corinth as a kind of precaution.

In a narrow defile between Delphi and Daulis, he met Laius who ordered him to step off his chariot's road. Oedipus started a fight with Laius, who was the first one to take out a weapon. Oedipus killed Laius in this fight without knowing whom he killed (371).

When he arrived to Thebes, he found the king of the city Laius had been recently killed and the city was under the mercy of the Sphinx, a monster with woman's head, lion's body, serpent's tail, and eagle's wings. The latter would kill anyone who could not give the correct answer the following riddle: "what being, with only one voice, has sometimes two feet, sometimes three, sometimes four, and is weakest when it has the most?". Oedipus answered the monster's riddle correctly and the answer was 'Man' (372). He eventually became the hero and the liberator of the city and as a reward, he got the throne and married Jocaste the king's widow; he had two sons and two daughters with her.

In his search to determine who killed Laius, and thus to end the plague that killed many people in Thebes as a new oracle promised that the city would be saved only if the murder of Laius had been found and punished. Oedipus discovered it was in fact he who killed the late king, his true birth father, and he had married his true birth mother, Jocaste (372). He had fulfilled the prophecy which he was trying to avoid; Jocaste killed herself and Oedipus pierced his own eyes becoming blind and exiled himself from Thebes.

The lesson learnt from this legend is that the first thing, we are fated to experience the very thing that we were lost; the second, is that we are destined to symbolically have a sexual relationship with the opposite sex parent and rivalry and hostility toward the parent of the same sex.

The term “Oedipus Complex” was first introduced by Sigmund Freud’s psychosexual theory of development in his book *Interpretation of Dreams*, published in 1899; Freud suggested that the psychological development in childhood takes place in a series of fixed stages called psychosexual stages, and he believed that life is built around this concept of tension and pleasure; and that the build-up of tension could cause a lot of conflicts. Thus, this tension built up and the fixation was due to the concept of Libido; however, the Libido is a natural energy source that fills the mechanisms of the mind, and when this Libido is stocked or fixated it can have a lifelong affect well into adulthood. Hence, Freud’s theory stresses the importance of personality development in childhood, thus, the fixation occurs at a specific stage in childhood; it could have a lasting effect well into manhood, each of these stages associated with a particular conflict that has to be resolved in order for the person to successfully advance to the next stage (Loewald 238).

Freud stressed that the first five years of life are crucial to the formation of the adult personality. The idea of the Libido or as it is widely known the sexual instincts and fixation are centered around different areas of the body at a different stages of growth. That is why it caused the psychosexual development; these stages are ordered by Rennison Nick in his book *Freud & Psychoanalysis* as follow :

The Oral Stage : is the first stage of personality development which occurs from birth to 18 months of age, this is when the libido is centered around the baby’s mouth, thus the infant’s primary source of interaction through the pleasure of sucking and accepting things into the mouth (35). Hence the pleasure is derived through the oral stimulation, and because the infant

is completely dependent on his parents who are responsible for feeding him, the child also evolves a sense of trust and comfort through this oral stimulation. This stage reaches its climax point in the primary conflict of weaning, which both prevents the child of the sensory pleasures of nursing and of the psychological pleasure of being cared of.

Freud believes that individuals with a fixation of that stage could develop issues of dependency or aggression, thus later in adulthood an oral type of personality in people that smoke or bite their nails. They become extremely gullible or naive usually following others and never taking the lead.

The Anal Stage : occurs between the 18 months to three years old, Freud believes that the main concern of the child's pleasure is on eliminating and retaining feces. Under the society's pressure especially the parents, the child is obliged to learn how to control his anal stimulation. The effect of this anal fixation may result into two kinds ; the first is when the parental responses are strict, the anal would be retentive which means obsession with cleanliness, control and perfection ; the second is when the parents are lenient the result would be anal expulsive in which the child's personality will be wasteful, messy and destructive (36). The resolution of the anal stage, proper toilet training, permanently affects the individual conflicts to possession and attitudes towards authority.

The Phallic Stage : is the most crucial sexual conflict in the process of the sexual development it begins from 3 to 6 years of age. Freud believes that at this level, the child develops an unconscious sexual attraction towards the parent of the opposite sex with the genitals as the pleasure zone.

This complex could be named Oedipus Complex for boys who are sexually attracted to their mothers when their libidinal energy switches from the anal zone to the genitals, and develops a rivalry towards the father, and fear of their fathers' punishment known as the castration anxiety, after which the child recognizes that his mother has no penis. Thus, the

child will have a growing fears that his father will remove his sex organ for desiring his mother. However for females this complex is known as Electra Complex, they became attracted to their fathers and very jealous of their mothers. Usually these are the result of the process of identification where the child starts to understand and develop some characteristics of their same sex parents (37).

Freud stated that the resolution comes much later and is never truly complete. Just as the boy learned his sexual role by identifying with his father, and the girl learns her role by identifying with her mother in an attempt to possess her father. At the eventual resolution of the conflict, the girl passes into the latency period, though Freud implies that she always remains slightly fixated at the phallic stage.

Fixation at this stage leads to the growth of a phallic character, which is reckless, resolute, self-assured, and narcissistic or excessively vain and proud. The failure to resolve the conflict can also cause a person to be afraid or incapable of close love; Freud also postulated that fixation could be a root cause of homosexuality as well as the sexual dysfunction.

The Latency Stage : the age range for this stage is from 6 to 12 years old or puberty, actually it does not have any focus of the Libido because it is the resolution of the phallic stage. It is a time of exploration in which the sexual energy is still present but it is not really focused on a specific area, it is directed into other areas such as intellectual pursuit, social interaction and changing and developing new skills and self esteem (38).

The Genital Stage : from 12 years old onward, this stage is an outgrowth of the latency stage ; the sexual desires that are dormant during latency are now awakened due to puberty. The child's energy focuses on the genitals and starts developing heterosexual relationships by fulfilling personal instincts for the purpose of procreation to survive the human race (38).

If, however, a child remains fixated, particularly on the phallic stage, his development will be troubled as he struggles with other repressions and became unbalanced.

Finally, Freud's psychosexual theory of development was seen audacious at the time when it first appeared. However, today, it is still considered very controversial and is criticized on scientific and feminist grounds. They believe that this theory focuses mainly on male development with a few concentration on females. In addition to this, these theories are very hard to be scientifically tested, especially the concept of the Libido, which is not measured and therefore cannot be tested. Moreover, future predictions are too broad meaning that the long time between the cause and its effect is very extended to presume the two variables' relationship and that Freud's research methods were based on case studies not on empirical research.

1.5. Feminist Approach

Without regard to all conventional interpretations, one reads the novel from a feminist perspective in order to examine the main image of women, their mental status, their life history as well as their awakening and concession and also tries to explain the double tragedies of them. Firstly, the tragedy is better shown in the miserable life of women under a patriarchal oppression, in which women have a low status in the family and society as a whole, and are economically dependent on others. This paternalism has brought a huge suffering and bondage to women who only serve as housewife and mother; they were obliged to endure the pain of unhappy marriages without having any freedom to pursue their own satisfaction, thus they live unconsciously and even lose themselves.

In contrast, women have grown new characteristics such as independence, bravery and increasing desires towards changing their unfortunate life; they are best at awakening and

developing their own limitations and this was the turning point in the emergence of the feminist movement in the 1848 at Seneca Falls and the main focus was on votes for women:

for women, the vote, the attainment of legal control over the property and person, and entry into male dominated professions and institutional hierarchies became the representative issue. (Offen 123)

The above quotation means that women at first tried to prove their presence in the society throughout their claims of the right to vote in order to gain equality to men; while these demands caused several problems.

For Coolidge, woman has been molded according to civilized man's standards and desires, she suggests that, "a successful woman must be what man approved of" and for that reason women have always conformed to the standards set for them (85). She further adds that; it is because women are never granted the chance to act as they feel because all traits and characteristics are not paralleled with feminism in which feminine are perverted and oppressed from infancy, that "the womanly woman" stereotype was created within extreme dependence on men whose role is to support and guide (90).

In the confrontation with the patriarchal ideology, women must liberate themselves first and be self-reliant in order to get rid of the tragic fate of self-lose, compromise and concession through awakening and resistance. Lawrence manages his characters to present his ideas in some sort of confrontation between his male and female characters; in his last years Lawrence championed primitive societies, where male supremacy was the total way of life.

However, after 1920 Lawrence's attitude towards antifeminism became more pronounced; he believed that the dominant ideology of the post-war period was "a perverted femininity of will and idealism" (Lusty and Murphet 17). His emphasis on the male

comradeship in his works written in the 1920's illustrates his attempt to redefine masculine values as Simpson declares in her book *D. H. Lawrence and Feminism*:

the neat reversal of these values are now masculine, leaving his woman character the choice of either identifying with the new feminine values of cerebration, will, technology and so on, or of becoming disciples of the new masculinism. (138)

the above quotation means that the modern woman must become appropriately passive or she must be consent follower to masculine values.

1.6. Summary of the Novel

Sons and Lovers is a novel written by D. H. Lawrence in 1910 and published in 1930; it is clearly autobiographical. It tells the story of the Morel family in the early 20th century and depicts the working class of England at the turn of the century, when industrialism was developing and approaching the English countryside. The novel is set in a town similar to the one where he was born. It is primarily about mother and son relationship; the mother and her son are Mrs. Gertrude Morel and Paul, who was her third child. Lawrence himself had an unusually close attachment to his mother; the novel gives a detailed and realistic portrayal of the hardships and conflicts of the Morels as a mining family.

At first, when Gertrude Coppard is twenty three years old, she met Walter Morel who is four years older than her in a Christmas party and eventually falls in love with him; later, this relationship is crowned by marriage. Their marriage is passionate and fun but only for three months: "she realised the life of the miners, hundreds of them toiling below earth and coming up at evening. He seemed to her noble. He risked his life daily, and with gaiety she looked at him, with a touch of appeal in her pure humanity" (Lawrence 11). Due to their very different expectations in life, Mrs. Morel is a religious, intellectual and educated woman who is interested in discussing her ideas; however, Walter is a miner, uneducated and drunken

man. Because of the bad circumstances of life that Mrs. Morel experienced at the Bottoms in Bestwood (12-13). Actually there is no love left between them, especially when she discovered that the bills of the household furniture are still unpaid.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Morel turns all of her attention to her children; they do well at school because of their ambitious mother that drives them onward; William the eldest is ambitious. Mrs. Morel is very proud of him because he is the best shorthand clerck and book keeper in the area (Lawrence 47). Unfortunately he moves to London because he finds a lucrative job to help the family income (51); he gets married against his mother's wishes but he falls ill and dies soon. Paul, who is very talented and artistic boy, he takes William's place as the center of his mother's world in an abnormal close filial relationship, and this leads Walter to spend more time in the pub. Mrs. Morel fails to make her husband nobler as she wants, but instead she succeeds in destroying him and turns him into a careless drunken man.

Paul, follows his mother around like a shadow, establishing himself a special place in her heart; Paul hates his father and views life from her point of view. At night he prays "Lord, let my father die" (Lawrence 55); however, he loves to sleep with his mother: they share the warmth, the security and peace of soul (61). He is completely dependent on her, even when he was seeking to find his first job. Paul was astonished by the business world and its regulated system of values, and its impersonality, he feels that he is "a prisoner of industrialism," and only wants a simple life (79). His only wish is to earn a small salary and when his father dies, he dreams to have a respectful life with his mother through painting, and live happily ever after. Nevertheless, Paul satisfies his mother by going along with her plans for him. His going to work in the factory is the fulfillment of his mother's dreams. Mrs. Morel sees him as a reflection of herself, they feel the excitement of lovers having an adventure together (89); she lives each moment through Paul, as though his life were her own. At the age of fourteen, he gets his first job at a factory, where he works 12 hours a day. Meanwhile,

William writes from London, telling his mother about the new social life that he experiences and about his new girl-friend. Mrs. Morel is only concerned about her son's well-being. While, her third child Arthur goes to Grammar school and Annie becomes a teacher and later gets married.

As Paul comes into manhood, he develops his friendship and eventual relationship with a girl named Miriam Leivers, the girl from the Willey Farm; he is fascinated by the revelations that he finds in her. He visits her home, teaches her Maths or sometimes he meets her at the Bestwood Library. The awakening of sensuality in Miriam draws her to Paul; she hopes to be with him in a spiritual union but without any physical interaction between them because she is very conservative girl (Lawrence 125). Meanwhile, Paul develops his feelings of sexuality and feels uneasy; he wants to escape her control because he finds her an introverted intellectual who wishes to share an artistic spiritual companionship but she is sexually repressed. She resembles his mother and this consequently leaves him frigid and distrustful.

However, their relationship cannot work, Mrs. Morel resents and disdains Miriam because she thinks that Miriam would take Paul from her, and this inhibits him from forming any successful and lasting relationships with other women. Throughout her strength and domination, she becomes Paul's superior soul: "he grew more and more restless. Miriam did not satisfy him. His old mad desire to be with her grew weaker" (Lawrence 217).

When Paul could not find his sexual needs in Miriam, another older sensual woman named Clara Dawes enters Paul's life; they begin a love affair. Clara fulfills a need for Paul. Eventually, Paul meets Baxter Dawes, Clara's former husband, in the pub and they nearly have a fight. This upsets Clara; she is in love with Paul who confesses that if he were rich, he would live with his mother in London. However, the excessive attachment of Paul to his

mother again leads this stormy flesh relationship to end up because he realises that Clara is not his soul mate, and later helps Clara to reconcile with her husband (240).

Actually, for Paul, no other woman can be compared to his mother, and though he resents her, he cannot separate himself from her. Mrs. Morel's extreme possessiveness of Paul has made it impossible for him to feel normal emotional and sexual desires for any other woman. At that time Mrs. Morel is very ill and is close to death, since she was affected by cancer, but she does not want to die (Lawrence 294). she feels that she must finally leave Paul. One night, when she suffers too much from her pains, Paul decides to put an overdose of morphia in her milk to end up her suffering (341). Upon her death, Paul feels nothing but a longing for his own death. He must then learn to live a life of his own, independent of the influence of his mother. However, the spirit in Paul persuades him to turn away from death and walk towards the town and a new beginning (366).

Finally, Paul Morel, like Lawrence himself is a lonely man, an artist searching for identity and meaning in his world. Paul must find his own answers from his background in the mining community, from industrial England, and from the strong influence of his mother. Paul has lived a life of struggle and despair in the mining community, but he has also wondered at the beauty and miracle of the earth and all the growing things that surround him in the pastoral countryside where he shows that he preferred the agrarian England as opposed to the dehumanizing and mechanized modern world (DeMott viii).

1.7. Conclusion

To sum up, Modernist literature was produced to break away from traditions and conventions in a post-war England. This chapter has included the basic theoretical background for a better understanding of Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. In the following chapters the study we adopt the psychoanalytic theory through the use of Freud's theory of

Oedipus Complex. Moreover, the feminist approach could be useful in exploring the main image of women at the time when the novel was written and published.

Chapter Two: Biographical Perspective on Unconventional Character Relationships in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*

“Woman is really polarized downwards towards the centre of the earth... And man is polarized upwards, towards the sun and the day's activity” (Simone De Beauvoir 229).

2.1. Introduction

In his work, Lawrence's main characters are gifted with life which constitutes their full existence; that is to say that they are physically well existed and portrayed but psychologically they are not convinced with their actual situation in life. They evolve as the novel progresses; however, their conditions as an ethnic social group are determined by their customs, traditions and conventions that are resistant to change. This chapter will tackle the biographical perspective of the unconventional character relationship in D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* in order to have an access to Lawrence's own life. In addition to that, it is a crucial step to shed light on Lawrence's biographical background and social surrounding and then study the work through the use of the biographical approach in order to give more credibility to its analysis.

2.2. Unconventional Mother-Son Relationship

During the course of life, human beings have different relationships; the first relation a man could have in his early life is with his mother because the mother's role is very elemental in building a boy's self esteem; and as time goes by, he starts to determine what he thinks of himself and of female gender in general. The mother reflects her influence on her sons either positively or negatively because the bond they share is very dynamic and will forever be a mystery; the relation can be strained and the son may not know where he fits in, and this later affects his relations with other women when he comes to manhood.

D.H. Lawrence uses his writings, especially his novel *Sons and Lovers*, to express his tortured soul for fully forty five years. He depicts his suffering, frustrations and emotional complexes that are stereotyped as personal revelations. Booth declares that Lawrence at first wanted to write about the early life of his mother, but these works were discarded. Thus, he changed his mind and decided to write about her mature years, especially her wasted life (X). This means that Lawrence was very attached to his mother and very pathetic towards her miserable and dejected life, thus, he decided to write about his mother's personal problems. His heroes and heroines are not presented as models to be followed, but he intended to provide the reader with dramatised experience that is skillfully organised.

Lawrence grew up hating his father and his bad qualities; he was deeply affected by his mother: "My father was dark, ruddy, with a fine laugh...he lacked principle, as my mother would have said. He deceived her and lied to her. She despised him- he drank" (X). That is to say, he scorns his father while his relationship with his mother is uniquely close because they share mutual understanding, and without her he feels impotent and has no real identity.

In *Sons and Lovers*, the semi-autobiographical protagonist grows up in a continuous antagonism between his educated mother and the working class, coal-mining father; Paul tries both to fulfill and escape his mother's aspirations and suffocating attentions. This is better illustrated in Andrew Harrison and John Worthen's: *D. H. Lawrence's Sons and Lovers: a casebook* "Lawrence appears to have focused his attention on an early, failed but fondly remembered relationships between his mother and a sensitive, artistic man" (6). This means that Lawrence was deeply affected by his relation with his educated mother. However, in the same book Michael Bell affirms that:

in his book Lawrence gave fictional expression to the intense relationship with his own mother which had, in its possessiveness checked his capacity in

early manhood and before meeting Frieda Weekley, to give himself fully to another woman. (32)

Lawrence's depiction of Mrs. Morel in the novel gives interesting clues about his feelings towards his real mother. Mrs. Morel's affection blinds her reason; she saw her second son Paul as if he is the only hope that remains for her after the death of her eldest son William; however, Paul is not aware of how to defend himself against his mother's will to overwhelm him as Lawrence says that Paul is very conscious of his mother's feelings and his soul remains always attentive to her (*Sons and Lovers* 52). This means that, he unfortunately cannot escape her control over him even though he knows that she would not let him to be himself.

Since his early childhood, Paul has a strange feelings about his mother's suffering; he sees her as a brave woman, rich with life but with too much responsibilities. He also believes that she is deprived of all her vital rights. However, he feels very impotent to change her situation, which makes him dogged inside (59). They were almost like partners; he loved to sleep with her because when bed is shared with someone who loves and feels the warmth, comfort, the security and peace of soul; he believes that it heals the body (61); thus, he considers her as his bright side, a real woman married below her level.

Just like Lawrence's mother, Mrs. Morel is a powerful mind and soul woman affected by her mental consciousness. She gathers her sons by her side against their father since she saw him as an inferior being, and lets no space for a happy relationship with him, and she even lets no place for a fixed love relationship for her beloved son Paul in his manhood. She only wants her children to know what a good life would be and to escape their working class environment through education and professional work. However, in his early love relationship with Miriam, Mrs. Morel was not satisfied because she thinks that Miriam threatens her domination on Paul since she knows that his relation with Miriam will affect his

transformation into a man (132), i.e. throughout her pure spirituality, Miriam desires to absorb Paul's weak personality and eventually hampers him to reach his maturity.

Finally, Mrs. Morel and Paul share an unconventional mother-son relationship that he inherited after the death of his eldest brother William; she neither makes him a man who knows how to manage his relations with other women in his life, nor set him free and do whatever he wants in his life. She wants him to be just like a doll between her hands to have a relentlessly power and to reserve all the abundances exclusively for herself, but this later affects Paul's thoughts concerning his private life after his mother's death.

2. 3. Relationship between Paul and Miriam

In *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence breaks away from the conventions of the late Victorian age specifically the Edwardian era that he witnessed, in order to give us access to the protagonist's feelings and thoughts. He described Paul's relationship with Miriam skilfully with reference to his own experience with his first love Jessie Chambers, who was the basis for the character of Miriam in *Sons and Lovers*.

Early in his manhood, Lawrence depends mainly on women whom he knows for both intellectual stimulus and emotional enjoyment. James Boulton believed in his book *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence* that Lawrence declared that these women were of independent mind, resolute and decisive in varying degree (1). Owing to his highly cultural sophistication, Lawrence continued to identify particular people and specific places in his work, such as the Chambers family, the haggis Farm and especially his closest friend and main early lover Jessie Chambers, who was his literary cooperator in *Sons and Lovers*. She fondly recalls the early years of her friendship with him. He was very close and attached to Jessie, and had a deep need for her as a friend and soulmate.

Despite some features, Lawrence's description of Miriam lead Jessie to question why he fixed her as "Miriam" when he gave her parts of his second version '*Paul Morel*', in order to write down her memories of their childhood to enrich his writing; she was completely surprised when she saw the way in which he described her (Booth XI). She focused mainly on the triangular relationship between Paul, Mrs. Morel and Miriam saying that Lawrence's mother was the major impediment in her relation with him just like Miriam's relationship with Paul, and wanted him to reflect this in the novel (XI). Jessie advised Lawrence to rewrite the novel by staying faithful to what really happened in his own life; she found it crucial to publish her book *D. H. Lawrence: A Personal Record* under the pseudonym E.T in 1930s. Nevertheless, she later destroyed it since it was still unpublished (XVI); this was due to her different views of the events occurred and her own interpretations on them.

In *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence depicts Miriam Leivers as a spiritual girl that ignores her physical being; she likes the life of imagination and hates being 'swine girl'. She wants to acquire knowledge so that she gets a deepened respect and position in her patriarchal society (*Sons and Lovers* 125). She is a beautiful shy girl; sensitive things seemed nothing to her (126). Her utmost goal is that she wants to be educated. Once, she confessed to Paul: "I want to do something. I want a chance like anybody else. Why should I, because I'm a girl, be kept at home and not allowed to be anything? What chance have I?" (135). She rejects her meaningless conditions in the household while she wants to determine something meaningful in her life.

Miriam was her mother's daughter; she is very religious; her only companion was nature; her conservative emotions lead her to subdue Paul, who is a picture of Lawrence's himself; she finds sex emotionally painful (142). They both share a lateness to reach maturity and physical ripeness, but she loves in him his potentiality and loneliness. Their intimacy is been kept so abstract and Paul sees their relationship as platonic friendship.

Paul, then, has passionate sexual relationship with Miriam; he finds in her the spiritual qualities of his mother. But, Paul's mother intrusion into his private life and her authority over him paralyzes his emotions as Simone De Beauvoir says in her book *The Second Sex* that Mrs. Morel thinks regarding Miriam that she wants to extract Paul from himself and devours him (232). She fears that Miriam would take Paul away from her. In a quarrel between Paul and Miriam, he declares to her: "I can only give friendship—it's a flaw in my make-up. The thing overbalances to one side—I hate a toppling balance. Let us have done" (193). That is to say, Paul gets enough of his relation with Miriam; he finds her very spiritual and wants to monopolize him, thus he decides to put an end to their relationship.

Finally, Lawrence is, in fact, grafting his earlier sexual failure with Jessie during the time when his relations with women were confused and unsatisfying. He had a sexually inhibited relationship with Jessie Chambers and this would be too risky for her and meant an end for professional career as a teacher which she considers it her possible way to independence, just like Miriam who wants to distinguish herself as De Beauvoir says about her that she hates men, but she rather wants to be a man because she is not satisfied with herself as a woman (231). This means that Miriam suffers from her patriarchal society. Both Miriam and Jessie converge in their assiduity towards learning to realize what they want in their lives and to fulfill their dream in their patriarchal society.

2. 4. Relationship between Paul and Clara Dawes

During Lawrence's lifetime, relationships outside marriage were seen as an obscene practice, and could lead to many social problems such as divorce. However, all along his life he shows us his pure sexual complexity since he could not correlate directly with a specific woman until he met his wife Frieda Weekley.

Lawrence had met Frieda in March 1912 when he visited his old professor Ernest Weekley, and after a brief acquaintance with his wife they immediately fell in love even though she was six years older than him (Roberts 2). Booth adds that they decided to elope together to the Continent and got married after divorcing her husband and leaving her children in 1914 (XII). Frieda was a very intellectual woman; she gave Lawrence an awareness of the German intellectuals such as Freud and provided him with an interpretive pattern for the events of the novel since she was very cultured and had early affairs with a rogue disciple of Freud named Otto Gross (XII), which attributed the very shown self-conscious in which Lawrence portrays scenes between Paul and his mother .

Frieda was the basis for the portrayed character of Clara Dawes, who in turn was separated from her husband Baxter Dawes temporarily. With Clara, Paul did not feel ashamed of his own desires towards her because she treated him indulgently almost like a child (Lawrence 254). Even though he looked down upon her in his heart because in his patriarchal ideologies, a woman should stay at home and never leave her husband no matter what the way he used to treat her is. During the course of the novel, Lawrence gives specific awareness to his sensations through Paul, who finds Clara as a tool to fulfill his sexual desires and never recognizes her existence and the main symbolic scene happens when he met Clara by the flood river Trent and have sex (267-270); their simultaneous blind passion reaches its highest point when they were together.

Again Paul finds Clara not very profound since she is only a way to feel his virility so that she could not have his spirit, he says to Miriam that Clara never knew the fearful importance of marriage which leads her to develop into the *'femme incomprise'* when she treats her husband badly and left him because he does not understand her (275). This was the turning point to end up their relationship; he reconciles her with her husband Baxter because he loves her too much.

Finally, throughout his descriptions of the character of Clara, Lawrence draws the antagonism that he wants to show between her and the spiritual Miriam based on his early love relationships with Jessie and Frieda.

2. 5. The Role of Women in Paul's Life

The role played by the three women in *Sons and Lovers* has different types and they are very crucial to the understanding of the events of the novel. The “dominating female”, “the dreaming woman” and the “suffragist” are major types that represent Mrs. Morel, Miriam and Clara respectively, these women have a tremendous impact on Paul's life. In addition to this, he is psychologically affected by the sexual stereotype of the unsatisfied woman due to a highly frustrated female character in a patriarchal society.

2. 5.1. Mrs. Morel

Paul Morel's early compassion about his mother's wasted life and as a result he despised his father, but when he came to manhood he finds that his mother holds his soul and leads him to “emotional aridity” with other young women (Stroch 139). Paul starts to develop a sense of hatredness towards his suffocating mother and this resulted in a series of fantasies in which he devastates her through culminating her actual death. He gave his mother an overdose of morphia when she is vercomed by cancer (Lawrence 348). This shows the destructive anger of Paul that appeared against his previous devoted love for her, as Stroch says that, “the infantile defense mechanism of the splitting of the mother into a good aspect and a bad aspect” (141). Even though Paul knows that his mother would surely die, but he makes things quicker to free himself as Stroch added that this scene is a clear image of a child's sadistic fantasy against the mother (142). Thus, in the novel Mrs. Morel is a type of the dominating woman.

2. 5.2. Miriam

Paul's first lover Miriam has a strong influence on him since she is a conservative girl, at first she thinks that Paul loves her but later she discovers that she does not belong to his world since he finds in her his mother's possessiveness. Once, he says to her that he can only give her friendship that's all, and what he is capable of is to put an end to their relation (Lawrence 193). Miriam feels victimized by the men in her own family and tries to escape her circumstances through Paul, and thus, she figures the type of the dreaming girl. Despite their apparent intellectual compatibility and mutual affection, she is very humiliated by Paul, especially in her slowness to understand Algebra; she is very attracted to him to the point that she breaks her ideals and gives her virginity in a delirium of her suffering and underestimation.

Moreover, Paul confesses to Clara that he does not want to marry because he does not want another mother (257), since he actually did not find a suitable partner.

2. 5.3. Clara

Paul's second love wanted to possess him physically. According to De Beauvoir, Paul wants an equilibrium with her; they have moments of ecstasy since she gives herself completely to him (232). They have a blind passion together. Even though Clara thought that her job in Nottingham factory would liberate her, but unfortunately when she goes back to her husband she gives up her post when they have left to Sheffield. Beauvoir wrote "when women has become sexually conscious of herself, there she is functioning away from her own head and her own consciousness of herself and her own automatic self-will" (230). This means that if a woman recognizes consciously her sexuality there she will function unconsciously because she will feel herself independent.

Finally, Paul fails to have his personal identity that he created for himself, thus he could not respond normally towards women especially during his mother's final days, the split between his mind and body destroys him.

2. 6. Symbolism of the Female Gender in Lawrence's own life and *Sons and Lovers*

During his biographical makeup, Lawrence was surrounded by female gender, especially his mother Lydia Lawrence, Jessie Chambers, his early Fiancée Louie Burrows and Frieda Weekley his wife. He was very attached to women at that time when he could not have a stable relation with a specific woman due to his mother, who took part in his private life and handicaps his emotions towards his lovers.

Lawrence explores his female characters from different perspectives in his writings. He has a strong patriarchal ideologies as Simone De Beauvoir says in her book *The Second Sex* that women can never make up an independent society because the feminine world is contrasted with the masculine universe; they only have an integral part in a male oriented society (567). Lawrence apparently tries to set up a form of equality between the sexes basically on their difference from one another. Under the cover of sexual equality, De Beauvoir distinguishes a modern version of patriarchal domination where the man can escape the sexual life but a woman is shut up in it (227), like what Lawrence has incorporated in the relationship between Paul and Miriam, i.e. the difference where the man is shown the quality of transcendence and the woman immanence.

It is not a coincidence that he enjoys the company of women, who find him a charming and sensitive companion; sexual relationships expose a painful division in him between the physical and spiritual aspects of love; he did not find a suitable partner to accomplish himself; he does not want the miserable kind of domination (De Beauvoir 227), i.e. if the woman is a passive substance, the result of the male centredness is nullified.

Finally, De Beauvoir said that Lawrence believed in male supremacy (229). However, for Margaret Storch Lawrence's reply concerning woman throw light on his awareness of the essential power of woman over man's emotional lives (139). While it is obviously perceived by his mother's closeness and his early contact with the women's emancipation movement. Lawrence resented female monopolism, and what is intensified is his relation with Frieda, but thanks to her because she makes him accept the matriarchal values (139). Thus, Frieda was considered as Lawrence's collaborator who provides him with several insights that helped him while writing *Sons and Lovers*.

2.7. Conclusion

To conclude, Lawrence's female companionship have a tremendous impacts; they provided him with raw material, ideas and criticisms on his works since they were the basis of his character's portrayal, thus, he evolved under their intellectual and emotional effects. As he was a member of the literary society, he and Jessie Chambers had the impression that they were zealous condidates. Each woman in Lawrence's life provided him with a specific touch of her own, and enhanced his contribution to the fictional world. He also used a type of duality such as that of mind and body, which had paralyzed him since his early childhood.

Chapter Three: Feminist Tendency and Psychoanalytical Perspectives on Character Relationships in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*

3.1. Introduction

In any work of literature, the psychology of the characters is very important to develop and enhance the events of its story. During the narrative of *Sons and Lovers*, character's psychology developed rapidly especially the one of the major character Paul Morel's own psyche, which is based on the theoretical framework's concept of Freud's Oedipus Complex in addition to other characters psychological development. This chapter primarily traces Paul's personality development with reference to Freud's Oedipus Complex and its psycho-sexual stages of a child's personality development. Moreover, this section is an attempt to explore the reasons why Paul is to develop such complex and can never set himself free from his excessive attachment to his mother; however, the theory gives the castration anxiety as a solution to overtake this issue. This chapter digs into the role and the importance of the three tragic women, i.e. Mrs. Morel, Miriam and Clara respectively, in Paul's life through the use of feminist-psychoanalytical perspectives on their relations.

3.2. Personality Development of Paul Morel

The personality of a human being may develop to be good or bad; it depends on two factors: first, the individual's heredity, and secondly the environmental factors. If a problem in one stage of personality development left unsolved, the following stages may receive more conflicts and tensions. Paul's personality development could be better illustrated throughout the use of psychosexual development stages that are acknowledged by Freud as follows:

3.2.1. Paul's oral stage

Right from the beginning of his life, Paul faces a lot of problems due to his careless and unloving father especially with his wife even when she was pregnant with his child. Paul came to this world unloved since his father does not care about having a new baby, and Mrs. Morel does not want another child from her husband. Mrs. Morel scorned her husband Walter "she had not wanted this child to come and there it lay in her arms and pulled at her heart... A wave of hot love went over her to the infant" (Lawrence 34). Paul grew up completely passive and cannot be himself when he reaches his adulthood; and all what he does is imitating his mother's feeling of joy, anxiety or sadness. Thus, he is dependent on her even when it comes to his feelings; he depends on her, and, as a result, he grows up to be a passive man.

As far as the oral stage is concerned, Paul confronts the antagonism of his father's bad temper and his mother's excessive love; these two factors are the starting point of the growth of Paul's personality. The general atmosphere of the family also influences his development.

3.2.2. Paul at the Anal Stage

Normally, and according to Freud's theory of sexual development, the parents are the ones who are responsible for the personality development of their child. However, in Paul's case, the conflicts between his parents occur over and over again. Mrs. Morel does not teach her son how to look after himself and his home. Thus, whatever Paul is in need of is fulfilled by his mother and as a result the young Paul does not have any troubles to satisfy his demands and all what he gets is perfectly done by Mrs. Morel except his father's attitudes which his mother could not control.

Hence, he starts to develop an anal aggressive personality; his cruelty and bad temper is clearly shown when he receives disrespect from others, thus he quickly dislikes them

“They’re hateful, and common, and hateful, they are, and I’m not going any more. Mr. Braithwaite drops his “h’s”, and Mr. Winterbottom says ‘You was’” (65). This is the result of the lavish love of his mother; for example, if he receives an disrespectful treatment like his father did, he consequently scorns that person and this attitude continues until his adolescence. This appears when he starts teaching his friend Miriam Algebra; he finds that she could hardly get what he teaches he “the algebra-book she closed, shrinking, knowing he was angered; and at the same instant he grew gentle, seeing her hurt because she did not understand”. This fact makes him easily indignant towards her; her slow understanding is the dissatisfying condition for him; he says to her, “You don’t learn algebra with your blessed soul. Can’t you look at it with your clear wits” (137). He starts to grow furious and abuses her verbally to the point that her mother asks him to be gentler with her daughter.

Paul’s anal aggression follows him in his manhood especially when he goes alone with Miriam, he becomes fiercer as if he killed her soul; his cruel personality is clearly shown towards her.

3.2.3. Paul’s Phallic Stage

As it is already mentioned before, Paul grows up to be a sensitive boy, hating his father to death and showing too much love to his caring mother on whom he is dependent since he spends his much time with her. He develops a kind of fearful personality and this is justified specifically when he faces a disillusioning situation, he immediately goes back to his mother’s decisions.

At this age, Paul becomes aware of his sexual desires and starts to develop a physical attraction towards his mother; he believes in his mind that his mother is the perfect woman for him and no other woman can take her place and have his soul.

However, this attraction consequently leads him to an oedipal love for her:

Paul loved to sleep with his mother. Sleep is still most perfect, in spite of hygienists, when it is shared with a beloved. The warmth, the security and peace of soul, the utter comfort from the touch of the other, knits the sleep, so that it takes the body and soul completely in its healing (61).

It could be seen that the bond which Paul and his mother share is an unnatural love, i.e. that of a child to his mother. He even could not solve the issue of his oedipus complex; he describes his mother with a voluptuous manner especially when he describes her in her sleep, the depiction is very passionate as if he describes his beloved. However, according to the theory if an oedipal conflict is not solved, it results to a further implications later in one's own sexual relations, and this is what happened to Paul with his two lovers Miriam and Clara.

3.2.4. Paul's Latent Stage

Actually, this stage is the resolution of the phallic one, and since Paul does not solve his conflict, he develops his intellectual pursuit; he becomes aware of his artistic skills and at the age of fourteen he works in a factory to earn a small salary.

3.2.5. Paul's Genital Stage

Despite all his familial conflicts, Paul is able to have a serious relationship in his life notably when he is accepted in Thomas Jordan Manufacturer of Surgical Appliance. He becomes friendlier due to his talent which helps him to be more self confident so that he can show himself freely without fear.

Even though Paul grows older, his mother still influences his life and choices of the woman whom he loves and eventually brings him to problems in that stage; since the theory says that the individual's sexual desire increases rapidly in this stage and needs to be realized.

Paul's problems to have a successful sexual relationship is clearly announced when he teaches Miriam Algebra and French; they share everything together, thus they have a feeling of attraction towards each other "Paul and Miriam stood close together, silent, and watched. Point after point the steady roses shone out of them, seeming to kindle something in their soul" (140). However, their relation soon breaks off since Paul's mother is not satisfied of her son's relationship with Miriam because she finds her very spiritual and wants to overwhelm Paul and takes him away from her. This is why she gives Paul her final warning to choose either to love Miriam or to stay with his mother. He refuses to give a decisive answer because he is very perplexed about his past glamour and his love for his mother whom he could not ignore her opinion about Miriam (141). This is the major element that influences Paul's genital stage: he does not want his mother to be hurt because of him and ultimately breaks up his relation with Miriam, who loves him from the deepest of her heart.

His second relation with Clara Dawes is characterized by simultaneous love; they quickly have a sexual attraction. Once again, Mrs. Morel does not really like Clara and this is the turning point that makes Paul anxious to keep on this relation. Although he passionately loves Clara, but his oedipal love to his mother drives him back to her as if she is his superior soul and no other woman can be her substitute. In his inner side, he thinks that if he loves another woman he cannot give his mother enough amount of love that she deserves. He confesses to his mother that he cannot marry either Clara or Miriam (305). Meanwhile, he shifts all his attention to his mother's illness; he gradually feels lonely because his mother is the only valuable thing in his life and he decides not to belong to any other woman.

Finally, Paul's traumatic childhood influences his personality development when he turns into manhood; all the social and economic circumstances lead to his mother's bondage over his personal life and decisions: she sterilizes him while he does the opposite. Thus, the conflict that is left unsolved in his early stages of development lasts and affects his manhood.

3.3. Mrs. Morel: Mother as Lover

Sons and lovers is considered as one of the literary works that brilliantly illustrates Freud's theory of Oedipus Complex; it concerns itself with the explanation of how a child's identity develops since his early childhood with the mother as a source of natural sexual desires for the male child and growing rivalry for the father. Mrs. Morel has rosy dreams about her marriage with a humble coal miner, which, she thinks, will bring her facilities in her life; however, this fact shifts to be a disastrous for her since she is shocked at her husband's amorality and lack of intellectual basis.

Owing to the miserable circumstances of their social and economic life, she retracts her affection from her drunken husband Mr. Morel to turn it back to her children, especially the eldest William. After the latter's tragic death and all the reasons mentioned above, the strong tendency that was shared between the two sons; now, it passionately falls on her sensitive, artistic and imaginative boy Paul, who develops an unusual dependency to his mother. She realizes that she must concentrate her attention on the living, not the dead (Lawrence 123). She ought to be more aware of Paul since he is affected by the same disease as his brother. Her love for Paul becomes unconsciously tyrannic over his private life; however, this love is more spiritual than physical "It hurt the boy keenly, this feeling about her that she had never had her life's fulfillment; and his own incapability to make it up to her hurt him with a sense of impotence, yet made him patiently dogged inside. It was his childish aim" (59). This means that Mrs. Morel is aware of her possessiveness towards her son but she keeps on doing that thing so to fill in the gap that she has missed and she risks her life by getting married to Walter Morel; she never has her own life's fulfillment; thus, Paul is her only solution to get what she wants to be in her life.

With all her soul, Mrs. Morel uses all her power and influence to prevent Paul from giving another woman love and tenderness which she keeps them up for herself, even when

his lust for Miriam grows bigger, his mother hampers him by saying that, "I can't bear it. I could let another woman but not her. 'She'd leave me no room, not a bit of room'. And immediately he hated Miriam bitterly" (186). This means that even when Paul thinks in his mind that Miriam is a good girl and fits him because they share many common things between them, but Mrs. Morel finds that she is a rival for her and would eventually take Paul away from her hands. She tries to influence Paul's opinion about his girlfriend Miriam and this is better illustrated when he declares to his mother, "But why-why don't I want to marry her or nobody? I feel sometimes as if I wronged my women mother." (305). That is to say, he could not live on his own, making decisions by himself; but he stays always underneath his mother's laws and decisions by showing his obedience to her while he hides his apprehension. She accuses him of coming back home late after his dating with Miriam, even she disapproves his relation with Clara, his second love, because she knows that she will not free him from her through her charming body. Since Miriam with all her spirituality could not reach what she wants, how could Clara split him from his mother through her physical side?

Finally, the sharp spiritual attachment and the deep psychological intercourse between him and his mother which stands as an obstacle in front of his own life; Paul finds himself physically and spiritually tied to his mother. The physical and spiritual intercourses cannot be successfully fulfilled; if one side is fully satisfied, the other one is completely destroyed. Therefore, Paul's heart and soul stays always with his mother even after her death; they are physically alienated from each other, but spiritually they will still be lovers since there is no counter influence to leave her because the major element of castration anxiety as Freud's theory rises could not take place in Paul's case because for him his father does not exist, hence the mother fixation presumes his character type.

3.4. Miriam: Lover as a Mother

Miriam Leivers is Paul's childhood friend; she is the first woman in his life outside the familial surrounding. She is a young and romantic girl that wants to be isolated even when she is with her family members because of her sensitiveness and religiosity "she did not fit in with the others; she could very rarely get into human relation with anyone: so her friend, her lover, was Nature" (Lawrence 145). At first Paul is fascinated by her love for him because they both share a common feeling towards nature.

Apart from all her good characteristics, Miriam has a sense of rebellion towards her bad conditions as she is a depressed woman and looked down by her male surroundings "it's not fair, because I'm a woman" (135). Thus, she is determined not to blind take the old harmful road that her siblings have followed, yet she seeks to better improve herself in life. Hence, the only available thing for her is the freedom of imagination. That's why religion is her refuge as her mother has brought up her under the victorian ideas of sexuality. Thus, Miriam's worship of the natural world is her utmost goal; she appears like a saint as Miller says, "God was omnipotent, and he knew everything in the world" (256). Indeed, this is better illustrated when she develops a sense of love and attraction towards Paul; she is inclined to be very mystical when she prays to God not to let her love Paul because she scorns male sex due to her brutal brothers (Lawrence 150). But, since she has a strong artistic ability that could enhance Paul's inspirations; she constructs her close relation with him basically on imagination and spiritual love as Murry says, "she had fallen in love with him along before he with her" (31). She loves him dearly because she finds in him another kind of man different from her brothers' mentality.

Due to his deterioration of health, Miriam finds that Paul becomes weak, she would be stronger than him, and could increasingly love him; she thinks "[i]f she could be mistress of him in his weakness, take care of him, if he could depend on her, if she could, as it were,

have him in her arms, how she would love him!” , i.e she wants him to be completely dependent on her so that she can absorb his spirituality (Lawrence 126). He sees in her a copy of his mother’s possessiveness. Nevertheless, when he accuses her of being a non-sexual woman tied to her spirituality and Christian beliefs, her dreams renew and develop to a more subtle psychological stage.

With Miriam, Paul feels that he is on his highest point of abstraction while his natural wishes are transmitted to a fine steam of thoughts (151). He wrestles with his psyche while he has passion to understand her possessive soul when she puts her arm in his, which makes him feel tormented and in turn causes his split of consciousness between what he wants to understand and what he needs. He hates her for her pious soul while she is emotionally afraid of having a physical interaction with her lover Paul.

For the previous reasons, Paul suggests to Miriam to end up their platonic friendship since she could not be what he wants her to be, which he tries to convince her in the following passage, “I know it’s a lot to ask, he said ‘but there’s not a risk for you really- not in the Gretchen way .You can trust me there?’” (246). Under his insistence, she gives herself completely to him and submits to his desires; but he refuses to marry her because his mother still holds his soul “ I’ll never marry while I’ve got you_ I won’t” (214). In fact, she returns to her family destroyed as a result of her submission to his will and sacrifice of her old morality and ideals “he knew he had landed her in a nasty hole, and was leaving her in lurch” (258). He causes her suffering and feels ashamed in her male oriented family and her patriarchal society as a whole where unmarried women have not the right to live freely but instead they must be tied the conventions that were dominant at that time.

3.5. Clara: The Sexual Initiator

Miriam's lack of spontaneity during their Physical union ends up Paul's journey of fulfilling his body's demands while his mind continues to search for a next solution to his agony; he turns to Clara Dawes a married woman estranged from her husband Baxter Dawes.

Clara is young woman older than Paul, she is a strong and buoyant. She helps him to have new acquaintances with other people since she is a very active woman and this is better illustrated in the following quotation: "Paul has more or less got into connection with the socialist, suffragette, unitarian people in Nottingham, owing to his acquaintance with Clara" (Lawrence 225) . With Clara, Paul comes across a new type of woman whose sexual vitality and a pure sensuality that is not burdened by any oppressive spirituality; he finds in her his missing piece that he is looking for to fulfill his carnal desires and emotional needs.

At first, Clara is introduced to Paul through Miriam, who thinks that he will eventually discover himself due to this unrewarding relation that is based on sexual encounter. Clara is very amiable to Paul but very hostile towards men "It was a bitter thing to her to be put aside by life, as if it had no use for her" (228). With her, Paul finds a new life apart from his mother even though this new sexual life does not make him fully independent, but he is attracted to her since he realizes that she is a mysterious woman who possesses a good knowledge of life due to her experience that his first love Miriam lacks (Sultan Shaikh 232). For Paul, Clara is his sexual initiator because she shows a clear sexual attraction towards him; they draw a close affinity together as he can have what he is looking for, whereas she loves him because of his unexpected movement like a young animal. De Beauvoir believes that the feminine flesh is a prey that allows a man to have access to the qualities he is looking for (366). This is Paul's case when he gets his impersonal love that he dreams of, but this quickly followed by disappointment because pleasure is not the only thing that he wants.

However, Clara reaches a full awakening as a woman and that corresponds with De Beauvoir's statement, "woman's eroticism is much more complex, and it reflects the complexity of the feminine situation" (367). This means that when this quotation is compared to Clara's case, it can be seen that Clara's suffering from her mother and then from her husband Baxter leads her to rebel against her situation and wants to be independent through her relation with Paul. However, she is not satisfied with this type of love because when she touches Paul passionately, he views himself as hopeless because his infinite desires for spiritual peace finds no way in Clara's sexual obedience "If I start to make love to you, he said, 'I just go like a leaf down the wind'" (Lawrence 316), i.e he clearly notices that Clara wants to possess him physically for herself but unfortunately she fails.

Finally, during their relationship, Clara wants to subdue Paul as she did with her former husband; but this goes wrong with her because whenever love is possessed and individualized, it turns into a disastrous results and this is illustrated in De Beauvoir's following quotation: "As soon as love is individualized, it is changed into avid egotism, and the miracle of eroticism vanishes" (232), Paul plays the role of the beloved lover and a husband substitute and can provide her only with a momentary ecstasy, while as a resolution he reconciles her with her husband Baxter.

3.6. Conclusion

Freud challenges the modern world by his foundations on the human thoughts and his revolutionary discoveries in the field of psychology; while these findings inspired many twentieth century writers. As a record, in *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence shows the effect of psychology and one's own emotional and spiritual struggles later in his life.

In the novel, Paul's complete relationship with his mother in terms of the quality of the love he shares with her; stands as an obstacle when he shifts to manhood because he

cannot find a satisfying companion. Owing to this reason, Paul is seen as a failure in forming a successful relation with other women except his mother: first, Miriam, who wants to possess him spiritually and then Clara, who wants to own him physically, whereas his mother holds his soul. Indeed, passing into the subsequent stage of oedipal love cannot be attained even when she is dead. Thus, as for the rest of his emotional life, he becomes uncertain of his choices and would always doubt his lovers who use him for personal gain.

Lawrence's own claim that thousands of young men suffer from the psycho-sexual malaise is portrayed in *Sons and Lovers* and this attests the suitability of his work which is considered as a subject for Freud's psychoanalytic theory.

General Conclusion

This dissertation is an investigation into unconventional character relationships in D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers: A Feminist-Psychoanalytic Perspective*, and its aim is to show the whereabouts of the unconventionality resides in the novel itself. Accordingly, the analytical core of the *Sons and Lovers* is already achieved by Lawrence regardless the use of Freudian theory. Despite some apparent similarities, it is seen that there are some differences between what the theory of Freud stresses and the analysis given by Lawrence. In *Sons and Lovers*, the relationship of mother-son is a little bit different from Freud's theory of Oedipus Complex since in the original story given by Freud, Oedipus and his mother Jocaste have a sexual affair which is not the case in Lawrence's story.

The novel is not about incestuous inclinations of a son, but rather about a mother's possessiveness and the strong dominance over her sons and its unsatisfying results, especially when the sons come into contact and close relationship with a woman a split occurs between their mind and body.

Sons and Lovers is both semi-autobiographical and psychological novel based on Lawrence's life experiences, through it he wants to show his own tragedy that he positively resisted when he was obliged to confront it since he passed through approximately the same tragic events as well as the happy moments of his protagonist Paul Morel. It clearly shows unconventional character relationships and the abnormal dependency of a mature son upon the suffocating control of his mother over the choices of his emotional life and even on his own career and social integration.

The aforementioned work depicts a type of modernist unconventionality in terms of character relationships where Freud's theories began to challenge the world, in addition to the strong feminist tide of some of the characters. Lawrence's main concern is the balanced power of his characters in their relations, while the concept of relationship for them is not a

question of setting up a good correlation with each other, and this is the reason why the majority of the relationships in the novel reflect a strong struggle; for example, Paul-Miriam relationship is characterized by struggle from both sides; Paul suffers from his mother's control over his devotion by imposing her own laws upon him, while Miriam suffers from her patriarchal family and society as a whole and her lack of power leads Paul to destroy her. Thus, Lawrence succeeds in depicting each relation especially the incomplete one between men-women which is seen as a characteristic of his major works.

The first chapter contains a short biography of the author since the work is based on his own life experiences, and an overview of the modernist era. Moreover, it is devoted to the identification of the Freud's theory of Oedipus Complex and the feminist approach to make the reader familiar with these two concepts, in addition to a brief summary of the novel. All these details will help the reader to understand the content of the study. Briefly, this chapter has included the basic theoretical background for a better understanding of Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*.

The second chapter is devoted to a biographical perspective on unconventional character relationship in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. It focuses on the unconventionality presented in the novel with reference to Lawrence's own life since he and the protagonist share nearly the same lifestyle. For example, in Lawrence's life female companionship plays a major role either intellectually or emotionally, and this is the case with Paul Morel the protagonist of *Sons and Lovers*, who is deeply affected by his mother's bondage over him, but when he comes to manhood he cannot love or in other words, he cannot find a woman that aptly suits his demands; he wants this woman to have the duality of both the mind and the body, but unfortunately he does not reach his wills. In turn, this duality of mind and body paralyze Lawrence since his early childhood which is the raw material of the novel. This chapter includes Paul's relationship with his mother, Miriam and Clara respectively with

reference to Lawrence's own life since the chapter deals with the biographical perspective, in addition to the role of women in Paul's life, as well as the symbolism of female gender in Lawrence's own life and *Sons and Lovers*.

The third chapter is devoted to both feminist and psychoanalytic perspective on character relationships in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. First of all, Lawrence was inspired by Freud's theories and insights in the field of psychology, and through the use of his theory of Oedipus Complex, he intended to show the effects of one's own psyche on his spiritual and emotional life just like Paul's case, who is seen as failure in constructing a successful relation, because he does not own a healthy and balanced psychology which later affects his choices and would be always doubting his lovers that they are using him for personal gain. However, the feminist tide is seen in the basic three women in the novel Mrs. Morel, Miriam and Clara, each of them uses all her power to take Paul for herself. Miriam with her strong spirituality thinks that she would attract and possess her beloved Paul, but unfortunately she does not succeed because in her he finds the copy of his mother's personality, and then Clara who uses her physical side to drive Paul to her and again she does not find away with him because he sees her intellectually void, while he is superior than her. Finally, the filial love that Paul shares with his mother overcomes all these unsuccessful relations and reserves the son exclusively for herself even after her death.

This literary work represents the theme of the unconventionality in character relationships, which stresses Lawrence's own claim that many people suffered from the same psychosexual unbalance portrayed in *Sons and Lovers*.

As a future perspective, this study could be as a starting point for a future doctoral research. Since this research does not tackle the whole themes of this work, a further research could deeply dig into the psychological side or to focus deeply on the three tragic women in

the novel. The analysis of this novel could be also very helpful for students and researchers who are interested in Lawrence's works and in British literature as a whole.

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