

The Image of the Weak Woman in D. H. Lawrence's 'Love on the Farm'

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Abstract

The researcher's concern in this paper is to deal with the image of the weak woman in D. H. Lawrence's fictional poem 'Love on the Farm', written in a dramatic monologue to evoke the speaker's inner feelings and thoughts. The narrator is evidently a suppressed country female, through which Lawrence stresses the image of a passive, subservient wife. She speaks out to reveal mixed feelings of fear and desire within her, through relating her experience to an implied listener. Lawrence allows the reader to imagine the horror that controlled the wife's soul and body during a sensual meeting with her husband. Lawrence depicts the real feelings of this wife in her encounter with her husband to convey her love experience.

Lawrence presents two contrasting images in the poem; the image of a passive wife; a shy, weak female who gives herself up in silence, and the image of a dominant, cruel husband in a patriarchal society in which man is elevated to woman. The image of the husband's supremacy is put in contrast with the woman's submission to reflect Lawrence's interest in declaring the inequality between man and woman since power is primarily male. The poem mirrors Lawrence's diverse readings and culture that formed his perception and stimulated him to present the male-female relationship.

Keywords: D. H. Lawrence – dramatic monologue – Modernism – Imagism – Bible – Aristotle – Plato – Friedrich Nietzsche – Sigmund Freud

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'The Female, as female, is passive, and the male, as male, is active, and the principle of movement comes from him' (Aristotle, qtd. in Linda Kintz, p.65).

This paper attempts to study the image of the weak woman in D. H. Lawrence's dramatic monologue 'Love on the Farm', published in his early Georgian Anthology, *'Love Poems and Others'* in 1913. Lawrence is concerned with the image of the passive wife, and in relating sex with

cruelty in a male-female relationship. Lawrence's idea is essentially biblical. According to the Bible:

Women should learn in silence and all humility. I do not allow them to teach or to have authority over men; they must keep quite. For Adam was created first and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and broke God's law. But a woman will be saved through having children, if she perseveres in faith and love and holiness, with modesty. (1 Timothy 2:11-15) p. 261

Women are sensitive, weak compared to men who are superior. They are at the mercy of men and under their absolute authority because they are subservient to men's will. This notion is taken from the Bible:

You wives must submit to your husbands, ... For the devout women of the past who placed their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful by submitting to their husbands. Sarah was like that; she obeyed Abraham and called him her master.... In the same way you husbands must live with your wives with the proper understanding that they are the weaker sex. (Peter 3, 3:7) p. 291

According to the Bible, the beauty of woman lies in her submission to man considering him a master. It is clear that man uses his bodily strength to dominate the woman since it is a way to dictate by showing supremacy over the fragile woman.

The image of the passive wife, that is presented in Lawrence's *Love on the Farm*, is based on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, using sensual images to depict a submissive woman. Eve sets the first holy example of a woman's obedience to Adam. Milton presents the marital relation between them, revealing the complete submission of Eve, to confirm her passivity. Like Milton, Lawrence depicts a rural woman in her surrender to her husband to prove the superiority of man over woman. The female narrator utters these lines:

And down his mouth comes to my mouth! And down
His bright dark eyes come over me, like a hood
Upon my mind! His lips meet mine, and a flood
Of sweet fire sweeps across me, so I drown
Against him, die, and find death good.

(*Love on the Farm*)

In the above lines, Lawrence portrays a weak woman who accepts her husband's proposal to make-love, she responds positively to his invitation showing a complete submission. Similar to Lawrence, Milton presents another image of submission in Book IV of *Paradise lost*; the notion that the beauty of Eve lies in her obedience:

So spake our general mother, and, with eyes
Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,
And meek surrender, half-embracing lean'd
On our first father; half her swelling breast
Naked met his, under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid. He, in delight
Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter
On Juno smiles when he impregns the clouds
That shed May flowers, and press'd her matron lip
With kisses pure. Aside the Devil turn'd
For envy; yet with jealous leer malign
(*Paradise Lost*, Book IV)

Accordingly, Eve passively submits to Adam's sexual call. She naturally obeys with pleasure and accepts to make love. She was granted the role of a passive wife since Adam is obviously superior. In Book X of *Paradise Lost*, Milton presents another extract that shows Eve as inferior to Adam and under his authority:

Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,
Superiour, or but equal, that to her
Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
And for thee, whose perfection far excelled
Hers in all real dignity? Adorned
She was indeed, and lovely, to attract
Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
Were such, as under government well seemed;
Unseemly to bear rule; which was thy part
And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.
(*Paradise Lost*, Book X)

The history of regulating the male-female relationship goes back to Christianity that puts a law of alliance between the "Flesh and the Word";

a system that governs the relation between man and woman. "*From the Christian penance to the present day, sex was a privileged theme of confession....it exonerates, redeems, and purifies the person; it unburdens him of his wrongs, liberates him, and promises him salvation*" (Michel Foucault, volume 1, p. 62). In Christianity, the physical communion between the 'flesh' and the 'Word' is a sacred union that is restricted within the frame of marriage. Man and woman launches life on earth. Eve, the mother of all humans, is created from Adam's rib, Adam is created from dust. Since Eve is the other half of Adam, they are one entity from one flesh but she is the weaker rib. According to the Bible:

Adam said, "At last, here is one of my own kind—bone taken from my bone, and flesh from my flesh. 'Woman' is her name because she was taken out of man"(Genesis 2: 21). p. 5

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife, and the two will become one. So they are no longer two, but one" (Matthew 18: 19). p. 28

Lawrence builds his philosophy on a biblical reality that the marital bond is a holy tie that gathers man and woman together. It is a sacred union that brings knowledge, pain and pleasure since it is a core of small societies, and new generations.

Love on the Farm is enriched by allusions to the Bible. It corresponds in its subject with what Lawrence states in a foreword to his novel *Sons and Lovers* of the "*Christian theology of Creation, Incarnation and Trinity*":

The 'Foreword' opens, for example, with a text from St John 'the beloved disciple': 'The Word was made Flesh', but the orthodoxy is immediately reversed: 'The Flesh was made Word'. God the Father, Lawrence asserts, is the Flesh, and we know the flesh as Woman; Woman, the Flesh, gives birth to Man, who in due time utters the Word. Woman or Flesh is the source of our instinctive or blood-knowledge. The Son, Man, constantly moves out, like a bee, from the Queen, Woman, to his work of conscious or intellectual endeavor, and back to her again for renewal. (*Study of Thomas Hardy*, p. xxv)

Since Lawrence's philosophy is based on a Christian doctrine, he opens his speech in *Sons and Lovers* with a text from the Bible: "*The Word was made Flesh*" (John 1: 14). For Lawrence, modern man is dehumanized by technology. Only when the (Word, the Son, Man) is incorporated with

the (Flesh, Woman), they will live and enjoy a natural life away from mechanization. Lawrence draws a simile in the foreword in which he resembles the woman with the Queen of bees, and the man with a bee who goes out to his work and returns to her after a long day of effort for renovation or renewal. The image of the bees is a natural image that reflects Lawrence's interest in nature. The man revolves around the woman because "*in a man's life, the female is the swivel and center on which he turns closely, producing his movement*" (*Study of Thomas Hardy*, p.56).

Man and woman are gathered in a sacred bond in which man shows dominance over his submissive wife. The image that creates the poem with its climactic sexual meeting between the married lovers suggests Lawrence's philosophy. Lawrence remarks: "*Modern man is terribly afraid of sex, of pain, of evil, of death...Men and women torture each other to death in the bedroom, just as the dying dinosaurs gnawed each other as they copulated in the chilling marches*" (qtd. in *Banerjee*, p.172). For Lawrence, no peace exists between man and woman without triumph since there is no equality; man is superior, woman is inferior. Woman finds pleasure in her submission to man and in her motherhood. According to Will Durant:

Equality between man and woman is impossible, because war between them is eternal; there is here no peace without victory – peace comes only when one or the other is acknowledged master. It is dangerous to try equality with a woman; she will not be content with that; she will be rather content with subordination if the man is a man. Above all, her perfection and happiness lie in motherhood. ... 'Man shall be educated for war, and woman for the recreation of the warrior; everything else is folly.'

(*The Story of Philosophy*, p. 433)

For Durant, women will not be satisfied or pleased in their equality with men since their pleasure lies in their fulfillment and maternity. But men are prepared for protection and mastering. Life is based on variation because "*nature abhors equality, it loves differentiation of individuals and classes and species. Socialism is anti-biological: the process of evolution involves the utilization of the inferior species, race, class or individual by the superior*" (*Ibid.*, p. 436).

The image of the passive wife goes back to the early Greek philosophers who support the idea of the preference of man over woman. When the poet Sophocles was asked about sex and whether he could still make love to a woman, he said: "*I am happy to have left all that behind. I feel as though I have been liberated from a savage and relentless slave*"

master" (Plato *The Republic*, Book I p. 27). Sophocles sees that the sexual drives degrade people, turning freemen into slaves, and men into savage beasts.

For Aristotle, man is privileged to woman. Man is active, superior and woman is passive, inferior. Aristotle views that woman differs in her nature from man. She is over sensitive and more kind, more impetuous than man who appears to be cruel and harsh. *On the Generation of Animals*, Aristotle writes:

Since the male and female are the first principles of [classes of men and animals and plants], they will exist in those things that possess them for the sake of generation. Again, as the first efficient or moving cause, to which belong the definition and the form, is better and more divine in its nature than the material on which it works, it is better that the superior principle should be separated from the inferior. Therefore, whenever it is possible and so far as it is possible, the male is separated from the female. For the first principle of the movement, whereby that which comes into being is male, is better and more divine, and the female is the matter. (Aristotle 1984, 1136) (qtd in Kintz, p. 65)

According to Aristotle, woman is a domestic, submissive being while man is active. A female is expected to remain indoors to bear and nurse her children, leaving for the male the outside labor.

Plato relates marriage with holiness. For Plato man is superior and preferable while woman is inferior because there is a vivid difference between the two sexes: "*Women and men are naturally the same, except that one is weaker and the other stronger*" (Plato *The Republic*, Book V, p. 147). Plato confirms the same opinion of favoring men over women since they attain a prior degree over women: "*Prizes and honors must be awarded to those of our young men who excel in war and in other employments, including the privilege of more frequent love-making with the women. These devices offer us a ready pretext to insure that they will be the ones begetting the most children*" (Ibid., Book V, p. 151). According to Simone de Beauvoir, in *The Second Sex*:

With the advent of patriarchy, the male resolutely claimed his posterity; the mother had to be granted a role in procreation even though she merely carried and fattened the living seeds: the father alone was the creator. Aristotle imagined that the fetus was produced by the meeting of the sperm and the menses: in this symbiosis, woman just provided passive material, while the male

principle is strength, activity, movement, and life. (qtd. in *The New York Times*, May 27, 2010).

Simone de Beauvoir agrees with Aristotle who views the female as powerless and helpless unlike the male who is active since the movement comes from him. Similar to Aristotle, Hegel states the biological difference between man and woman; one is active and the other is passive. *"It goes without saying that passivity will be the female's lot. Because of this differentiation, man is thus the active principle while woman is the passive principle because she resides in her non-developed unity"* (Ibid. *The New York Times*, May 27, 2010). From Hegel's view, nature imposes a sense of difference between man and woman.

Nietzsche's view does not differ from Hegel who regards man as superior over woman. Man enjoys a *"strength of will, courage, more impulse towards power, less sympathy, less fear, and less gentleness"* (Bertrand Russell, p. 769). Nietzsche sees woman as weak, and reliant; guided by her sensitive feelings. Nietzsche, who care about psychology, sees that the will to power is a psychological drive that proves the superiority of man over woman since there is a distinction between the psychological traits of man and woman. According to Freud:

The male was aggressive and impetuous, independent and self-willed, able to show great strength of character, and often in possession of outstanding intellectual and moral traits. The female was passive and dependent, narcissistic and self-centered; she let herself be dominated by her feelings and lacked moral rectitude. (Olsen and Koppe, p. 406)

For Freud, man is privileged over woman with certain character traits. Each sex has his own role; the man is active and the woman is passive. Lawrence agrees with Freud in his view so he writes:

The male is the "Will-to-Motion" and corresponds to the unicorn, the principle of love, the destiny of man. Female 'flesh' is the passive stabilizing principle, while male 'spirit' is an active principle responsible for progress and achievement in the world. (*Study of Thomas Hardy*, p. 56)

For Lawrence, the woman is the center who attracts the man to her. Man, in turn, owns the power of motion; he revolves around the woman. He is moved by his desire for complete satisfaction. *"Lawrence takes the Blakean attitude that desire is not evil, and that by acting on our inmost impulses, we open up the greatest possibilities for creative change"*. (Douglas A. Mackey, p.18) Like Blake, Lawrence views man as caged

within his "*sexual taboos which destroy his ability to feel and think by isolating the processes of feeling and thinking from each other*" (qtd. in Richard Elmann & Robert O'Clar, p. 350). For Lawrence, the sexual taboos confines man and prevents him from expressing his natural desires. Lawrence does not go with the saying that the erotic desires are taboos because he is convinced that "*open expression of sexuality was healthy, and that human beings could find true fulfillment only by living in harmony with nature*". (Roger Babusci, p.994) To harmonize with nature means to have union with a partner and to accept the human desires as a necessity because "*man's openness to his senses allows him to experience the four elements of the ancients—earth, air, water, and fire—in the apple. He reacts vibrantly to the ancient, elemental life.*" (Douglas A. Mackey, p. 17-18)

Lawrence makes use of Browning in writing *Love on the Farm*, since both lived the same experience of marrying and eloping with their lovers to Italy; an experience that may affect their philosophy of love. Douglas A. Mackey remarks: "*With Frieda, Lawrence could act out an "equilibrium" between self and other that affirmed the individuality and integrity of both*" (Ibid., p. 8-9). In a foreword to his *Study of Thomas Hardy* (written in 1914), Lawrence states his philosophy of love especially after his relationship, and finally his marriage, with Frieda who left her husband and children. Lawrence declares to McLeod :

The only way for art and civilization to get a new life, a new start – by bringing themselves together, men and women – revealing themselves each to the other, gaining great blind and knowledge and suffering and joy, which it will take a bit further lapse of civilization to exploit and work out. Because the source of all life and knowledge is in man and woman, and the source of all living is in the interchange and the meeting and mingling of these two: man-life and woman-life, man-knowledge and woman-knowledge, man-being and woman-being. (*Study of Thomas Hardy*, p. xxvii)

Man and woman initiated life on Earth; their sensual union led to understanding the secret of life, and the wisdom of their divine creation. God created them for love, renewal and regeneration. Their physical communion harmonizes them with nature. Lawrence comments:

The supreme desire of every man is for mating with a woman, such that the sexual act be the closet, most concentrated motion in his life, closest upon the axle, the prime movement of himself, of which all the rest of his motion is a continuance in the same kind. And the vital desire of every woman is that she shall be clasped as axle to the

hub of the man, that his motion shall portray her motionlessness, convey her static being into movement, complete and radiating out into infinity, starting from her stable eternity, and reaching eternity again, after having covered the whole of time." (*Study of Thomas Hardy*, p. 56)

For Lawrence, sex life is considered a steering wheel of man's life and a base of his being and movement. The sexual privilege which man enjoys, is the control he exercises over the woman. The passivity of the woman rests on her nature as a weak creature. Lawrence brings man and woman together in the image of a wheel:

As in my flower, the pistil, female, is the centre and swivel, the stamens, male, are close-clasping the hub, and the blossom is the great motion outwards into the unknown, so in a man's life, the female is the swivel and centre on which he turns closely, producing his movement. (*Study of Thomas Hardy*, p. 56)

Man is obsessed to have union with the other, and to complete integration. The two poles, man and woman, in turn, meet together to form a flood of emotions, and an entire fulfillment. Lawrence comments: "*In love, a man, a woman, flows on, to the very furthest edge of known feeling, being and out beyond the furthest edge: and taking the superb and supreme risk, deposits a security of life in the womb*" (*Ibid.*, p. 52). The physical union between the male and the female is a way for their psychological satisfaction.

Love on the Farm is narrated dramatically like Browning's dramatic monologue, *Porphyria's Lover*, to give an example of a helpless, weak wife. The poem is narrated in a rural woman's voice and from her own point of view. Like Browning, Lawrence depicts the inner voice of the narrator who pours out emotions to an implied listener. The reader is standing outside the story as an observer of the whole action. Unlike Lawrence's poem, Browning's *Porphyria's Lover* is narrated in a man's voice and from his own perception to show the submission of Porphyria.

When glided in Porphyria; straight
She shut the cold out and the storm,
And kneeled and made the cheerless grate
Blaze up, and all the cottage warm;
Which done, she rose, and from her form
Withdrew the dripping cloak and shawl,
And laid her soiled gloves by, united

Her hat and let the damp hair fall,
And, last, she sat down by my side
And called me. When no voice replied,
She put my arm about her waist,
And made her smooth white shoulder bare
And all her yellow hair displaced,
And, stooping, made my cheek lie there,
And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair,
Murmuring how she loved me — she
Too weak, for all her heart's endeavor,
To set its struggling passion free
From pride, and vainer ties dissever,
And give herself to me forever.

(*Porphyria's Lover*, qtd. in Sylvan Barnet, p. 453)

The image of the weak woman is recurred in both poems. Women are portrayed as obedient, fragile creatures while men are presented as sadistic ones who enjoy causing pain for women. The difference between the two poems is that in Browning's *Porphyria's Lover*, the male narrator killed *Porphyria* after making-love with her to possess her. But in Lawrence's poem, the female narrator enjoys her death in love calling it a good death. '*Of sweet fire weeps across me, so I drown / Against him, die, and find death good*'.

Both Lawrence and Browning stimulate the reader's imagination to imagine the sensual relation between a submissive woman and a cruel man. The narrative events of their poems reveal an obvious aggression directed towards the weak woman to empower her body. For instance, the image of winding the wife's throat to murder her is repeated in both poems. In *Love on the Farm*, the husband puts his fingers that still have the smell of the rabbit's fur around the wife's throat: "*I know not what fine wire is round my throat;*". The same image is used in Browning's *Porphyria's Lover*; the male narrator killed *Porphyria* by winding her yellow hair around her throat: "*All her hair in one long yellow sting I wound three times her little throat around, And strangled her*". The narrator feels that *Porphyria* becomes his own forever after killing her. This is reflected in his speech:

That moment she was mine, mine, fair,
Perfectly pure and good: I found
A thing to do, and all her hair
In one long yellow sting I wound

Three times her little throat around,
And strangled her. No pain felt she;
I'm quite sure she felt no pain.
(*Porphyria's Lover*, qtd. in Sylvan Barnet, p. 453)

Both Lawrence and Browning reproduce Freud's view of the sadistic man in their poems in which they present the image of the cruel man whose enjoyment accelerates and increases, causing menace and horror to the woman. In *The Theory of Psychoanalysis*, Freud says: "*The sadistic character uses every means to control and dominate the individuals who are its love objects even using violence and force to attain its goal*" (Olsen and Koppe, p. 227). Depicting man's sadistic pleasure to master and to cause pain to woman, reflects the man's sado-masochistic nature since his sensual pleasure is only realized by a sadistic display of strength. According to Freud:

In Freud's first etiologically based explanatory attempt, sadism and masochism were related to the drive to master. In the second explanatory attempt it was taken back one more step, to the biologically defined destructive or death drive. (Ibid., p. 226)

Man desires to possess the woman by showing a physical strength over her. He dominates physically and emotionally because he is physically structured to master. Some philosophers see that there is selfishness in love because love involves a desire for dominance over the partner. According to Nietzsche in *'The Story of Philosophy'*:

Love itself is only a desire for possession; courtship is combat and mating is mastery: Don Jose kills Carmen to prevent her from becoming the property of another. 'People imagine that they are unselfish in love because they seek the advantage of another being, often in opposition to their own. But for so doing they want to possess the other being. (qtd. in Will Durant, p. 421)

Lawrence was influenced by Nietzsche's philosophy, especially Nietzsche's views on the nature of women. which he sees as more natural than men and purer. Lawrence's weak wife in the poem is more natural unlike man who behaves cruelly. For Nietzsche, there is cruelty and selfishness in love since love is a desire to own the other; the woman's soul and body. In the *Will to Power*, Nietzsche writes:

We take pleasure in woman as in a perhaps daintier, more delicate, and more eternal kind of creature. What a treat it is to meet creatures who have only dancing and nonsense and finery in their

minds! They have always been the delight of every tense and profound male soul.

(qtd. in Russell, p. 764)

Woman is a sensitive creature who gives pleasure to man. Nietzsche, here, means that woman is a pretty creature, and man is deeper in mind, and because of her delicate nature, man takes pleasure in her company. Nietzsche speaks more gently of love:

'Whence arises the sudden passion of a man for a woman? ...Least of all from sensuality only: but when a man finds weakness, need of help, and high spirits, all united in the same creature, he suffers a sort of over-flowing of soul, and is touched and offended at the same moment. At this point arises the source of great love. And he quotes from the French: 'in true love it is the soul that embraces the body' (Will Durant, p. 421).

Accordingly, Nietzsche views love as an attraction between lovers. It is based on a spiritual union, and leads to a physical communion. It is a sense of fulfillment between man and woman when their souls and bodies are united together. Lawrence defines love as:

the mysterious vital attraction which draws things together, closer, closer, together....Love does not lie in merging, mingling, in absolute identification of the lover with the beloved. It lies in the communion of beings, who in the very perfection of communion, recognize and allow the mutual otherness. (qtd. in Armin Arnold, p. 64-6)

Lawrence builds his view on recognizing the perfect intimacy between the lovers, when a sensual fulfillment is attained with their union, and woman entirely submits to man. Douglas A. Mackey writes: "*The sexual consummation of 'Love on the Farm' is accomplished because the woman gives herself up totally to the man's embraces. She holds nothing back and does not resist*" (*D. H. Lawrence: The Poet Who Was Not Wrong*, p. 25-26). The image of the woman's complete physical affinity is taken from the love poetry of the Renaissance era. Edmund Spenser's *Prothalamion*, for example, gives a clear image of the sensual relation between the married lovers. The speaker, here, is addressing his bride, describing their pleasure in their bridal day. It is written to celebrate the conjugal bond in which the speaker expresses his love, "*And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound, / That fruitful issue may to you afford, / Which may your foes confound, / And make your joys redound / Upon*

your bridal day, which is not long: / Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song." (Prothalamion)

Love on the Farm is an imagist poem, for it has two contrasting images; one is set upon the other. The first one is the image of a 'passive', country wife, and the second is the image of a 'cruel', primitive husband who comes home with a slaughtered rabbit in his hand — together they create an atmosphere of primitivity, and cruelty that is intensified with saying '*Ah, soon in his large, hard hands she dies*'. This atmosphere is very impressive and effective to establish the idea of a man who empowers the body of his wife with his harshness. He is a symbol of brutality; a powerful man who attempts to overcome the wife who lacks power.

Douglas A. Mackey writes:

'Love on the farm', is a woman's sex fantasy which celebrates submission. The speaker watches her husband working outside at dusk; ominously the sky looks wounded in the sunset. He kills a rabbit that he has snared, and she emphasizes strongly with the animal, especially when he returns it to her. (D. H. Lawrence: *The Poet Who Was Not Wrong*, p. 24)

In this respect, the poem presents a vivid image of a wife who celebrates her imaginative love experience. Like the prey, the silenced 'preying' wife finds herself an easy victim of her husband's aggression. She is a symbol of the rabbit or the crying bird in her weakness; a victim to his savagery. She expresses her terror through the technique of the interior monologue to show how her husband conducts himself as the master and she is under his authority. According to Michel Foucault:

The husband's self-restraint pertains to an art of governing— governing in general, governing oneself, and governing a wife who must be kept under control and respected at the same time, since in relation to her husband she is the obedient mistress of the household. (*The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 2, p.165)

For Foucault man shows supremacy and power over woman by controlling her emotionally and physically. The husband desires to master while the wife shows obedience. The biological difference between the two sexes imposes the inequality between them. The woman is weak, delicate, and fragile while man is strong, brave, and firm. According to Foucault:

Physically, men are strong enough to endure cold, heat, and journeys on foot; women, who work indoors, were given bodies that are less resistant. Women have a natural fear, but one that has

positive effects—it induces them to be mindful of the provisions, to worry about losing them, to be in dread of using them up. The man, on the other hand, is brave, for he is obligated to defend himself outdoors against everything that might cause him injury. In short, 'the god directly prepared the woman's nature for indoor works and the man for works of the open air.' But he also equipped them with common qualities: since in their respective roles, men and women have to 'give and take,' since in their activity as household managers they have to gather in and mete out, they both received memory and diligence. (Ibid., p. 158)

God created each sex for a special role that suits his nature. The two roles are accurately harmonizing and the nonexistence of one would make the other of no use. Each sex is distinguished by certain physical and character traits to outfit his nature. Foucault says:

Outside, therefore, the man sows, cultivates, plows, and tends the flocks; he brings back the things he has produced, earned, or acquired through exchange. Indoors, the woman for her part receives, preserves, and allocates according to need. Generally speaking, it is the husband's activity that brings provisions into the house, but it is the wife's management that regulates their expenditure. The two roles are exactly complementary and the absence of one would make the other useless. (Ibid., p. 157)

The physical strength of man provides him the ability to master and control the woman. Man and woman are one entity, share the duties together for the family's stability. In *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Nietzsche writes: "*Man shall be trained for war and woman for the recreation of the warrior. All else is folly.*" (qtd. in Russell, p. 764). Each sex has a role to do; man is prepared for war and he should prove as a warrior, but woman is prepared for motherhood. Nietzsche comments:

That commanding something which the people call the 'spirit' wants to be master in and around its own house and wants to feel that it is master; it has the will from multiplicity to simplicity, a will that ties up, tames, and is domineering and truly masterful. (qtd. in Maudemarie Clark, p.235)

In this regard, man has a desire to display his power over woman. He needs to be master in his house to satisfy his manhood. He enjoys his supremacy over the woman's soul and body. The woman, in turn, enjoys his dominance.

From the outset, Lawrence draws a dramatic vivid image of a weak woman in contrast to an image of the cruel man to reveal the woman's psychological state. There is light that comes from the window and it is given a golden color to represent sunshine or the man's physical presence. The light is suggested first by the window, and supported by its golden colour. It is focused on the image of the man who is coming with '*his large, dark hands*' that are moving through the evening wind. The female narrator detects him clearly because of the bright light that comes from the window. The man's physical presence causes happiness for the country wife. His physical appearance is familiar for her with his manly looking.

Therefore, the sun in the opening stanza corresponds with the husband's presence. The interior monologue of the wife is divided into two time-segments; absence and presence. The first time-segment is before the husband's arrival and the second time is after the husband's presence. The poem opens with the first time-segment where a country woman is describing her absent husband to the reader. He appears from a distance walking home. She expresses her admiration with his strength, "*What Large, dark hands are those at the window*". The second time-segment begins with the husband's presence as he uses his key to open the door and the wife is watching with terror. '*I hear his hand on the latch, and rise from my chair / Watching the door open; he flashes bare*'. In his introduction to '*Selections of D. H. Lawrence's Poetry*', Professor M. Enani writes:

The tone of the poem changes to record the change of the psychological state of the woman. The critic Helen Sword said that the woman considers everything in nature as a menace and a threat referring to the original title of the poem as "Love and cruelty" and Lawrence changes it into "Love on the Farm". The critic says that the man's return with the slaughtered rabbit was expected to make the woman to discard her husband because his hands still smell the fur of the rabbit. But rather, the poem presents an image of a submissive wife who admires the strength of her husband confessing her complete obedience to him and his dominance over her.(p. 47- 48, my translation)

Professor Enani sees that in her interior monologue, the female narrator describes in detail an implicit feeling of happiness for her husband's return; a feeling that is mingled with terror. She accepts with horror the idea of being victimized like a prey or a trapped rabbit who failed to be set free. Later, the reader realizes that the sense of terror that is seen and noticed in the woman's eyes and voice, is an introduction to a sensual meeting or a preface to the wife's symbolic death:

*He flings the rabbit soft on the table board
And comes toward me: ah! The uplifted sword
Of his hand against my bosom, and oh, the broad
Blade of his glance that asks me to applaud
His coming! With his hand he turns my face to him
And caresses me with his fingers that still smell grim
Of the rabbit's fur! God, I am caught in a snare!
I know not what fine wire is round my throat;
I only know I let him finger there
My pulse of life, and let him nose like a stoat
Who sniffs with joy before he drinks the blood*

*And down his mouth comes to my mouth! and down
His bright dark eyes come over me, like a hood
Upon my mind! His lips meet mine, and a flood
Of sweet fire weeps across me, so I drown
Against him, die, and find death good.*

The poem is originally entitled "*Cruelty and Love*" – a title that is significant in itself to denote aggression and harshness in a love relationship. The substitution of the title to "*Love on the Farm*" is sufficient to identify optimism, affection, hopefulness, and warmth unlike its original title. Further, the title carries a vivid image that moves the reader's imagination away from the crowd of the city to the charm of the country to live with a rural wife in her conjugal experience. Lawrence invites modern man to return to nature:

I am part of the greater whole, and I can never escape. But I can deny my connections, break them, and become a fragment. Then I am wretched. What we want is to destroy our false, inorganic connections, especially those related to money, and re-establish the living organic connections with the cosmos, the sun and the earth, with mankind and nation and family. Start with the sun, and the rest will slowly, slowly happen. (*Banerjee, p. 13*)

Noteworthy, the image of the weak woman and her physical communion with man in Lawrence's poem is in harmony with nature. Man's sexual dominance over the woman's body is part of the natural system as Lawrence understands it. It is part of the universe as the sun, the earth and the other planets. Norms of modernity and urbanism should submit to the universal natural system according to Lawrence.

Love on the Farm consists of two quatrains and five successive stanzas varied in length. The first quatrain is an extended rhetorical question that is written to offer a complete thought, and to paint a prolonged picture. It is not required to entail an answer. But rather, it is employed to serve two main purposes: to arouse the reader's curiosity by inquiring about the man that the narrator describes, and to show admiration for his masculinity. Also it achieves a rhetorical effect, as in these lines:

What large, dark hands are those at the window
Grasping in the golden light
Which weaves its way through the evening wind
At my heart's delight?

There is a caesura within the first line after "What large," an obligatory, abrupt pause to drive the reader to stop to think deeply about these "*large, dark hands*" that may indicate the man's strength, and his cruelty. It directs the reader to slow down in reading the poem to concentrate on its meaning. The first three intended run-on lines of the first stanza also do not have a complete meaning, but rather, they are left unfinished. Hence, they are not punctuated at the end to create feelings of expectation. The reader keeps asking himself what is going to happen next? The fourth line completes the meaning by declaring the woman's delight using an end-stopped of a question mark.

The reader observes that the woman's feeling of 'delight' in the opening stanza is turned into 'terror' and 'death' in the last stanza. The poem opens with the rural wife's interior monologue that states her delight for her husband's return back from work. The female narrator expresses her admiration of her husband's strength when he appears in the golden light saying: "*What large, dark hands are those at the window / Grasping in the golden light / Which weaves its way through the evening wind / At my heart's delight?*" In the last stanza, Lawrence descends into a symbolic death and the encounter between the lovers; a descent which is more surprising to the reader who expects the continuity of horror especially after bringing the slaughtered rabbit. The repetition of the word "down" is used in purpose to show the man's masculinity, power and mastery over the wife, compared with her feeling of humiliation, and weakness: "*And down his mouth comes to my mouth! And down / His bright dark eyes come over me, like a hood / Upon my mind!*". Hence, a flood of passion overwhelms the wife.

A hood comes over her mind; mental consciousness is extinguished in passion. A consummation of being is achieved in the sexual

union here, and the purifying passion of fire smelts consciousness free of its limitations. Experience does not cease here at the end of the poem: it begins. (Douglas A. Mackey, p. 24)

Lawrence closes the poem with these lines:

His lips meet mine, and a flood
Of sweet fire sweeps across me, so I drown
Against him, die, and find death good.

The wife does not show any resistance, but she submits emotionally and physically to her husband. The wife's death is symbolic, once she is dominated by the powerful body of her husband, she melts into his character, she loses her identity to be part of her husband's.

The female narrator uses certain words to reflect the wild nature of the man saying: (*I'm caught in a snare.../ his finger is round my throat.../ he drinks the blood*). The weak woman stands for the rabbit who is hanged by a wire loop. She compares her husband to a primitive, savage man who slays animals for food. The way of throwing the rabbit on the table and turning the woman's face to him with his fingers that still have the smell of the rabbit's fur expresses the man's savagery. Like the prey, the weak woman submits to his power and he ordered her to welcome his coming with applaud. "*and oh, the broad Blade of his glance that asks me to applaud*". Opposing or conflicting feelings are inside the country woman who says: (*Should I not answer to his talk / Or should he my tears surmise*). Contradictory emotions are inside the country wife and tormenting her: delight and horror, attraction and repulsion, desire and aversion, agreement and disagreement. The woman is perplexed to take a decision among all these opposing sensations that are inside her and disturbing her. She is hesitated to accept the husband's proposal to make-love and to respond positively to his invitation. Her withdrawal may explain her shyness. Douglas A. Mackey writes: "*Her morbid self-sacrificial quality which involves physical submission with mental resistance, denotes the split in her nature between body and soul*" (*D. H. Lawrence: The Poet Who Was Not Wrong*, p. 25-26).

The metaphor of 'drinking the blood' is a biblical image that implies holiness, dread, and pain. The word "blood" represents the spiritual side in man since it alludes to Christ's blood that freed people of their sin. Before he went to the cross, Jesus gave the cup of wine to his disciples after the final supper, saying, "*This cup is God's new covenant sealed with my blood, which is poured out for you*" (Luke 22: 20, p. 111). Christ's blood is a redemption from sins; a salvation from punishment. "*This is the blood which seals the covenant that God has commanded you*

to obey" (Hebrews 9: 20, p. 278). Similar to Lawrence's Biblical image of Christ's blood, Eliot's *East Coker*: "*The dripping blood our only drink, / The bloody flesh our only food: / In spite of which we like to think / That we are sound, substantial flesh and blood— / Again, in spite of that, we call this Friday good.*" (Eliot's *East Coker*: IV)

To sacrifice with the rabbit and drinking the blood causes horror to the woman as a symbol of her end. The poet uses exaggeration or hyperbole: (*up lifted sword of his hand, against my bosom / Blade of his glance, / wire is round my throat;*). He chooses particularly certain words like 'sword', 'blade', and 'wire' together with the slaughtered 'rabbit' to emphasize aggression and brutality of the man, and to reach the poem to its finality by a sexual fulfillment or death in love. Repeating the same motifs of the man's brutality are expressed in these lines: (*The large, dark hands*) of stanza one become (*the large, hard hands*) of stanza five in which the rabbit dies, to emphasize the idea of cruelty, and to increase the woman's fear. (Sandra M. Gelbert, p. 54) Lawrence's portrayal of the man's cruelty in the poem is typically a Nietzschean perception. In his book *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Nietzsche writes: "*Thou goest to woman? Do not forget thy whip.*" (qtd. in Russell, p. 764). The image of the slaughtered rabbit in his hands that are full of blood expresses his primitivity and bestiality. The strange thing is that the wife is attracted to her husband instead of going away from him.

Enani sees that Lawrence alludes to the Bible when he says that the married lovers achieved fulfillment with their emotional union: '*I drown / Against him, die, and find death good*'. This line reverts to the Biblical phrase, "*Let there be light — and light appeared. God was pleased with what he saw. Then he separated the light from the darkness, and he named the light 'day' and the 'darkness' night*" (Genesis 1 4:5), the wife does not die with her emotional meeting with her husband but reaches a sensual pleasure that separates light from darkness (Enani, p.48). Enani explains that the wife's death in love at the end of the poem is a metaphor of her feeling of the sensual fulfillment.

Readers may find trouble in understanding this line: '*Against him, die, and find death good*' since using the verb 'die' and the noun 'death' opens more doors of questions than it closes. It moves the reader's imagination towards the meaning as a figurative death, that is intended to reflect the pleasure reached after the encounter between the married lovers. Hence, the word 'death', here, hides unspoken details that are understood to the reader about the male-female physical affinity that is portrayed in all the love poems. For instance, at the end of Gilbert Highet's poem: '*So, after she changed each separate sheet and blanket, / I kissed her. We made peace all over the bed.*' (qtd. in Michael

Alexander, p. 110). It is the peace that Lawrence relates at the end of his poem with death or the fulfillment that is achieved after the sexual communion between the lovers.

The first-person narrator "I" is used in purpose in the poem to emphasize the female narrator's presence, "*I am caught in a snare! I know not what fine wire is round my throat; / I only know I let him finger there / I drown against him, die, and find death good.*" The narrator intends to repeat the pronoun "I" to focus on the importance of her existence and it makes it easier for the reader to remember her.

Love on the Farm is written in the iambic with variations in rhyme and length of lines. For example, the opening line in the poem: '*What large, dark hands are those at the window*' is longer than the second line: '*Grasping in the golden light*'. The third line: '*Which weaves its way through the evening wind*' is longer than the fourth line: '*At my heart's delight?*'. To Marsh, Lawrence confirms: "*I think.... My rhythms fit my mood pretty well in the verse*" (qtd. in Sandra M. Gelbert, p. 54). Thus, the rhythm used in the poem helps first to convey the poet's mood, to communicate the meaning, and to suggest mixed feelings of delight and horror within the woman. Lawrence uses a formal loose rhymes and phrases such as '*Or should he my tears surmise*', and some approximate rhyme like (*window/wind, home/come, hood/flood*). Repeating words of presence "come/goes home" emphasizes the presence of the husband. Frequent imagistic repetitions and similarities are used to form music and melody, such as (*And swings all loose from the swing of his walk!*), (*he flashes bare, and flashes his eyes*), (*And down his mouth comes to my mouth! And down*), (*large, dark hands / large, hard hands*).

Sandra M. Gelbert comments:

'Love on the Farm', is one of the most live and emotionally realistic of Lawrence's early verses, and it exhibits a degree of formal looseness.... The style grows progressively less lyrical and more gnarled. The central section, in which the man killed the rabbit, is cast in breathless tetrameter. In the final, sensual confrontation between the man and the woman, the lines lengthen, though unevenly, into a rough but more relaxed pentameter. Throughout, the poem quivers with the tense ambivalence of its theme.

(*Acts of Attention: The Poems of D. H. Lawrence*, p. 54-55)

Accordingly, Lawrence presents a dramatic situation through the woman's interior monologue. Lawrence divides the story of the poem into four dramatic segments to appear more thrilling, changing the poetic meter in each segment to record a change in the woman's psychological

state. So the style becomes less lyrical and more crude. The first dramatic segment introduces the reader to a rhetorical question intended to express the woman's admiration of the man's strength. The second dramatic segment sheds light on the man's cruelty in catching the rabbit which presses back her ears in terror, and then in his "*large, hard hands she dies*". She dies two times; first of fear and then of the painful death. The weak rabbit stands for the woman in her helplessness comparing her with the man's physical strength. In his way home, the rabbit swings in his large, hard hands from the swing of his walk like the pendulum of the watch in a regular rhyme. (*Ah, soon in his large, hard hands she dies, / And swings all loose from the swing of his walk!*). The central dramatic segment of the poem in which the man returned with the slaughtered rabbit in his hand is formed in breathless iambic tetrameter in which the lines of the verse are consisting of four metrical feet. The final dramatic segment of the sexual meeting between the married lovers, the lines extend, into soothing pentameter in which the lines of the verse are consisting of five metrical feet.

The concluding lines of *Love on the Farm* paint lively pictures that offer a physical sensation with the words that are used according to the five senses; seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling – the reader is invited to experience a picture with all his senses through the employment of imagery and rhythm. The sensational images provide a closer contact between the two lovers. (And caresses me with his fingers that still smell grim / his finger round my throat, / his lips meet mine), refers to touch. The image of (smell grim), refers to smell. The image of (I hear his hand on the latch, / asks me to applaud), refers to hearing. The image of (His bright dark eyes come over me), refers to vision. The image of (drink the blood), refers to taste.

The notion of colour dominates the poem since Lawrence uses vivid coloured images. He tries to paint real pictures using different colours to create a real vision, to form beautiful images and to provide a clear expression. The colour achieves a natural sight to give a sense of the narrative. The colours grow more darker to reflect the man's cruelty that accelerates the woman's fear and finally death in love. For example: ('golden light', 'bright breast', 'yellow, evening glow', 'blue stoop', 'brown ball', 'brown surprise', 'dark eyes'). Lawrence uses visual imageries to express the woman's horror ('she glances quick her startled eyes', 'quivering fears', 'flashes his eyes', 'turns back her liquid, anguished eyes', 'watching the door open'). He uses auditory imageries to convey the woman's feelings like ('calling low to her lover', 'plaintive cry is heard', 'low word', 'terror of his oncoming,' 'should I not answer to his talk', 'should he my tears surmise,' , 'I hear his hand on the latch', 'He flings the

rabbit soft on the table board', 'asks me to applaud'). Lawrence draws live, colourful images to express the narrative.

Conclusion

This research stresses on the image of the weak woman as portrayed in Lawrence's "love on the Farm". Lawrence believes in nature, and in woman as a sensitive creature who is oppressed by man's mastering over her body and soul. The weakness of a woman versus the strength of man is part of the harmony nature offers to man for his physical strength.

The writer of this paper tries to study Lawrence's idea in this poem through a careful reading of his lines and structure considering the reality that "*the poet is haunted by a demon, a demon against which he feels powerless*" (James Longenbach, *The Nation*, October 1, 2013). "love on the Farm" is a fictional poem narrated in the first person singular, using the technique of a dramatic monologue and it develops to reach a clear psychological self-revelation of a female narrator. In a yellow evening, a country wife glimpses her husband from the window, walking back from the farm. The story that makes up the poem and the conclusion of a love-making suggests the image of a submissive wife.

"Love on the Farm" is built on a passionate private relationship where Lawrence blends the Victorian tendency to nature with Imagism. He portrays the natural life of the farmers who are living in the village by giving a simple image of their country life to give a primitive impression. He presents a dramatic experience, in a form of an image, through the speech of the country-woman. Sex is a central motif since the poem is full of erotic images, and sexual implications.

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