

**UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ**

**DUALISM AND FELINE SYMBOLS IN D. H.  
LAWRENCE'S *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love*  
AND *The Plumed Serpent***

**A Pro Gradu Thesis**

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HUMANISTINEN TIEDEKUNTA  
ENGLANNIN KIELEN LAITOS

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Dualism and feline symbols in D. H. Lawrence's  
*The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* and *The Plumed  
Serpent*

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Tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää, miten ihmisluonnon kaksinaisuus eli dualistisuus näkyy D. H. Lawrencen romaaneissa ja mikä on niissä esiintyvien kissaeläinsymbolien pääfunktio. Pääasiallinen materiaali koostuu D. H. Lawrencen romaaneista *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* ja *The Plumed Serpent*. Lisämateriaalina on käytetty esimerkiksi dualismia ja kissaeläinsymboliikkaa käsitteleviä kirjoja ja artikkeleita. Tutkielmassa vastataan kysymyksiin: 1) Mitä on dualismi Lawrencen ja eri filosofien mukaan? 2) Mikä on kissaeläinten symbolinen merkitys Lawrencelle ja eri kulttuurien ja aikakausien edustajille? 3) Miten ihmisluonnon dualistisuus näkyy kirjojen henkilöissä ja heidän rakkaussuhteissaan? 4) Mikä pääfunktio kissaeläinsymboleilla on romaaneissa ja miten ne liittyvät ihmisluonnon dualistisuuteen?

Lawrencen elämää kuvaillaan ja dualismiteoriaa tarkastellaan suhteessa muihin dualistisiin teorioihin. Kissaeläinsymboliikkaa tarkastellaan ensin yleisesti ja sen jälkeen suhteessa Lawrencen dualismiteoriaan. Romaanien henkilöt ja tapahtumat esitellään, korostaen erityisesti henkilöiden välisiä romanttisia suhteita ja niissä esiintyviä ongelmia. Ihmisluonnon dualistisuuden ongelmaa pohditaan romaanihenkilöiden kannalta ja samalla arvioidaan kissaeläinsymbolien merkitystä ja niiden suhdetta dualismiin.

Lawrencen teorialla maailmankaikkeuden ja erityisesti ihmisluonnon dualistisuudesta on sekä yhtäläisyyksiä että eroavuuksia muiden dualismia koskevien teorioiden kanssa. Lawrencen teorian mukaan maailmassa on kaksi vastakkaista pääperiaatetta, mies- ja naisperiaate. Miesperiaate edustaa yksilön rationaalista ja henkistä puolta ja naisperiaate yksilön aistillista ja vaistonvaraista puolta. Yksilön onnellisuuden edellytyksenä on hyväksyä nämä vastakkaiset puolet itsessään ja yhdistää ne yhdeksi kokonaisuudeksi. Ihanteellisessa ihmissuhteessa miehen ja naisen välillä molemmat osapuolet ovat yhdistäneet vastakkaiset puolensa ja kohdanneet sitten toisensa täydentävinä vastakohtina. Tämä ihmisluonnon dualistisuus on myös pääsyynä siihen, että romaanien henkilöiden välisissä rakkaussuhteissa esiintyy paljon ongelmia. Ne henkilöistä, jotka hyväksyvät itsensä ja kumppaninsa dualistisuuden, ovat lopulta onnellisempia kuin ne, jotka eivät siihen pysty. Romaaneissa esiintyvät kissaeläinsymbolit kuvastavat henkilöiden ihmisluonnon dualistisuutta ulkonäön, liikkumisen tai käyttäytymisen kautta. Kissaeläimet symboloivat enemmän usein negatiivisinkin nähtäviä, naisperiaatteeseen liittyviä ominaisuuksia kuin positiivisempia, miesperiaatteeseen liittyviä ominaisuuksia.

Asiasanat: dualism.duality.male principle.female principle.white self.dark self.

feline symbol

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The relationship between a man and a woman has inspired many an artist throughout centuries. It is also one subject that constantly occurs in the works of D. H. Lawrence, a major 20<sup>th</sup>-century English writer. It is particularly important in *The Rainbow* (1915), its sequel *Women in Love* (1920) and *The Plumed Serpent* (1926). In these novels, Lawrence describes the hardships of maintaining a romantic relationship on a both physically and mentally satisfactory level. Another theme which is often present in Lawrence's works and which critics such as Kenneth Inniss (1971) and H. M. Daleski (1965) find extremely important is the duality of the universe. However, I will look at dualism on a more constricted angle, namely concentrate on the duality of human nature. In addition to that, since Lawrence often gave animals symbolic value in his works, I will examine the feline symbolism in the novels and in general. I feel that there is no other animal, which has been seen in such a contradictory light in the course of history than the cat, and this is one reason I chose feline symbols as my subject. The other reason is that I have always been interested in symbolism, mysticism and mythology.

In my thesis, I will try to show that in the three novels, the main function of feline symbolism is to portray the male and female principles of Lawrence's dualistic theory. I believe that through the examination of feline symbols I will also find evidence of human duality being the main reason for the problems that the characters in the novels have in their romantic relationships.

I will begin my study by introducing the author of the three novels and the context in which they were written. Then I will take a look into his world of dualism and compare its principles with those of other views on dualism. Next, I will discuss how felines are seen symbolically, first in a more general sense by people of different cultures and then according to Lawrence's doctrine of dualism. Then, I will present the novels and their main characters. I will discuss the lives and loves of each main character, with special emphasis on the problems encountered in their relationships to the opposite sex. Here I will also discuss the feline symbolism and human duality in the novels. I will finish my thesis by summarizing my findings.

## 2 LAWRENCE AND DUALISM

### 2.1 Lawrence as The Man and The Writer

David Herbert Lawrence was born on the 11th of September, 1885 in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire. Eastwood was a growing colliery village and a tight-knit community, consisting of collier men who depended on each other to support their families and women of whom few had jobs, and children who could hardly wait to become colliers themselves (Worthen 1997:1). Worthen (1997:1) observes that although it was not the best background for Lawrence who, in his work, would write about the relationships between men and women, and man and the natural world, the very absence of these relationships in Eastwood made them remarkable to him.

Lawrence was the fourth child of Arthur Lawrence, a miner, and Lydia Lawrence (née Beardsall)(Draper 1964:13) who had originally been a teacher (Draper 1964:21) and who later had to open a little shop to bring home some extra money (Pinion 1980:2). Lydia, who had a great love for books and was interested in intellectual matters, could not bear that her husband spent his evenings in the “male world” drinking with his mates. She despised him - he could never do well in anything - and consciously alienated the children from their father, telling them stories about his irrational and violent behaviour. Arthur, who had married above himself, was unhappy with the lack of respect and love shown him by Lydia and the children, and responded by further irritating his family. (Worthen 1997:2.)

Arthur was an easygoing but passionate man, and this passion was probably further accentuated by his obvious lack of self-respect and even self-hatred. Pritchard (1971) states that part of the reason for the tension between Lawrence and his father was that Lawrence mistook his violence for sexuality that threatened his mother and himself. Scared of Arthur, he turned to Lydia, but she would not give him the attention and love he needed - she felt that his physical being had to be suppressed. (Pritchard 1971:22-23.) Possibly she feared that he would become like his father, abandon the world of intelligence and turn to sensuous pleasures instead.

Now that Lawrence had no one to turn to and no male role model to learn from, his

sexual identity was blurred. On one hand he loved his mother, on the other, he felt she was just using him. (Pritchard 1971:23.) Secretly, he began to admire his father and his masculine energy; he had possessed this frightening woman. Lawrence's admiration went so far that Pritchard (1971:23) claims it had a touch of homosexuality in it, but there is little concrete evidence of that. It could also have been a question of jealousy, if not envy.

The mixed feelings toward his mother and the guilt he felt because of them, bothered Lawrence for years. Popular among women, he used every opportunity for a sensual contact, but the idea of his mother prevented him from having any satisfactory relationships with them. Only Lydia's death in 1910 freed him from his oedipal pains. (Pritchard 1971:22.) It also helped Lawrence to overcome his hatred of Arthur, and his attitude toward him became healthier than before (Beal 1968:3).

From the beginning, Lydia Lawrence had taught the children to take school and the possibilities it could offer seriously, and she had had high hopes for them to rise into the middle-class. Her second son Ernest, who had been the cleverest of the children at school, had been the first one to make her happy: he had had a succession of relatively well-paid jobs and, at the same time, he had been studying a great deal. Lawrence, on the other hand, had been frail from the start, and had missed too many classes to do particularly well at school. (Worthen 1997:3.) In school, the bookish Lawrence had no interest in school games and preferred the company of girls (Pinion 1980:6). Despite the scholarship he had won at the age of thirteen, he dropped out of school three years later (Worthen 1997:2-3); a move which, no doubt, had not been encouraged by his mother. There had been many reasons for it; he had been an oddity among his fellow students and probably made gross fun of, but the main reason had been that his uncle Walter Lawrence had been arrested and later committed to prison. He had killed his son during a row, and the story had been splashed over the local newspapers. (Worthen 1997:3-4.)

The schooling had taken a lot of money from the family, and now Lawrence was forced to take a job as a clerk in Nottingham. At this time, his brother Ernest died of erysipelas, and, due to double pneumonia caused by the twelve-hour workdays, Lawrence nearly followed him to the grave. After the recovery, Lawrence noticed a change in his mother's attitude toward him. As her favourite son was gone, Lawrence was the one to carry the

weight of her hopes and expectations, together with a new, deeper love. (Worthen 1997:4.)

Now Lawrence, who had stayed at home after the illness, also began to see the country around his home in a different way (Worthen 1997:4). This affected his future writing: his love of nature is clearly visible in his works. A few months later he began his career as a teacher, first as an uncertified pupil-teacher and later, after attending a training course at Nottingham University College (Worthen 1997:5), as a school master (Pinion 1980:11). During this period he also started to write the first version of his first novel, *The White Peacock* (Worthen 1997:5), which was published five years later in 1911 (Draper 1964:13). The reception of the novel was poor but the next novel, *The Trespasser* (1912), had a better success (Pinion 1980:23, 28).

By that time Lawrence had already met his future wife Frieda Weekley, who was a daughter of a German baron and, at that time, married with two daughters to one of Lawrence's professors. Lawrence and Frieda's meeting had been love at first sight and led to marriage in 1914. (Garnett 1974:38.) Their life together was stormy but their love for each other, art and travels kept them together. They spent a lot of their time travelling around the world and making friends with artists, aristocrats, philosophers and people in high political positions. (Pinion 1980:134, 32.) Pinion (1980:36) states that travelling and the new acquaintances gave Lawrence, who had already before going to College read Schopenhauer and William James and who, at College, had joined a socialist society (Worthen 1997:7), constantly new ideas for his works.

Jacobson (1973:133) adds to this another element that affected Lawrence's writing: his hatred of modern society. Having formed a new relationship to nature, he was a great supporter of the old agricultural way of life and strongly opposed industrialism and the political and cultural developments accompanying it (ibid). According to him, democracy, science, urbanism, liberalism and religious scepticism, among other things merely

“...encouraged people to believe that they could find fulfilment as producers and consumers of material goods, as members of competing political parties or nation-states, as manipulators of yet more and more powerful machines...”

( as quoted by Jacobson 1973: 133-134.)



His feelings toward this “mechanization of man” and man’s alienation from nature (ibid: 135) are portrayed particularly well in *The Rainbow* (1915) and *The Plumed Serpent* (1926), as will be shown later. Despite the fact that his works were not always favourably received - *The Rainbow* and *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928) were banned for obscenity - Lawrence was an industrious and versatile writer. Before his death of pleurisy on the 2nd of March, 1930, he managed to write a large collection of novels, plays, poems, short stories and other miscellaneous prose. (ibid: 36,64.)

Novels were Lawrence’s “spiritual biography”, and their characters and milieus came from his boyhood and youth (Beal 1968:3). Inniss (1971:9) points out that in these novels he, unlike other writers of his time, not only concentrated on the social life of man, but also dealt with cosmological questions. As if he were a psychic, he had a compelling need to preach about metaphysics, and, like a lyrical poet, he was interested in the timelessness of being. In his novels, common-sense knowledge meets mythology and Freud. Man has a relationship to birds, beasts and flowers and, with their help, becomes conscious of the many dimensions of the universe. (Inniss 1971:10.)

## 2.2 Dualism

According *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (1996), the term “dualism” was originally invented by Thomas Hyde at the beginning of the eighteenth century. As a metaphysical theory, it refers to the world being made up of two elemental categories, which are incommensurable (<http://www.utm> 1996), i.e. they are distinct and independent types of being (Carroll 1998). This includes distinctions between mind and body, good and evil (<http://www.utm> 1996)), material and spiritual (Carroll 1998), male and female and culture and nature (Giblin 1998), just to mention a few. Dualism also claims that both two components in question must exist, not just one of them. This is in contrast to monism, which states that there is only one elemental, and pluralism, maintaining that there are many elements, which constitute the world. ( <http://www.utm> 1996)

### 2.2.1 Lawrence's Dualism

Lawrence's dualism is a part of his pantheistic and naturalistic Weltanschauung, or world picture (Inniss 1971:33) and has, as a matter of fact, been the subject of many studies. Draper (1964:21) feels that the origins of this doctrine stem from Lawrence's difficult childhood, most of all the contrast between the parents' personalities. As opposites, the two of them attracted each other but there was not enough in common between them to sustain a marriage on a satisfactory level. Pinion (1980:37) remarks that the same symptoms of unfulfilment were later seen in Lawrence's own marriage with Frieda.

According to Lawrence's doctrine of dualism, there exist two opposite basic principles in the world; the male and the female principle, and all creativity is dependent on the fruitful co-operation between them (Daleski 1965:13). This dualism also extends to human nature. The male principle - which is found strongest in a man (Daleski 1965:25) - emphasizes continuous motion, variability and change - "Will-to-Motion" -, whereas the female principle, the embodiment of which is a woman (Daleski 1965:25), stresses endless oneness and stability - "Will-to-Inertia". The male principle is based on affection - the spiritual "Love" - and the female, on the will to govern - or the natural "Law" of the body. (Daleski 1965:24-26.) Further, the male spirit represents the "white self" (Jacobson 1973:136), the spiritual (Draper 1964:23), rational and mental-conscious side of an individual, that yearns for knowledge beyond the senses. The female spirit, then, is the "dark self" (Jacobson 1973:136), the sensual (Draper 1964:239, instinctive and blood-conscious element in man.

The male and female principles of Lawrence's dualism are then seen symbolically, as light and darkness, the dove and the eagle, the lamb and the tiger, or the unicorn and the lion, respectively. Between these opposites, e.g. the lion and the unicorn, there is a never ending battle, which neither of them must win or they both will cease to exist. The fight, therefore, is the only reason for existence - "raison d'etre"- for both animals. Daleski (1965:23) states that the opposites not only complement each other, but also retain their separate identities. Man, too, must accept the contradictory male and female principles within him and combine them to one and the same; otherwise his life is no longer in a balance. Moreover, he should not only recognize his dual nature but also, when necessary, go as far as he can towards either extremity.

In addition, in the relationship between a man and a woman, the two sexes have to make a double reconciliation of opposites. First, they have to find a way to reconcile the contradictory qualities within themselves and then they have to meet each other as opposites. The ideal relationship, according to Lawrence, would then be that between two “full individuals”, who transcend their duality in the balance that is found between them. (Daleski 1965:23-24.) In the sexual act, the man and the woman, the female and the male principle – “Love” and “Law”- would come together and constitute a third principle; a creative principle. This is the “fruitful co-operation” mentioned above.

### 2.2.2 Dualism as Philosophy

Giblin (1998) states that Western philosophy and Christianity have emphasized dualisms such as those mentioned above (see p.10), and that these dualisms are hierarchical, with one of the poles being viewed as superior to the other. According to gender dualism, males are associated with the “higher” poles of the dualisms - reason, mind, spirit - and females, together with various groups of society that are seen as “other”, such as peoples of colour and homosexuals, with the “lower” poles - bodiliness, passion and matter (ibid). Giblin (1998) also notes that in Christian anthropology, which was influenced by Hellenistic gender dualisms, the image of God has been unevenly divided. Although both sexes are supposed to be made in the image of God, Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), for instance, held the male as the norm for humanity, while the female was merely a defective form of human being. This led to a two-nature anthropology, according to which a woman’s nature differed from a man’s nature in that while men were active, rational and autonomous, women were passive, intuitive and emotional.

In Lawrence’s dualism, there is the division into the “dark” female and “white” male principles, which resembles the division of the gender dualism. However, unlike gender dualism, Lawrence’s dualism does not see the female principle as “lower” or inferior to the male principle. Actually, as Daleski (1965:35) points out, the latter consisted of the very things Lawrence fought against for most of his life: abstraction and idealism, while he fiercely supported the female principle with what he called its “phallic consciousness”(in ibid). In addition, a friend of Lawrence’s once stated that Lawrence was really “a woman in a man’s skin” (in Daleski 1965:34) - although Daleski (1965:35)

claims that he intensely believed in himself as a male. Pritchard (1971:24) sees that Lawrence suffered from the conflict between the male and female principles within himself, and devoted his entire life to finding a way to solve it.

Another kind of dualism is Descartes's mind-body dualism. He felt that the basis for the knowledge of one's own existence is provided by the knowledge of one's self as a thinking being, or as the famous phrase goes: "cogito, ergo sum" – "I think, therefore I exist". Since he could conceive of himself without a body, but not without a mind, he concluded that mind and body must be two completely distinct entities. He further argued that if he could think of mind and body as existing separately, God could have created them separately, and they could not be even essentially connected, much less the same thing. Furthermore, body or matter in general could be divided into parts, but there is no such thing as a part of a mind. (<http://sun> 1998) Science, on the other hand, discarded the whole concept of mental, or the mind, and saw mental events only as brain states, thus offering a monistic account of realism - physicalism (<http://www.utm> 1996).

Lawrence's doctrine of dualism also claims that mind and body - properties of male and female principles, respectively - are separate from each other. Daleski (1965:21) observes that this separation of identities is the very thing that distinguishes Lawrence from most dualist philosophers, but obviously not from Descartes. However, unlike Descartes, Lawrence argues that they are both parts of the same whole, and thus strongly connected.

Chinese philosophy offers a dualistic theory, which resembles that of Western philosophy and Christianity. However, the theory of *yin* and *yáng* is not based on hierarchies. According to Willis (1993:90), *yin*, which originally meant shadow or darkness, and *yáng*, which stood for sunshine or light, are regarded as "the two cosmic forces, which interacted to produce the phenomena of the universe". As these basic opposites were elaborated into a system of opposites, *yin* came to represent everything that was feminine, passive, cold, wet and soft. *Yáng*, on the other hand, represented such qualities as masculinity activity, heat, dryness and hardness. (ibid.) Everything in the world can be identified with either *yin* or *yáng*, with Earth as the ultimate *yin* object and Heaven the ultimate *yáng* object (Ross 1998:1). However, there is no question of one being inferior to the other.

Furthermore, as Willis (1993:90) adds, although *yin* and *yáng* are opposites, on a more philosophical plane they are seen as complementary and mutually dependent. Actually, as Cave (ed.)(1991:9) points out, there is a seed of *yin* in the *yáng* and a seed of *yáng* in the *yin*. According to Ross (1998:1), Taoism sees that at the moment of change the two forces containing the seed of each other actually become each other. Therefore, he further observes that nothing in the world is either *yin* or *yáng* but everything is a mixture of the two which means that “female” beings can also be mostly *yáng* and “male” beings mostly *yin*. Willis (1993:88), however, states that the Chinese believe that there should be the same amount of *yin* and *yáng* present in the world for man to be truly happy, in other words, the two forces should be in equilibrium.

Like the philosophy of *yin* and *yáng*, Lawrence’s dualism also claims that everything in the world is either male or female - unicorn the male and lion the female -, or both (Daleski 1965:31). As mentioned above, the opposites that are separate entities, complement each other and thus form a whole, which leads to the conclusion that without both parties in question, there is no whole. Furthermore, Lawrence’s individual must, at times, go to the extremes, thus perhaps becoming more male than female, even if the individual is otherwise seen as being more female than male. This resembles the theory of a *yin* becoming mostly *yáng*. Things are not always what they seem to be, as seen in the case of Lawrence himself (see p.11). Moreover, like the Chinese, who believe that the cosmic balance between *yin* and *yáng* is the key to true happiness, Lawrence acknowledges the importance of balance. As seen before, his ideal male-female relationship stems from the two “full individuals” meeting each other as opposites and then transcending their duality into a balance between them.

In short, Lawrence’s dualism bears resemblance to all the three views on dualism mentioned here, but it also differs from them. First, Lawrence’s male-female divisions greatly resemble gender dualism; females are associated with passion and the body, and males with reason and spirit. However, the divisions differ from each other in that while the gender dualism sees the male as superior, Lawrence considers it inferior to females, and vice versa. Second, the similarity between Lawrentian and Cartesian dualism is based on the separateness of mind and body. However, as Descartes sees no connection between these entities, Lawrence considers them belonging to the one and the same.

Finally, Chinese philosophy sees everything either as female - *yin* -, male - *yang* -, or a mixture of them, as does Lawrence's dualism. Both theories also agree that even if something is classified as being female or male by nature, there can be changes that alter the classification – man can go to either extreme. Moreover, both theories also accentuate the essentiality of equilibrium between the opposing forces or principles. To put it simply, unless man is willing to accept the feminine and masculine elements within him and combine them into a whole, he is not all that he can be.

To sum up, the views on dualism examined here differ from each other greatly but they all agree on one aspect: the world is full of phenomena that exist separate from each other. Whether they are seen as equally important parts of a whole or in hierarchies is another matter and depends on who is making the classification.

However, since symbols such as lambs and tigers are an important part of Lawrence's dualism, some attention to this subject should be paid. Therefore, in the next pages, the symbolic value he and other people have given to one group of animals, the felines, will be discussed in greater detail.

### 3 FELINES AS SYMBOLS

As Tresidder (2000:42) notes, animals have always been the most immediate, powerful and important foundation for symbol systems of all cultures. There is no other source that has offered such a varied range in iconography, because nearly all human qualities can be represented in animal form. Psychology and religion have attached to animals the essential symbolism of the instinctual, the unconscious, the libido and the emotions.

#### 3.1 Some Feline Symbols through The Ages

According to Martin (1998:1), felines were used as symbols of power, energy and essence in ancient cultures, but later they have received negative connotations as well. They can be both noble, gracefully moving creatures who valiantly protect their cubs as well as merciless killers, ignorant of the destruction they leave behind, but this only

shows the same kind of duality in their nature as in the nature of man (cf. Lawrence's doctrine of dualism). However, to see how the images of felines have developed, the symbolic meaning attached to the cat, the lion, the tiger, the leopard and the jaguar should be examined.

### 3.1.1 The Cat

Experience has proved that the cat is an animal that clearly divides people in two: to those who love it and those who detest or even are scared of it. Since it displays most if not all the characteristics of the felines, the cat is a good example to show why felines in general have been seen in such a contradictory light through ages.

Tresidder (2000:59) states that the size of cats does not diminish their symbolic power. Almost universally, they represent transformation, clairvoyance, agility, watchfulness, sensual beauty, mystery, and female malice; only these associations had differing significance in ancient cultures (ibid). According to Martin (1998:1), the symbolic meaning attached to the cat has, in the course of time, varied from beast of good to beast of evil, a fact that may be explained by the combination of the gentle and the sinister aspects in the animal's appearance. In ancient Egypt, the cat was originally regarded a personification of the universe because it could curl in a circle, see in the dark and had a fur, that sent sparks of light electricity. Lurker (1991:38) states that in the New Kingdom (c.1567-1085 B.C), male cat was regarded as an incarnation of the sun god and the female cat as the solar eye. It was also godly; cats even symbolized lunar goddess Bastet (Tucker/cat 1998:1), who had originally been a lion goddess (Biedermann 1993:132). Bastet was linked with love, sex and fertility (Willis 1993:50), and she was also a guardian and benefactor of mankind (Martin 1998:1). The worship of cats went so far that anyone who even accidentally killed a cat was put to death (Tucker/cat 1998:1), and once the cat was dead it was mummified (Biederman 1993:132). Cats were also associated with other lunar goddesses, including the Greek Artemis, or the Roman Diana, and the Nordic Freya whose chariot they drew (Tresidder 2000:59).

Later, as Christianity spread, the cat was connected to paganism and was thus valued negatively. For instance Baudouin III, Count of Flanders, began an annual tradition of

cat torture called the Cat Festival by throwing his cats from the tower of his castle. (Tucker/cat 1998:1.) During the Middle Ages especially black cats were buried in fields to protect the crops from evil spirits or weeds, but witch hunts weakened their position once again (ibid) as their ability to hunt in the dark was linked to the dark forces (Biedermann 1993:132). In Western Europe cats were publicly tortured and killed as people used them to represent witchcraft, vampirism and black magic. They began to symbolize sins like laziness, lust, deceit and promiscuity, and their hissing was associated to “that old snake” - the Devil. (Tucker/cat 1998:1.) Another connection to snake would be through the concept of rebirth. The widely known image of a male serpent who seems to swallow its own tail represents the circle of life, expressing that an end is always followed by a new beginning (Biedermann 1993:78). Similarly, the cat is believed to have not one but nine lives.

Eventually, cats were again prized as mouse catchers, and their antics were no longer considered evil, but playful and coy (Tucker/cat 1998:1). Moreover, cats can be both jinxes and good luck charms; for instance in America a black cat is thought to be unlucky while in some other countries - like Great Britain (Martin 1998:1) - it is considered lucky (Tucker/cat 1998:1). The reverse is true of white cats - lucky in America and unlucky somewhere else (ibid).

For psychologists, the cat is a typically feminine animal and associated with night. Biedermann (1993:132) suggests that this femininity of cats and the negative attitudes toward them have, in part, caused the position of women in many countries to be inferior to men. There could be some truth in it especially if we consider the fact that the witches that were burned during witch-hunts were mostly women and cats were seen as their companions. It is further suggested that cats reflect the mistrustful attitude men may have toward women (Myyttiset kissat 2000:tv2)). As dream symbols cats symbolize selfishness, treachery and deceit, as well as tenderness and affection (Maununen 1994: 80). They may also represent the intuitive or paranormal side of the person who is dreaming (Dee 1992: 205) - another link to witchcraft. A black cat can be both a good and a bad omen (ibid).

Sayings and proverbs also show the importance of the cat as part of our everyday life. “In a cat’s eyes, all things belong to cats”, is an English saying which I would interpret



as having to do with the animal's independence. An Irish Proverb, on the other hand, shows how important it is to treat the cat right: "To kill a cat brings seventeen years of bad luck" (Martin 1998:2). The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs gives more examples of proverbs that have cats in them: "Care/ curiosity killed the cat", "All cats are grey in the dark", "A cat in gloves catches no mice" and "When the cat's away, the mice will play" (Simpson (ed.) 1982:33).

In addition, literature and comic books, which are full of cats, have probably helped many people to create their own images of the cat. For instance, there is the grinning Cheshire cat in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, and Garfield, Sylvester (Tweety and Sylvester) and Tom (Tom and Jerry) in the comic books and cartoons. Also famous artists, such as Picasso, Goya and Leonardo, used cats in their paintings. In them, cats were often pictured as cruel and menacing, showing their beastly nature. On the other hand, the hundred paintings of Louis Wayne whose works were immensely popular at the turn of the century showed the loveable side of the cat's nature – he even gave his cats clothes. (Kissaihmissä 1999:tv2.)

In short, the image of the cat has changed a lot in the course of time - from a divine creature to the devil's aid and, finally, to the useful house pet or the playful companion of today. Perhaps it is in our memory, as a part of our cultural inheritance, that the cat has played many roles in human lives and thus can only be seen in a contradictory light.

### 3.1.2 The Lion

The lion is an animal, which can be seen both as a cute stuffed toy animal and a fierce blood-hungry killer. It is obvious that the people who live in the vicinity of lions and may even come into contact with them may feel somewhat more negatively toward these animals than us Westerners who only see living lions in zoos and behind bars. We only see the beauty and even some likeness to ourselves in its flat amiable face rounded by a thick mane, and hardly remember that behind it all is a savage with a killer instinct and knife-sharp teeth.

Whichever way we look at the lion, there is one thing that is undeniable: it is and always

has been, impressive and kingly. In many cultures the lion represents earthly power, strength, dignity, courage, and royalty (Tucker/lion 1998:1). It is the king of the beasts and the lord of the jungle (ibid), and the images of the lion wearing a crown on its head are familiar to all of us from our childhood. The lion king was supposed to be wise and just, possessing both great physical and spiritual powers, and for this reason the Pharaohs of Egypt were at times pictured as lions - Ramesses II (the New Kingdom) was even named "the strong lion"(Lurker 1991:77) - and English kings adopted the lion as their emblem (Tucker/lion 1998:1). In western Asia, the theme of the royal lion hunt symbolized death and resurrection – the killing of a godlike creature ensured the continuation of life (Tresidder 2000:58).

The lion's yellow fur (Tucker/lion 1998:1) together with the mane that resembles the rays of the sun (Biedermann 1993:189) made it a symbol of the sun. Old and young lions were often depicted sitting back to back, representing the rising and setting sun, the old and the young, or the past and the future (Tucker/lion 1998:1). In ancient Egypt the lion was a solar animal which could symbolize not only nocturnal destruction and death, but also the rebirth in the morning (Lurker 1991:77). The Egyptian goddesses Sekhmet and Bastet and god Ré, the latter wearing a sun-like disc over its head (Biedermann 1993:189), were all symbolized as lions. Sekhmet and Bastet (later symbolized as a cat) both were actually manifestations of the goddess Hathor, the patroness of lovers. Sekhmet was a terrifying killer to whom criminals were sometimes sacrificed, whereas Bastet was a benefactor to the mankind. (Willis 1993:50-51.) As the lion was the symbol of masculinity, the lioness was the symbol of femininity and of the mother who would protect her cubs and fight for them (Tucker/lion 1998:1). This shows the duality in the lion's nature.

With the coming of Christianity, the lion as one of the sun symbols became an emblem of Christ. Since people believed that lion cubs were born dead and "resurrected" by their father's breath of life, the lion was also seen as a symbol of both personal and, later, Christ's resurrection. However, the lion could also be considered as an instrument of God's punishments, or the Antichrist and the devil who chased does and gazelles - symbols of the innocent. (Tucker/lion 1998:2.) It was believed that if man would not follow God he would not be able to resist the lion's - the devil's - temptation (Biedermann 1993:189). In Judaism, however, the lion of death was overcome by prayer:

Daniel in the lion's den (Tresidder 2000:58, see also *the Bible* for Daniel 6).

In astrology, a person born in the sign of the lion is portrayed as a vain tyrant with lust for money and power, but also as having greatness of spirit. In depth psychology the lion represents powerful but controlled energy. It is an animal which demands a lot from itself but is adamant and ruthless when fighting against others. (Biedermann 1993:190-191.) In animal fables the lion can be the wise king of the jungle but also a stupid big animal outsmarted by the smaller ones; it can be sweet and nice as the Cowardly Lion in *The Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum, or awesome as in the animated film *Lionking*. This only shows the different qualities the lion has been given.

In summary, the lion is a powerful and even frightening animal but it also represents justice and protection for the weak. It combines the masculine aggression with the feminine care, thus also combining Lawrence's male and female spirits.

### 3.1.3 The Tiger

The tiger is the biggest of the felines and possibly most feared as well. Although it only eats people when it is extremely hungry, wounded or have cubs to feed, some tigers are known to have developed a taste for human flesh and become man-eaters. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there was a tigress which was believed to have eaten 438 people in eight years. (Pickering 1999:17.) The tiger was considered to be so terrifying that even demons were afraid of it, which is why people in China protected their homes and the graves of their loved ones with statues of tigers (Biedermann 1993:371). This is possibly one of the reasons that the tiger awakes more negative images in people than a lion, for instance.

The name "tiger" comes originally from Iranian and stands for "sharp" (Biedermann 1993:371), which obviously refers to the animal's sharp claws and teeth. Originally it had symbolic value only in Asia (Biedermann 1993:371) where it was common; for instance in China it was regarded the king of the beasts and, therefore, took on much the same symbolism as the lion in the Western countries. Like lion, it represents royalty, power, courage, but also wrath, ferocity and cruelty. For the wild tiger, these attributes

are used in a more frightening way, whereas the tamed tiger is considered more a benefactor of the humankind. (Tucker/tigers 1998:1). Attitudes toward the tiger are dualistic; In Chinese Buddhism it usually symbolizes anger, but when it is pictured fighting serpents, it is an emblem of the war against sin and dangerous instincts. Although in many cultures it is good for the men to eat tiger meat as it gives them courage, the same does not apply to women; they are believed to become headstrong. (Tucker/tigers 1998:1.) As a matter of fact, in China a quarrelsome woman is called a “white tiger” (Biedermann 1993:371).

More examples of the tiger’s positive interpretation are attribute to its talent to guard money, which makes it a symbol of the gods of wealth in China, and the ability to see well in the dark, which makes it a Buddhist symbol of spiritual illumination. Moreover, five mythic tigers are believed to guard the universe against the forces of chaos, and medieval bestiaries even made the tiger the symbol of a mother’s love (Tucker/tigers 1998:2.) In Islamic countries the tiger is seen as the messenger of their religion, and ancient Persians even named their life-giving river Tigris after this magnificent feline (Myyttiset kissat 2000:tv2).

In addition to being both a killer and a guardian, the tiger is also noted for being a shape-shifter. Some primitive people believe that tigers are actually humans who transform into tigers for the hunt. In China there is also the “were-tiger” which equals the Western were-wolf. Another connection to the wolf is that in a Chinese version of *Little Red Riding Hood*, the wolf has been replaced by the tiger. (Tucker/tigers 1998: 1.)

According to Chinese astrology, a person who was born in the year of the tiger, loves freedom, is strong and courageous, and always lands on his feet (Myyttiset kissat 2000:tv2). As a dream symbol the tiger is often connected to physical energy, vigour and enthusiasm (Dee 1992:229). As a matter of fact, in China it is considered a yang-animal (Biedermann 1993:371), masculine, aggressive and active. In books and comics, some of the famous tigers are Sher Khan in *Junglebook*, and Hobbes (Calvin and Hobbes).

Like the cat and the lion, the tiger is seen in both negative and positive light. It is graceful and beautiful to look at and has a soft fur, which makes it an ideal cuddly toy, but it is also so big and dangerous that no animal can match its strength – or a human

being, for that.

### 3.1.4 The Leopard and The Jaguar

The leopard and the jaguar are animals that are not as well known in the Western world as the lion and the tiger. The leopard is more familiar to Africans and the jaguar to Meso- and South Americans. There is also less data available on the importance of these felines than on the felines already examined.

The leopard is a nocturnal animal of which little is known. In ancient times it was believed that the leopard was not a species of its own, but a mixture of the lion and the panther, a “leo-pardus”. Because of this misunderstanding, early Christians considered it a symbol of the offspring of unwholesome intercourse. (Tucker/leopard 1998:1.)

In many different cultures, the skin of a leopard was believed to bring its wearer great, even magical powers. In Egypt, the leopard skin was associated with Seth the god of evil, in classical mythology with Dionysos, the god of wine, and in Hebrew stories with Nimrod, the builder of the Tower of Babel. The leopard was familiar to and feared by those facing martyrdom in Roman amphitheatres and a great persecutor of the saints in St. John’s Revelation. Its spots made it a symbol of sin – hence the saying “ a leopard does not change its spots” (Simpson (ed.) 1982:131, see also *the Bible* for Jeremiah 13:23) – and it was also identified as the Antichrist. (Tucker/leopard 1998:2.) Thus, in the light of the evidence given here, it seems that unlike the cat, the lion and the tiger, the leopard has been regarded only in negative terms.

The jaguar is one of the most important animals in Aztec mythology. The jaguar’s presence, beauty, strength and nobility made it an emblem of ruling lineage and royal power (<http://www.kokone> 1998); thus it reminded of the picture we hold today of the lion. It was also associated with fertility and the earth (Willis 1993:236).

Clendinnen (1991:227) states that in the ancient times the jaguar was pre-eminent among land animals, their lord. Together with the eagle, it had been present at the creation of the sun, following it into the flames, and thus forever participating in its glory.

Moreover, it was also seen as the darkness that ate up the sun during an eclipse (<http://www.kokone> 1998). According to another Aztec creation story, jaguars were present when Tezcatlipoca, the supreme god of the Aztecs, and Quetzalcoatl, another major deity, fought for the lordship of the cosmos, and in the course of the battle, jaguars even consumed the earth (Willis 1993:237). Furthermore, the jaguar stood for the star travelling in the night through the underworld, just like the eagle stood for the day sun. Its roar was compared to the sound made by earthquakes (<http://www.kokone> 1998). Clendinnen (1991:224-225) also states that the jaguar was a night-walking sorcerer, or the divine patron of the stars, because it moves alone during the night and has an indifferent demeanour. Moreover, its spotted skin was like a starry sky, and it was particularly identified with the Dipper constellation (<http://www.kokone> 1998)

In daily Aztec life, the belief in the divine and even occult powers of the jaguar (<http://www.kokone> 1998) lead to different modes of conduct. Gifford (1985:12) states that the Aztecs were great believers of animism, according to which something that resembles something else becomes that which it resembles. In other words, if a shaman painted his skin to look like a jaguar he received its soul and supernatural powers: he was reborn as a jaguar to help his people. Clendinnen (1991:229) adds that a tribe whose totem animal the jaguar was, studied its hunting manners and then imitated them, possibly during tribal wars. Aztecs also liked to describe the jaguar in animal hero stories as having clearly noticeable human characteristics, although, as Gifford (1985:12) notes, in these stories they were often strong but hardly intelligent. Perhaps the thought of the jaguar being intelligent as well as supernaturally powerful was too intimidating for the Aztecs, and they wanted to believe in human superiority.

Although the leopard and the jaguar look alike and are both nocturnal hunters, it seems in the light of the evidence given above, that unlike the jaguar or, as a matter of fact any other feline discussed above, the leopard has been regarded only in negative terms.

### 3.2 Lawrentian Felines

Lawrence, who, according to Inness (1971:13), loved animals for themselves, often referred to them in his works. As mentioned in connection with Lawrence's doctrine of dualism (see p.10), animals frequently symbolize male and female principles and the concepts associated with them - the "dark" lion vs the "light" unicorn. In his analysis on Lawrentian beasts Inness (1971) states that the lion, as a representative of the female, animal self, is associated with flesh, blood-consciousness, power and personal authority, darkness, God the Father, and fire death, or desert. It is also the most royal emblem of our divinity in the flesh and, in contrast with the meek unicorn, usually valued positively by Lawrence. Its kingship and authority over other animals are also generally recognized. (Inness 1971: 40-46.)

Inness (1971:55) also points out that the lion emblem includes the tiger and other fierce hunters like it. It would seem semantically justified that also other feline beasts like the leopard and the jaguar, despite the fact that they are not specifically mentioned, should belong to the group. Even the ordinary house-cat, killer by nature, could be added to the list. These are the felines that will be examined and analysed in the three novels that are the data of this study.

Inness (1971:40) states that the Lawrentian tiger, in spite of its inclusion in the respected and noble lion symbol, is a sterile spirit, and rather "the murderous, purely devouring aspect of the lion, a false absolute of wilful enjoyment of the senses as an end in themselves" (Inness 1971:121). Lawrence himself also feels that the white eyes of the tiger reveal that the fire burning inside it is white and cold, the fire of white ecstasy. It shows "the supremacy of the flesh, which devours all, and becomes transfigured into a magnificent brindled flame, a burning bush indeed". With this he refers to William Blake's "Tiger, tiger burning bright, In the forests of the night" (as quoted by Inness 1971:36.) This kind of fulfilment reminds one of an egotistic soldier who, entirely concentrated on his task, keeps on killing and takes pleasure in seeing the destruction (ibid). As such a soldier, the tiger is "disapproved". However, there seems to be an obvious discrepancy between this statement and another, in which he claims that predatory cats with leonine or tigerish characteristics are valued positively. (Inness 1971:40-41.) Moreover, this later statement does not give a definite answer to the

question about how other felines, for instance leopards, jaguars and domesticated cats are valued.

Despite Inness's (1971) clear-cut analysis of Lawrence's animals, felines and other animals can hardly be defined as being simply "good" or "bad". Instead, it is probable that they are dualistic by nature, like humans and all other creation (see p.10), and therefore the feline characteristics may represent either the female or the male principle. Thus they can be either that, which is admired, positive in these animals or that which is feared or despised, negative in them.

In *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* and *The Plumed Serpent*, there are characters who by their appearance, movement or behavior, can be seen as cats or other felines. The characters may even change from one feline into another, and the felines can symbolize qualities that are positive or negative. There are also incidents in which the characters may recognize themselves or other characters in these animals. This feline symbolism, in part, reflects the duality in human nature – the male and female elements in man.

#### 4 SOME OF LAWRENCE'S WORKS AND THEIR CHARACTERS

All the three novels of Lawrence that will be examined here share one theme: relationships between men and women. *The Rainbow* (1915) and its sequel *Women in Love* (1920) form a whole in which women and men of the Brangwen family try to find love and acceptance of oneself in different times in rural England. In *The Plumed Serpent* (1926) a similar search takes place in Mexico where the modern Englishwoman Kate meets the ancient Aztec movement and its charismatic leaders. In these novels Lawrence describes the hardships of maintaining a romantic relationship on a both physically and mentally satisfactory level, caused by human duality. He also accentuates that accepting oneself and the other as dual beings is the basis of any human relationship. A satisfactory relationship can be achieved by making compromises but denying oneself is a straight way to the doom.



#### 4.1 The Rainbow

Although *The Rainbow* (1915) only concentrates on the lives and loves of three generations of the Brangwen family, the roots are deep in the ground of their forefathers. Through the ages, the male Brangwen had been living on the Marsh Farm, working hard on the fields “because of the life that was in them, not for want of the money” (*The Rainbow*: 7. From now on I shall refer to this novel as *TR*). The life had been simple but fulfilling, and they had always felt as one with nature around them, not wanting for more than it would willingly give them. In this, they are an example of Lawrence’s male principle; representing the “dark self” (Jacobson 1973:136), the sensual (Draper 1964:23), instinctive and blood-conscious side of humans (Kermode 1973:43).

The female Brangwens, on the other hand, had “looked out from the heated, blind intercourse of farm-life, to the spoken world beyond” (*TR*: 8), and Draper (1964:59) feels that they were posing a threat to the men and their down-to-earth way of life. The women had also started to dream of giving their children something they themselves had never had: education (*TR*: 10). Thus these women represented Lawrence’s female principle; the “white self” (Jacobson 1973:136), the spiritual (Draper 1964:23), rational and mental-conscious side of the human being (Pinion 1980:70).

However, now times were changing, as the characters in the novel show. The distinction between the sexes becomes less clear; the characters start to display both “male” and “female” characteristics, which, in part, also influence the behaviour of the people they loved. This duality of man is the main theme of *The Rainbow*, and it prevents the characters from achieving a fully satisfactory relationship between a man and a woman.

##### 4.1.1 The First Generation: Tom and Lydia

Tom Brangwen was the first to deviate from the pattern of typical Brangwen men. Originally, he was close to them with his love of the home farm and the “zest for every moment of life” (*TR*: 18-19). However, as a schoolboy he already noticed the difference between himself and his peers, feeling “more sensuously developed, more refined in instinct than they”. He hated them for their “mechanical stupidity” (*TR*: 16) and felt

contempt for them, but he had no power or means to disagree with them in any kind of argument. Disillusioned, he decided that the school had nothing to offer for a boy with “a turnip on (his) shoulders” (*TR*: 18), and was only too glad to return home.

When his father died, he happily took over the care of the farm and became “one of the men” with manly habits. He became a handsome youth and lived life to its fullest. Once, being drunk in a public house, he let a prostitute seduce him, and this event filled him with fear: would all his relationships be just this “nothingness”, would there ever be anything else (*TR*: 19). He went on living his carefree life, but could not find true satisfaction as he had no respect left for himself or the women he saw. A few years later he met a foreigner at a nearby town of Matlock (*TR*: 24), and his aristocratic air and looks made Tom dream of foreign countries and people like the foreigner:

No sooner was his mind free, no sooner had he left his own companions, than he began to imagine an intimacy with fine-textured, subtle-mannered people...and amidst this subtle intimacy was always the satisfaction of a voluptuous woman (*TR*: 25).

Frustrated, he suppressed these thoughts by drinking heavily, until the answer to his prayers walked right into his life.

“That’s her” (*TR*: 29), he had said involuntarily as they met in passing. This embodiment of Tom’s dreams was Lydia Lensky, an aristocratic Polish widow, whose voluptuousness and foreignness were something he had never experienced before. She was not pretty, “her thick dark brows almost met above her irregular nose, she had a wide, rather thick mouth” (*TR*: 33), but there was something about her that made him certain that they were meant for each other:

Brangwen felt that here was the unreality established at last. He felt also a curious certainty about her, as if she were destined to him. It was to him a profound satisfaction that she was a foreigner. A swift change had taken place on the earth for him, as if a new creation were fulfilled, in which he had real existence. Things had all been stark, unreal, barren, mere nullities before. Now they were actualities that he could handle. (*TR*: 32.)

Still, he knew he should not be hasty. It would happen in its own time.

Lydia had been married before, borne children of whom only one daughter, Anna, had survived and, just before moving to her present home, she had tragically lost her husband. Alone, with only her daughter and the haunting memories from the past, she

had been living in a foreign country, longing for “the peace and heavy oblivion of her old state” (*TR*: 54). For her England had seemed cold with “skies so hostile” (*ibid*). She had been aware of the people who passed around her only as “looming presences” (*ibid*). Tom, however, was different. He was not just a passer-by; his presence lingered on and made her uneasy:

Who was this strange man who was at once so near to her? What was happening to her? Something in his young, warm-twinkling eyes seemed to assume a right to her, to speak to her, to extend her his protection. But how? Why did he speak to her? Why were his eyes so certain, so full of light and confident, waiting for no permission nor signal? (*TR*: 38.)

In Lydia’s eyes, Tom was no gentleman, but he was the first person to wake her from her long stupor. She knew that giving herself to him would mean giving up the old self and creating a new one, and she hesitated. On one hand, she wanted this new life that would stem from Tom, it would be good for her and little Anna; they would be safe. On the other, she was not sure that she wanted the old self destroyed. However, when Tom came to propose to her she accepted. Even though they had not known each other but for a while, the wedding took place and things went well for a while. Marriage opened up a whole new world for Tom, a sensual world of unknown secrets and dark passions. Everything else once so dear lost its value, paled in comparison with the new universe. To him the blood-intimacy with this exciting woman was everything he could ever hope for, and he felt immensely proud of himself:

As she moved...her head revealed itself to him in all its subtle, intrinsic beauty, and he knew she was his woman, he knew her essence, that it was his to possess. And he seemed to live thus in contact with her, in contact with the unknown, the unaccountable and incalculable. (*TR*: 59)

Then the very qualities that he had found so appealing in Lydia came between them. She was a foreigner with a foreign past that he could not understand. Listening stories about her past, Tom began to feel inferior to her, just like to his peers in school. After all, what was a simple boy from a farm compared to this “amazing thing...with all wonder opening out behind her” (*TR*: 62)? He was “a peasant, a serf, a servant, a lover, a paramour, a shadow, a nothing” (*TR*: 62). Lydia, who had enjoyed sharing her experiences, soon realized that he was not interested in her past but only the present they shared. She too became irritated, and lapsed into “a sort of sombre exclusion” (*ibid*). Now they were together only in flesh, not in spirit, and even that changed when she found out that she was pregnant. Frustrated, Tom turned to his stepdaughter Anna whom

he had learned to love dearly, but a child could not give him the support he needed.

A while later, he met his brother Alfred's mistress, an educated and dignified lady, and the old thoughts of intimacy with sophisticated people started to haunt him again. For the first time he had regrets about how his life had turned out to be. Perhaps, if he had not succeeded to the farm, things would be different, life less "unadventurous". (*TR*: 90-91.) However, as Lydia, who had noticed his unhappiness, hesitantly opened her arms for him and they were reunited, he decided their love was all that mattered. Draper (1964:63) sees that this new love showed that they finally "forged their essential marriage": "When at last they had joined hands, the house was finished, and the Lord took up his abode" (*TR*: 96). The truth about their marriage, however, is only revealed after Tom's death during a flood (*TR*: 250):

She, Lydia Brangwen, was sorry for him now. He was dead - he had scarcely lived. He had never known her. He had lain with her, but he had never known her. He had never received what she could give him. He had gone away from her empty...he had served her honourably, and become her man, one with her. She was established in this stretch of life, she had come to herself... She was grateful to Brangwen. (*TR*: 258-259.)

They had loved each other in their own ways, but they had never learned to understand one another. They had been joined together as strangers, and as strangers they now had to part.

#### 4.1.2 The Second Generation: Anna and Will

Lydia's daughter Anna was, as a child, at first insecure and resentful of the new surroundings she had to adapt to after her mother got married to Tom. She was, at the same time, incomprehensibly jealous of her mother, and cold and critical of her (*TR*: 68). In time, however, she managed to build a relationship to her stepfather and, finally, began to think of him as "something big and warm" (*TR*: 69).

Little Anna was a curious thing; at once shy and wild. Although she bore no relation to the Brangwen women, her sharpness, imagination and intelligence reminded of them but, like Tom, she took no interest in learning (*TR*: 100). She mistrusted intimacy and had "a curious contempt for ordinary people, a benevolent superiority" (*TR*: 98). Like her

stepfather, she had no real friends as the girls at school were mere “bagatelles” to her (*TR*: 100), and the first person to really affect her was Lydia’s Polish friend Baron Skrebensky, a vicar and an aristocrat (*TR*: 98-99, cf. Tom’s encounters with the foreigner in Matlock and with Alfred’s mistress ). This meeting gave Anna an ideal of what she would like to be: an educated “free, proud lady absolved from the petty ties, existing beyond petty considerations” (*TR*: 102). Nevertheless, since she could not find “her kind of people”, she rather stayed at home.

At seventeen, there came a change. She began to feel the urge to get away from the ordinary, and to accomplish this she tried religion, only to find that the sermons made no impression on her. She also tried reading and socializing with girls her age, but until Will’s visit to the farm, she found no way to the outer world (*TR*: 106-107). Will Brangwen was Anna’s step cousin. He was a shy, self-possessed, well-mannered boy of twenty years and had a passion for church, craftwork, study and creative art. Smith (1971:19) sees him as “a curious mixture of the vigour and vitality of the Brangwen men and the knowledge and tastes of their women”. Will repelled Anna because of his animal head with hair like sleek, fine fur, and black fledge on his upper lip, but he also fascinated her; he was so strange and unlike anything she knew. Soon, she found herself waiting eagerly for his visits:

In him she had escaped. In him the bounds of her experience were transgressed: He was the hole in the wall, beyond which the sunshine blazed on an outside world. (*TR*: 114.)

As the two, despite the disapproval of Anna’s parents, gradually became close they “drew apart, escaped from the elders, to create a new thing by themselves” (*TR*: 115). They both felt the spell-like electricity between them, and when their lips finally met one evening, it opened up a pathway to the mysterious and dark world of desire - a world her parents already inhabited. Like Anna’s parents, they too got married soon, and also their beginning as a unit was blissful, “sweeter than sunshine” (*TR*: 144). For days they stayed in each other’s arms, living for each other and forgetting the world outside.

Nevertheless, Anna soon needed the reality and other people beside Will. She began to plan tea parties and filled her days with household duties (*TR*: 150). Will could not believe that Anna had left their self-made paradise and felt betrayed. He had let her do as she pleased with him; she had made him abandon his qualms, maxims, rules and smaller

beliefs in exchange for a universe where neither time nor work mattered. He had resented it at first, but soon he had adapted to this new way of life and learned to love it, and now she had ended it. He could not give in to her again and, bitter, returned to his religious world. Anna, who could not get the same kind of satisfaction out of the church as he got, however hard she tried, was furious; he had something she could never get:

He was very strange to her, and, in this church spirit, in conceiving himself as a soul, he seemed to escape and run free of her. In a way, she envied it him, this dark freedom and jubilation of the soul, some strange entity in him. It fascinated her. Again she hated it. And again, she despised him, wanted to destroy it in him. (*TR*: 159.)

Demanding compensation, Anna attacked and hit Will where it hurt the most. She accused him for doing nothing and refused to give any value to his precious woodcarving. Will was enraged, he felt that she did not respect him as a breadwinner or as a man with his own ideas of life, society and mankind. With new attacks and counter-attacks, their life became a war. Not counting the occasional quick outbursts of love, the only time they met on an equal ground were the nights, and Draper (1964:64,66) sees that only their “sub-terranean attraction” for one another held them together. Finally, Anna realized that there was no end to the battles, that they would never learn to understand each other:

...he did not alter...he was something dark, alien to herself. She had thought of him just the bright reflex of herself. As the weeks and months went by she realized that she was a dark opposite to her, that they were opposites, not complements. (*TR*: 169.)

However, they stayed together. Then came the baby, Ursula, and after that four others, and Anna, like her mother before her, drifted apart from her husband. Motherhood gave new meaning and joy into her life; she had no need for her husband now. Will, following in Tom’s footsteps, responded by going away on Saturdays. On one of these trips he came across a girl who seemed ready for a little adventure (*TR*: 227). Her prettiness and childishness were an irresistible challenge for Will; “she would be helpless in his hands” (*TR*: 228), but as it turned out, she was not prepared to give him what he wanted. However, the escapade left him more self-confident; a fact Anna could not help noticing:

Here was a new turn of affairs! She liked him better than the ordinary mute, half-effaced, half-subdued man she usually knew him to be. So, he was blossoming out into his real self!...She was very glad to welcome a stranger...He was a sensual male seeking his pleasure, she was the female ready to take hers: but in her own way.” (*TR*: 234-235.)

To Will Anna's decision meant liberation; his intimate life became so active now that it set another man in him free - a man ready to find a job outside home (*TR*: 238). At thirty he started giving lessons in woodwork and actually enjoyed this new, public life, happy to be of service to mankind. Anna spent the days taking care of their five children and the house, and the nights exploring the world of passion with Will. Neither of them was truly satisfied, though. Will, to whom church had always meant so much was ashamed of his dark, sensual self. Weak as he was, he had no strength to deny himself the nocturnal pleasures; instead, he gave up his spiritual illusions, thus becoming "soulless", as Pinion (1980:156) sees it. Draper (1964:69) notes that Anna, as a mother of a large family, was also forced to give up something once so important: her childhood dreams of ever becoming a free lady. So, bitter and resentful of each other, the two of them kept living their life as husband and wife: together, but apart.

#### 4.1.3 The Third Generation: Ursula and Anton

Anna and Will's daughter Ursula resembled both her grandparents and her own parents, being part Lensky and part Brangwen. As Draper (1964:70) notes, of all persons she had the most respect for Lydia and her past, but she also shared Tom's allegiance to the home farm. She had something of Anna's temperament, sharing her contempt for belittling circumstances of life (*TR*: 263) and common people, but she was also interested in religion and study like Will. Smith (1971:39) sees that as Brangwen women in general, Ursula saw education as the way to the "finer more vivid circles of life" but, unlike her female ancestry, her interest in education was actually strong enough later to turn her into a teacher. I quite agree with Draper (1964:69) in that all this shows how she was a much more complicated person than any of her forebears.

When she met Anton at the tender age of fifteen, her life was in emotional turmoil. She was looking for answers that religion no longer could provide (cf. Anna):

The religion which had been another world to her, a glorious sort of play-world where she lived...walking shakily on the sea like the disciple, breaking the bread into five thousand portions, like the Lord...now fell away from reality, and became a tale, a myth, an illusion...The weekday world had triumphed over the Sunday world...Her task was now to learn the weekday life. How to act, that was the question? Whither to go, how to become oneself? (*TR*: 283-284.)

Yet, she was craving for sensual love from the “Son of God”(TR: 286): “She wanted Jesus to love her deliciously, to take her sensuous offering, to give her sensuous response” (TR: 287). She was ashamed of her passion for Christ, but so far there had been no “Son of Man”(TR: 286) for her to love. Then he came in the form of 21 year-old army officer Anton Skrebensky, the son of her grandmother’s friend Baron Skrebensky. Anton was on a month’s leave, and he immediately brought Ursula “a strong sense of the outer world...as if she were set on a hill and could feel vaguely the whole world lying spread before her” (TR: 290). He was not a handsome man, but there was something in him that caught her eye (cf. Tom’s meeting with Lydia) - something familiar and yet so strange: his self-possession reminded her of Will, only Anton seemed to be “shining” (TR: 291).

Ursula, who was tired of “unsure people who took on a new being with every new influence” (TR: 291), was happy to see a man with self-assurance. She thought of him as a gentleman, an aristocrat (cf. Tom and the foreigner at Matlock), and was irresistibly drawn to him. Soon, they became lovers. However, they were really playing with fire, not love. Even their kissing was a game, which they both aimed to win:

She turned to him, her face all laughing, like a challenge. And he accepted the challenge at once...And he kissed her, asserting his will over her, and she kissed him back, asserting her deliberate enjoyment of him...A sort of defiance of all the world possessed her...she would kiss him just because she wanted to. And the dare-devilry in him, like cynicism... retaliated in him. (TR: 302.)

To Ursula, the passion between herself and Anton was more than just that, it also signified the search for her maximum self, the female, “oh female, triumphant for one moment in exquisite assertion against the male, in supreme contradistinction to the male” (TR: 303). Realizing that she had power over Anton, she could afford to be satisfied and radiant. Anton resented that because it made him feel inferior to Ursula, and that was something he could not bear (cf. Tom and Lydia). He was not as swept away by their affair like she, the “Ultra-romantic” (Draper 1964:70), but is only looking for sensuous satisfaction.

Later, after a heated conversation on war, Ursula’s attitude towards Anton changed. She, a romantic, could not understand why he would like to go to a war and fight for a foreign nation, when he could be doing something for himself. She no longer saw him as self-



supporting but rather as a puppet of society - nobody. (TR: 311.) Anton tried to convince Ursula that fighting was his duty as a part of the nation but failed. He felt nullified and confused and she was angry because he was not what she had expected. Their love turned from a game into a war, the only purpose of which was to destroy one another and, at the same time, protect one's own face.

Finally, there were no tender feelings left in their relationship, only the age-old dark passion. Ursula found herself enjoying this battle between the female and the male and was horrified of herself, at the victory of her dark self over the good in her:

What had happened? Had she been mad: what horrible thing had possessed her? She was filled with overpowering fear of herself, overpowering desire that it should not be, that other burning, corrosive self... She denied it with all her might... She was good, she was loving. (TR: 322, cf. Tom and the prostitute)

She tried to mend fences; she would not admit herself that things would never be the same again. She put on a happy face and tried to forget about the incident. Anton knew he loved her, but being with her hurt too much. He too went on pretending that everything was fine, but at the same time he was planning the escape: he joined the forces at Boer war (TR: 33).

However, that was not the end of their story. After a long period of occasional postcards, Ursula received a letter from Anton: he had returned to England (TR: 438-439). At this time she was twenty-two and about to finish her studies at college. To her, the years of education had not shed any more light on her old problems; she still did not know what to do with her life. When she met Anton again she had the same mixed feelings for him as when she had first laid eyes on him. He was so familiar, yet something had changed; there was some strange fixity in him:

She knew a great difference in him. The kinship was there, the old kinship, but he had belonged to a different world from hers... She knew, vaguely, in the first minute, that they were enemies come together in a truce. (TR: 442.)

The new Anton both scared and attracted her, now he seemed more like the man she had fallen for (cf. Will after the escapade). She was ready to take him back as she saw him, once again, as the answer to her problem: "the key, the nucleus to the new world" (TR: 442). She would not listen to the warning bells in her head; she only wanted out of her

old life. The old flame of passion was rekindled and they were both content with each the situation for a while. However, Anton had been offered a job in India, and he wanted to take Ursula with him to his kind of world. She toyed with the idea but would not say anything definite, so he remained hopeful.

Enamoured with the idea of being in love again, they pretended to be a married aristocratic couple, lived in a hotel and spent money carelessly, surrounding themselves with every kind of luxury. It was all a sweet dream until Ursula was crudely woken up by the call of the old world. Suddenly, she wanted away from the mechanical, artificial modern world to the peace of the farmland and the ageless nature (cf. Brangwen men). Feeling her drifting away from him Anton proposed to Ursula. He was ready to give up the post in India to keep her, but to his surprise she said she was looking forward to the new country.

They got engaged and started preparing for the journey. Ursula was both happy and anxious to see India but, after spending some time in the countryside, she also found herself fulfilled in being alone. Anton saw the sign of danger but was convinced that once they had arrived in India, she would forget about the old world.

Then, one day, Anton's world collapsed. In his dreams he had seen himself as "somebody" in India, a ruling aristocrat above peasants. Ursula found his thoughts revolting and attacked his materialism and taste for power (*TR*: 461-462). Again, he seemed to shrivel in her eyes, to lose all the human dignity and turn into a mechanic monster. Once more, they tried to work things out, but it was too late: they had "done with each other" (*TR*: 481). Anton was devastated but unconsciously relieved and, after a while, he proposed to another girl and was accepted. Together with his new wife he sailed for India, leaving Ursula for good (*TR*: 483).

Ursula, back in her parents' house, had no strength to think about the painful affair. Then she discovered something shocking: she was pregnant. Unaware of Anton's marriage and scared of the future, she wrote to Anton to ask for forgiveness. For the sake of the unborn baby she was ready to sacrifice the chance for true happiness:

Who was she to be wanting some fantastic fulfilment in her life? Was it not enough that she had her man, her children, her place of shelter under the sun...as it had been enough for her mother? (*TR*: 485.)

Nevertheless, the mere thought of marrying a man who was possessed by the false and corrupt “New World” was tormenting (TR: 492). She fell ill and, due to the severity of the illness, lost the child. Although she was sorry for the miscarriage, she was also relieved. Now that she no longer needed Anton she could forget about him and begin anew, purified: “The pole of night was turned and the dawn was coming in” (TR: 493).

#### 4.1.4 Comparison of the Three Couples

The three Brangwens of the novel *The Rainbow*, Tom, Anna and Ursula, experience, in many ways, a lot of similar things. They all find their life ordinary and dissatisfactory and share the contempt for “common people” and the admiration of well-bred, subtle-mannered aristocrats or foreigners. They feel that the contact with these strange and unknown people is the only thing that can save them from the mundane life on the farm. Then, their wishes are granted; Tom marries the Polish woman Lydia, Anna her step-cousin, the strangely self-possessed Will, and Ursula gets engaged to the Polish-born soldier Anton. However, although they all have fallen in love with their companions very quickly, they also fall out of love fairly soon. The very qualities that at first attracted them in their lovers and that the three Brangwens felt they themselves lacked, soon cause problems in their relationships, so that none of these is very successful.

Tom can not accept that his wife has a past in which he does not exist, that she has all this experience from abroad but he has none. Envious, he refuses to hear about her past and only accepts the present, which he can share with her. Although they love each other physically, they remain strangers until the very end.

Anna sees Will as the doorway to another, better world, but she soon discovers that his world is not very much different from the world she already knows. Moreover, as a wife and a mother she has to abandon all her childhood dreams of ever becoming a lady. She feels betrayed and loses her respect for Will and he, robbed of his self-esteem, turns away from her. Their home becomes a war-zone, and the only thing they willingly share is the connubial bed.

Ursula thinks of Anton as a gentleman, an aristocrat, a noble soldier, but when she

realizes that he is just a minor cog in the machinery, a nobody with no opinions of his own, she loses interest in him. Also their love becomes a power struggle, which Ursula easily wins. Not even their sensual passion for one another can keep them together, Anton leaves for India and Ursula decides to wait for her true destiny.

As Lawrence argued (see pp. 10-11 of "Lawrence's dualism"), finding the complementary sides of personality in another human being and balancing them with the ones already possessed, is not only desirable but crucial if good relationships are to be maintained. However, the problem with the three Brangwens is that they are not happy with themselves and expect that their partners would change them into something new. They do not realize that unless they accept all the different opposing qualities, both "white" and "dark" in themselves, they can not find harmony in life. Therefore, even if the partners had been right for them, the timing is not.

Moreover, even a perfect relationship also requires some amount of personal sacrifice, such as those made by the characters of the novel. However, giving up one's ideals may also mean giving up part of one's original character. Lapsing into the secondary roles of a bread-winner (Tom and Will) or a channel for new life (Lydia and Anna), and exchanging love for passion may keep two people together, but it will not bring true happiness. Ursula, despite the loss of the baby, is the only character in the novel that is left with a hope for a better future. She, along with her forebears, has to learn the lesson in love the hard way but, instead of settling for a compromise, she decides to follow her inner voice. She is the only one to realize that peace and happiness can also be found within oneself.

#### 4.2 Women in Love

In *Women in Love* (1920), the sequel to *The Rainbow*, the search for true love and happiness continues. Ursula Brangwen, now 26, has become a class mistress at a nearby grammar school in her hometown Bredalby, and although her daily life is active, she wonders if that is all life has in store for her. However, love comes right in when she least expects it in the form of Rubert Birkin, a school inspector.

Ursula's sister Gudrun, who is a year younger, has recently come back from London after a long period of study at an art-school. She has an artist's passion for life and would also like to find a man for herself, but instead of looking for one, she insists that the man should just "come along" (*Women in Love*: 8, to which I shall from now on refer as *WIL*). This man is Gerald Crich, a man of wealth and power.

*Women in Love* shows that the starting point for every good relationship between a man and a woman is that the parties first like each other as friends, and that is what happens to Ursula and Birkin. Gudrun and Gerald, on the other hand, never really learn to like each other but, like Gudrun's parents, base their relationship on passion and continuous fight for power. Moreover, unlike Gudrun and Gerald, Ursula and Birkin also learn to accept the duality in their own and each other's nature

#### 4.2.1 Ursula and Birkin

Ursula had known Rupert Birkin by name and appearance before he actually approached her. She had seen him at a wedding and had been left thinking about him. He was a curious person; on one hand he piqued and attracted her, on the other, he was annoying. Besides, she had seen a woman beside him at a wedding. However, when he came to Ursula at school one afternoon, he startled her:

She saw, in the shaft of ruddy, copper-coloured light near her, the face of a man. It was gleaming like fire, watching her, waiting for her to be aware. It startled her terribly. She thought she was going to faint. All her suppressed, subconscious fear sprang into being, with anguish. (*WIL*: 36.)

Birkin seemed not only to light up the classroom in which there was hardly any light left, but also Ursula's boring life: "It is so dark...Shall we have the light?" (*WIL*: 36). She was wakened as if from a dream, and watched Birkin in silence, fascinated.

Birkin saw the fright on Ursula's face, and could not but admire her, feeling strangely happy:

Her eyes were round and wondering, bewildered, her mouth quivered slightly. She looked like one who is suddenly wakened. There was a living, tender beauty, like a tender light of dawn shining from her face. He looked at her with a new pleasure, feeling gay in his heart, irresponsible. (*WIL*: 37.)

Remembering what he was there for, he quickly turned to matters of teaching, and the moment had passed.

Time passed and the summer was just coming in when they met each other again. This time it was at the home of Hermione Roddice, the woman Ursula had seen with Birkin at the wedding. Unaware of what was lying ahead, Hermione had made acquaintances with Ursula and Gudrun, and this was their second stay at her house. There were a lot of other people too, but the atmosphere was not the gayest. Ursula could not bear the rattle of the light conversation and was feeling frustrated, while Birkin, at whom Hermione had curiously poked fun the whole time, watched her “like a hermit crab from its hole” (*WIL*: 94). Ursula seemed to be the only thing worth attention, like “a strange unconscious bud of powerful womanhood” (*WIL*: 94), and he suddenly realized she was his future.

Soon enough, his relationship with Hermione ended but not without a bang: perhaps unconsciously aware of Birkin’s thoughts and enraged by his refusal to have her, she hit him with a paperweight. This blow had a strange effect on Birkin, on one hand he was glad that it had happened and freed him from Hermione once and for all, on the other, he decided not to get involved with any woman at all. Now that he was free and could get closer to Ursula, he suddenly forgot all about her. A short-term memory loss: how convenient for Hermione, who would never know about it. The blow had caused him a concussion, from which he did not recover for weeks.

One afternoon, when Ursula wandered along the countryside of Breadalby, she saw a man tinkering with a boat: it was Birkin. She had not seen him for a long time because of his illness and, although she realized he was busy, did not want to go away. Noticing her, he stopped his hammering and came to her. He was friendly enough, but something had changed in him, he seemed coldly indifferent of her. She tried to get closer, but somehow he pushed her away. The two of them talked together but did not seem to find a common ground. She was suddenly filled with hatred towards him, yet there was something so attractive about him, something so alive. However, gradually a little fire began to burn inside Birkin and, although he would not show it, his feelings toward Ursula were reawakened.

Ursula had now challenged him: given him a chance to come close to her, but days went

by without a sign from Birkin. She was at the same time bitter and anxious; was he going to ignore her like this forever. Then there came a note; she and Gudrun were invited to have tea with him. Angry and hurt by Birkin wanting a third person along, she went there, but alone. Seeing each other again, they both were on guard. Then, the silence was broken by Birkin, but it was not what Ursula had expected to hear: he wanted them to pledge themselves forever, no matter what their relationship would turn out to be. He was not offering her emotional love, but something impersonal and hard, and he did not want that kind of love from her, either. She was exasperated and freezing inside; she had experienced hot but impersonal passion with Anton Skrebensky, and now she wanted something safe and warm, something soft and tender. Yet for Birkin, love was not the root:

There is...a final me which is stark and impersonal and beyond responsibility. So there is a final you. And it is there I would want to meet you - not in the emotional, loving plane - but there beyond, where there is no speech and no terms of agreement...And there could be no obligation...One can only follow the impulse, taking that which lies in front, and responsible for nothing, asked for nothing, giving nothing, only each taking according to the primal desire...What I want is a strange conjunction with you...an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings... (WIL: 151-153.)

Ursula was dismayed, it was exactly what she wanted to avoid - a relationship based on selfish animal passion. Birkin said he did not love her - he did not even think she was attractive. It seemed that he did not really want a woman at all, or a lover or a companion, he wanted someone he could use to his own perverse purposes, whatever they were. She did not know, nor did she care. He could pretend all he wanted - she knew he loved her anyway. Deep inside he knew it too, and he had no other choice but to submit: "Let love be enough then. I love you then - I love you" (WIL: 160).

Their love was like any new couple's, sometimes soft and airy, sometimes heavy and thundering. They enjoyed each other's company in any way they could, and they spent a lot of time just talking and laughing. It was all innocent and sleep-like, until Ursula did something unexpected: she invited the beasts of passion into their paradise. She wanted intimacy with him; she wanted to have all of him:

She wanted unspeakable intimacies. She wanted to have him, utterly, finally to have him as her own, oh, so unspeakably, in intimacy. To drink him down - ah, like a life-draught... She believed that love was *everything*. Man must render himself up to her. He must be quaffed to the dregs by her. Let

him be *her man* utterly, and she in turn would be his humble slave – whether she wanted it or not. (*WIL*: 278.)

This meant complete self-abandon, and Ursula knew that Birkin would never comply willingly. However, it was a challenge she would have to take; she would fight for it.

Birkin was terrified of the change in Ursula; he had been happy with the gentle, sensitive love they had had. He was tired of passion, and he did not want to be Ursula's possession, but to be free. Moreover, he wanted "to be with Ursula as free as with himself, single, clear and cool, yet balanced, polarised with her" (*WIL*: 209). When he tried to make her see his view, she accused him for not loving her, and turned down his marriage proposal.

However, they could not stay apart from one another, no matter how hard they tried. Ursula tried to find comfort in her own friends and activities and Birkin in Hermione, but their love for each other was so strong it brought them back together. They got married, and this time they found the paradise for both of them:

She had her desire of him, she touched, she received the maximum of unspeakable communication in touch, dark, subtle, positively silent, a magnificent gift and give again, a perfect acceptance and yielding, a mystery, the reality of that which can never be known, vital, sensual reality that can never be transmuted into mind content, but remains outside, living body of darkness and silence and subtlety, the mystic body of reality. She had her desire fulfilled. He had his desire fulfilled. For she was to him what he was to her, the immemorial magnificence of mystic, palpable, real otherness. (*WIL*: 337.)

#### 4.2.2 Gudrun and Gerald

Gudrun had first met Gerald Crich, the son of a local industrial magnate, at a wedding, where she had at once felt drawn to his good looks and obvious masculinity. He had seemed "pure as an arctic thing...like a young, good-natured wolf" (*WIL*: 15), but she had also sensed that there was a more sinister side in him, which piqued her curiosity. Suddenly, she had felt a strong sensation:

"Good God!" she exclaimed to herself, "what is this?" And then, a moment after, she was saying assuredly, "I shall know more of that man." She was tortured with the desire to see him again, a nostalgia, a necessity to see him again, to make sure it was not all a mistake, that she was not deluding



herself, that she really felt this strange and overwhelming sensation on his account, this knowledge of him in her essence, this powerful apprehension of him. "Am I *really* singled out for him in some way, is there really some pale gold, arctic light that envelopes only us two?" (*WIL*: 15.)

This sensation had been too strong for her; she had left the wedding to be alone with her thoughts.

Now they were to meet again. She and Ursula were on the way home from school, when they saw a man riding a red Arab mare, and when the man came closer, they saw it was Gerald. They all had to stop at the railway crossing and wait for the train to pass, but the mare did not like the noise of the approaching locomotive and tried to get away from it. Gerald pulled her back, but the closer the train came, the more nervous the horse became. When the locomotive was very close to them, it put on the brakes, but the screeching sound of the brakes was too much for the horse; she got on her back feet, spinning round and round. Gerald would not give in to her, he bit himself down on the mare, closing round her "almost as if she were part of his own physique" (*WIL*: 115). His spurs came down on her sides and she began to bleed. At the sight of blood Gudrun became white and nearly fainted; Ursula was horrified and furious at Gerald. When the mare had calmed down Gudrun went to Gerald and slashed at him: he must have been proud of himself now, but when she thought about the incident later she could still see him on the horse:

...the sense of indomitable soft weight of the man, bearing down into the living body of the horse: the strong, indomitable thighs of the blond man clenching the palpitating body of the mare into pure control; a sort of soft white magnetic domination from the loins and thighs and calves, enclosing and encompassing the mare heavily into unutterable subordination, soft blood-subordination, terrible. (*WIL*: 116-117.)

Gerald had power; Gudrun was now under his spell. He too remembered the look on her face when she had witnessed the scene with the mare and felt proud: it seemed that this woman was somehow compelled by him.

However, Gerald's feeling of self-conceit was premature: at his father's annual water-party, he came to witness that there was a violent side in Gudrun as well. Getting tired of other party guests, Gudrun and Ursula decided to go to some place more quiet, and when Gerald and Birkin offered them a canoe, they gladly accepted it. The girls found a

secluded spot by the lakeside where they could act as they pleased: they swam naked in the lake, sang merry songs and danced on the grass. Suddenly, they spotted a herd of cows standing nearby. Gudrun, feeling herself free and uninhibited, started dancing towards them, hopping closer and closer, nearly touching them.

Then she heard a cry, and all the cows started running up the hills. It was Gerald who could not understand what she was doing. She, angry at the interruption, followed the cows up the hill, with Gerald behind her. Then she paused, glanced at him, and rushed upon the cattle with her arms lifted, until they gave way and ran off. Gerald reproached her and said it was not safe to disturb the cows, they might turn against her. What then happened he could not have predicted.

She looked at him inscrutably. "You think I'm afraid of you and your cattle, don't you?" she asked. His eyes narrowed dangerously. There was a faint domineering smile on his face. "Why should I think that?" he said. She was watching him all the time with her dark, dilated, inchoate eyes. She leaned forward and swung round her arm, catching him a light blow on the face with the back of her hand. "That's why," she said, mocking.  
(*WIL*: 177.)

Having recoiled from the blow Gerald said deadly pale in a soft voice: "You have struck the first blow" (*WIL*: 177) As if accepting the challenge Gudrun replied: "And I shall strike the last" (*WIL*: 178), she answered. He could not understand why she was behaving in such an irrational manner, but when he asked her the reason for her actions, she simply replied that it was he who made her behave like that. Then she turned away and left him alone. Later Gudrun softly pleaded him not to be angry with her. He said he was not, he was in love with her. She laughed at him slightly teasing, but her voice was caressing when she replied: "That's one way of putting it" (*WIL*: 178). She said it was all right, and before they left the place in the canoe, she gave him a soft, lingering kiss on the mouth.

It had happened to Gerald now: he had fallen in love. He had not believed that any one woman could make him happy, and had only used women to satisfy his sensual needs. Pussum, whom he had met in London (Chapter VI), had appealed to him greatly, but only because he had felt power over her – it was never a question of love. Now, however, things were different: he loved Gudrun.

Gudrun, on the other hand, did not feel the same. She liked to watch him; he was beautiful to look at in his arctic maleness, but to have him as a lover – that was another matter. Yet, she had to make a decision; she had received an offer to come and teach drawing to Gerald's little sister Winifred at Shortlands, where the Crichs lived. Something was bound to happen between her and Gerald if she accepted the offer, but perhaps that would not be so serious; after all, a kiss is just a kiss. Curious to see if something would happen, Gudrun accepted.

One day, when Gudrun was at Shortlands, she and Winifred decided to make a picture of Winifred's big black-and-white rabbit, Bismarck. However, when Gudrun grabbed the animal by its ears to make it come out of his hutch, she noticed how strong he was. She felt rage toward him as he scratched her wrists badly with his claws, and tried to force him under her arm. Gerald, recognizing the desire for cruelty in Gudrun, came and took the beast from her. Bismarck lashed out and tried to escape, and a sudden wrath came upon Gerald as well; he seized the screaming animal by his neck and forced him under his arm. He caught her eye and felt "the mutual hellish recognition" (*WIL*: 253). There was a strange look in her eyes, full of "underworld knowledge" (*ibid*), and it seemed to plead, as if she was at his mercy. Yet, at the same time it was a look from the victor. The unholy connection that had been forming between Gudrun and Gerald since the day by the railway crossing had got stronger with every violent act that was performed, but this time they had joined forces and now it was time for the partners-in-crime to count their losses: the wounds. A truce was declared in the war between the two parties when they compared their injuries in the spirit of good comradeship:

"How many scratches have you?" he asked, showing his hard forearm, white and hard and torn in red gashes. "How really vile!" she cried, flushing with a sinister vision. "Mine is nothing." (*TR*: 254.)

Afterwards, Gudrun went to London for a while and by the time she had returned, Gerald's father had already fallen seriously ill. Gerald stayed by his bedside and lost the hold on his normal, everyday life. The death came so slowly and the long wait was agony for Gerald, but when Gudrun came back to Shortlands, he turned to her. He made it his mission to establish a relationship with her. He felt that "if he could put his arm around her...he would equilibrate himself" (*WIL*: 347). Gradually, they became lovers. Now she meant everything to him; a fact that he had to admit to her as well, but Gudrun did not know if she really wanted him. She wanted to believe in his love, but she had doubts

about it. She only knew that when he kissed her she relaxed and almost melted; he was “the exquisite adventure, the desirable unknown” (*WIL*: 350) which she was happy to explore. However, she could not undo the spell, and she secretly suffered.

Gudrun had got so deep into Gerald’s blood that he contemplated marriage: why should they not have a double wedding with Ursula and Birkin. Yet he felt marriage was his doom, he was not capable of committing himself to any soul, not even Gudrun. Instead he asked if the four of them could go abroad at Christmas, after Ursula and Birkin had been married.

The trip to Tyrol was the end of everything between Gerald and Gudrun. The first days were fine; they enjoyed their stay and behaved like lovers do, like they could not get enough of each other. Then, as time passed, they turned to new people for entertainment, and gradually the flame went out and the fire turned to ice. When Ursula and Birkin left Tyrol and Gudrun and Gerald stayed on, it was time to make a decision. Their love had become a battle, which neither of them could win; Gerald’s passion for her was never ending, but he could not love her the way she wanted him to love her. She decided it was over for them. Finally, he understood that she would never give him what he needed. Still, even if it was over, it still was not finished; they had to “put some sort of a finish to it...a conclusion...there must be finality” (*WIL*: 487).

Then he saw her with another man by the slopes. He realized that she had already moved on and flew into a towering jealous rage. The hatred toward Gudrun was so great in him that he tried to strangle her with his bare hands. To his dismay, he could not kill her. After all, he had to admit to himself that he did not care enough of her to take her life into his hands, it was not what he really wanted. Exhausted, he let her fall to her knees and began to drift up the slope he had to run off. He was so tired, she had drained all his strength away, and now he just wanted to sleep. He ran up the snowy mountains, climbing higher and higher, until he was nearly unconscious. Later, they found his frozen body on the mountains. He had fallen off the slope into eternal sleep; the final chapter in his and Gudrun’s book had been closed, and here was the conclusion.

### 4.2.3 Comparison of The Two Couples

In *Women in Love*, both Ursula and Gudrun want to find a man in their life. However, as they both find one, there is a great difference in the attitudes toward how things are to proceed. Already from the start, Ursula takes her relationship with Birkin seriously and is committed to making it work. Gudrun, on the other hand, is simply curious to see where her relationship with Gerald would lead. It almost seems that she is only toying with Gerald, as she is too free a spirit to be tied down yet. The same, however, applies to Gerald. Despite his good intentions he can not get himself to make a commitment to Gudrun, whereas Birkin succeeds in this task.

Therefore, of the two couples only one manages to form a satisfactory relationship. Ursula and Birkin fall gradually deeply in love with each other, but at first the differences of opinion about the nature of their relationship prevent them from becoming truly happy. Ursula, who believes in love and passion as the basis of everything, can not understand Birkin's wish for a connection, which is not love but something "more", something pure and gentle, an equilibrium (see p. 39). For a while situation seems impossible, but then they give up their pride and are reunited. The flame is rekindled, and something new born, something, which satisfies them both.

The story of Gudrun and Gerald has not as happy an ending. Their attraction to one another is immediate, but based on the wrong kind of elements: swooning passion and desire for cruelty towards each other and other living things (cf. the incidents with the mare, the cattle and the rabbit). Gudrun wants a man, who would give her love, but she soon notices that man is not Gerald; all he wants from her is her body, and she can not love him the way he is. Gerald thinks that what he feels for Gudrun is love, but he is mistaken. Their affair is destructive as it soon turns into a continuous struggle for power, and it ends as it had begun: violently with Gerald dead after a fall from the mountains.

In fact, there was never any hope for the romance of Gudrun and Gerald, since their relationship lacked some important elements. First, they could not be at ease in each other's company. Ursula and Birkin's relationship was based on them wanting to be together; they enjoyed each other's company and felt happy in each other's presence.

Their being together was spontaneous, filled with talk and laughter, whereas Gudrun and Gerald never experienced that kind of carefree intimacy. Whenever they met, the air was filled with hungry desire or taste of violence; there was no time for anything else. Secondly, The question of who controls the relationship became too important an issue for Gudrun and Gerald; neither wanted to give in to the other party. Ursula and Birkin, on the other hand had no such struggle, and even if their means were different they both had the same aim: a union based on equality. Thirdly, Ursula and Birkin loved each other as a whole, both physically and mentally, whereas Gudrun and Gerald only loved each other's beauty and sensuality, or as Birkin exclaimed in Chapter XXVII, "Gudrun...(was) a born mistress, just as Gerald (was) a born lover" (*WIL*: 393). Finally, Ursula and Birkin learned to accept the duality in their own and each other's nature and realized that their love can be both passionate and tender. Gudrun, on the other hand, never understood that the violence in her was part of her nature and not caused by Gerald, and Gerald, until the very last moment, refused to believe that he was incapable of committing himself completely to anyone.

In short, the novel shows that the key to happiness in a relationship is based on friendship, equality, love and the acceptance of oneself and others. Denying one's true nature and acting against it may bring temporary satisfaction, but in the long run it only ends in ruins.

#### 4.3 The Plumed Serpent

D. H. Lawrence wrote the novel *The Plumed Serpent* (1926) during his and Frieda's stay in Mexico in the mid-1920's. According to Niven (1987:167-168), the writing was inspired by his discovery that Mexico was a country where people wanted to go back to their "primitive", Aztec origins. Sympathetic to the idea of reviving old religions and customs under a strong leadership, Lawrence imagined what its consequences would be, and worked his thoughts into the novel.

One major theme of the novel is, like in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, the duality of man. The heroine of this novel, the forty-year-old Irishwoman Kate Leslie, has been recently widowed and, disgusted with modern world Europe and America and in search

of something new into her life, she has come to visit Mexico. Her first instincts about the country are antipathetic, although she has a “will-to-happiness” (*The Plumed Serpent: 2*. I shall refer to this novel as *PS* from now on), her “alter-ego” (*PS: 3*) keeps her from enjoying any new experiences she might encounter. She feels that Mexico has “an underlying ugliness, a sort of squalid evil” around it and is afraid that it would give her “the contagion of its crawling sort of evil” (*PS: 14*). However, as she meets Don Ramón and General Cipriano Viedma and learns about their plan to revive old Aztec gods, she is forced to admit that there is something primitively attractive in the country and its inhabitants. Finally, she is faced with a difficult decision: should she stay in Mexico with the two men and completely abandon her old self, her old values and beliefs, or go back to Europe, alone but her individuality intact.

#### 4.3.1 Kate, Cipriano and Don Ramón

Kate’s first contact with the primitive cruelty of Mexico was through a ritualistic bullfight which both repelled and fascinated her. She had agreed to go to the fight at the request of her cousin Owen and another American, Villiers, expecting “a gallant show” (*PS: 9*). Instead, she was completely shocked by what she witnessed: the wounded bull attacking a blindfolded horse, and the smell of blood, “a nauseous whiff of bursten bowels” (*ibid*). Although leaving a bullfight was a national insult, she could not take it any longer and had to leave.

She made her way through the angry crowd, and when she finally reached the archway under the stadium, she saw that it was pouring with rain. As she stood there shivering in her thin frock and wondering what to do, she saw a little dark-faced officer approaching, clearing his way through the masses of people with a “quiet unobtrusiveness, yet with the peculiar heavy Indian momentum” (*PS: 14*). He came to her introducing himself as General Viedma and offered to get her a ride to her hotel, an offer, which she gladly accepted.

Waiting for the car of his friend to show up, they started talking and it turned out that he had been educated in England and had even known Kate’s former husband’s brother. Possibly it was the mutual acquaintance or the knowledge of his education that made

Kate accept his invitation to visit him and invite him to see her at her hotel before she stepped into a Fiat and drove away. Safe in the car, she felt relief to get away from that awful place and even from the man. He had been very nice, but:

...he had made her feel she wanted to get away from him too. There was that heavy, black Mexican fatality about him, that put a burden on her. His quietness, and his peculiar assurance, almost aggressive; and at the same time, a nervousness, an uncertainty. His heavy sort of gloom, and yet his quick, naïve, childish smile. Those black eyes, like black jewels, that you couldn't look into, and which were so watchful; yet which, perhaps, were waiting for some sign of recognition and of warmth! Perhaps! (*PS*: 17.)

Later, as she sat in a tea-house having some tea and strawberry shortcake, she pondered about the current events. Although the stranger had peaked her curiosity, the whole affair with the bullfight, the Indian and Mexico itself had made her feel uneasy, and she was glad when the car left her in a tea-house. Here she could, for a moment, feel herself "in the cosmopolitan world", even though she strangely sensed that Mexico was in her destiny, "almost as a doom" (*PS*: 17).

A while later, Kate met General Viedma, or Don Cipriano, as he was also called, again as she was sitting at a tea-table with some of her friends. This time he had a friend with him, a middle-aged tall, big, handsome man, who "gave the effect of bigness" (*PS*: 30). Compared to him, Cipriano seemed small and almost "cocky" (*ibid*). Even though Kate, as a perfect hostess, talked to both of them it was this new acquaintance whose name was Don Ramón Carrasco, that now stole her attention. As she later found out, he was the intellectual and political leader of the movement the purpose of which was to rid Mexico of Christianity and to revive the pre-Columbian religion of the Aztecs. The two men had appointed themselves as gods of this religion, Don Ramon becoming Quetzalcoatl, the Plumed Serpent, and Cipriano Huitzilopochtli, the war god. Between Kate and Don Ramón, there seemed to be an instant understanding and mutual liking. His impressiveness and sardonic humour made him attractive in Kate's eyes, whereas Cipriano, mute and disciplined, seemed to shrink before her. Where Don Ramón understood her feelings about the oppressiveness of Mexico and the "nothingness" of its inhabitants and even admitted that there was some truth in them, Cipriano seemed to plead that she would learn to think differently, yearning for her rapport and compassion. Kate felt this could never be, she could never be "a real Mexican" (*PS*: 32).

Later, one morning Kate woke up at the age of forty, and it was a blow to her: youth and



“happiness” were now over, and it was time for reserve and responsibility (*PS*: 39). It made her think about her life, previous and present, and her trip to Mexico:

It was no good Kate’s wondering why she had come. Over in England, in Ireland, in Europe, she had heard the *consummatum est* of her own spirit. It was finished, in a kind of death agony. But still this heavy continent of dark-souled death was more than she could bear. She was forty: the first half of her life was over. The bright page with its flowers and its love... ended with a grave. Now she must turn over, and the page was black, black and empty... How could one write on a page so profoundly black? (*PS*: 41.)

She did not know the answer to that question. Therefore, she decided to concentrate on Mexico and its culture.

Being able to read Spanish quite well, she read the Spanish pages of newspapers, and that is how she came upon an article on the gods of antiquity returning to Mexico. She found it very interesting, and decided to visit the place, Sayula, where the gods had once lived and where they were supposed to emerge again. She felt that although she resented Mexico, there was still some mystery, some magic in it, “almost like hope” (*PS*: 47). Perhaps it was right for the gods to rise from the dead, to be reborn, as she too had to be born again. She knew she no longer needed or wanted love, she had had her fill with her husbands and her children. What she wanted was something quite different, to be alone and yet, at the same time, to have a kind of silent co-existence with others:

... when she could escape into her true loneliness, the influx of peace and soft, flower-like potency which was beyond understanding... (was) so delicate, so fine... yet, the only reality... in the rare, lingering dawn of maturity, the flower of her soul was opening. Above all things, she must preserve herself from worldly contacts. Only she wanted the silence of other unfolded souls around her, like a perfume. The presence of that which is forever unsaid. (*PS*: 49.)

Oddly enough, she could see that kind of silence in the black eyes of the Indians and she knew that both Don Ramón and Don Cipriano had heard her soundless call. This could be why she had come to Mexico, away from England and the people around her.

Still, there came the time when Kate had to decide whether to stay in Mexico or to go to the United States with her cousin. She knew it was not an easy country for a woman to live alone in, and had she not wanted to get away anyhow? Yet she felt like “a bird round whose body a snake has coiled itself” (*PS*: 60), and this snake was Mexico. So she stayed, and eventually got herself an old Spanish house by the lakeside with a Mexican

woman Juana assisting her there. She kept in touch with both Don Ramón and Cipriano, and they talked about Mexico and its politics and religion, but it was not before she and Juana witnessed a religious dance at the plaza that she began to understand what the religion of Quetzalcoatl was all about.

That Saturday evening Sayula plaza was full of people watching something of a show, and Kate and Juana joined them. There were musicians who were naked from their waists up and sang a song about Quetzalcoatl. Then a man with a banner of the sun started an ancient Aztec story about the Aztec gods, along came the drums and then another man began singing in “the fashion of the old Red Indians...inwardly” (*PS*: 110), with no recognizable rhythm. It was hardly music but Kate understood it, it spoke to her soul.

Suddenly there was a silence and everyone seemed to be waiting for something. Then a man rose and walked to the group of women who were watching the performance. He smiled at them, and one of the women got up and took the man’s hand. Then another man walked to another woman, then another, and soon the plaza was full of couples holding each other’s hands. Kate, though scared, was also made to get up and find a man to go to. Now they were all in a circle holding each other by the hands, and it began to move slowly. Kate moved along with it, between two silent men and she felt she was no longer herself; she was something more than that:

She felt her sex and her womanhood caught up and identified in the slowly revolving ocean of nascent life, the dark sky of the men lowering and wheeling above...she was gone and her own desires were gone in the ocean of the great desire... Only the pure sliding conjunction. Herself gone into her greater self, her womanhood consummated in the greater womanhood. And where her fingers touched the fingers of the man, the quiet spark, like the dawn-star, shining between her and the greater manhood of men. (*PS*: 115.)

She danced and gradually lost the track of time, nothing else had any meaning except this primitive, passionate, wild, sensual circle of men and women. When the dance finally stopped and everyone left the circle, Kate hurried home with a new secret about herself. She had made contact with her primitive self.

Despite her newfound greater womanhood, Kate was still bothered by thoughts of both Cipriano and Don Ramón. Cipriano’s nakedness was so “aloof, far-off and

intangible... So that to think of it was almost a violation" (*PS*: 162). As for Don Ramón, he was almost horribly handsome, emanating "a fascination almost like narcotic" (*PS*: 164). They were both full of pure sensuality, and still they kept quiet about it, desireless and powerful. Kate felt like Salome in front of John, all this beauty in front of her, inaccessible, and she was ashamed of herself. She wanted to be pure, too, and alone in her silence; there was no room for love in this new life of hers. Still she knew that Don Ramón had touched her somewhere inside and she could not escape from him.

One day Cipriano came forward with a bold suggestion: would Kate marry him and become a goddess in the Quetzalcoatl pantheon. Kate, having gradually become more interested in the ancient religion, first refused his marriage proposal. She wanted to help the men and especially Don Ramón, but the thought of marriage did not appeal to her. On the other hand, she was still horrified of Mexico and its people, and marriage would provide a shelter from it all. She could marry Cipriano but it would not be her true self that would become his wife but "some curious female within her, whom she did not know and did not own" (*PS*: 211). Perhaps she should just pack her trunks and go to America. However, she would not make any decisions before talking to Don Ramón.

When Kate met Don Ramón he was not in high spirits. He had lost contact with his wife Carlota, who did not understand or accept his mission as the leader of the Men of Quetzalcoatl. To her it was blasphemy, God and Jesus were the only higher powers in her life, and now her husband wanted to deny their importance and appoint himself as the living Quetzalcoatl. He felt they had failed each other, they could not "give up the assembled self, the daily I...and...meet unconscious in the Morning Star" (*PS*: 225, c.f. Birkin and Ursula in *Women in Love*). Kate understood him; she too knew how the "dawn-star" could shine between men and women (see p. 50 for the dance at the plaza). She also wanted something bigger than piece of a man; she wanted someone to believe in.

Their conversation was interrupted suddenly by a volley of shots: there was an intruder at Don Ramón's hacienda. Don Ramón quickly drew a revolver from his hip, strode along the terrace, and leaped up onto the roof. There came more shots and Kate, terrified, fled to the stairway where he could see the action. Then there was a crash in the air as Don Ramón jumped at the intruder, and they both fell on the floor. The bandit

dropped his gun and Kate snatched it, not daring to fire it. The bandit stabbed Don Ramón with a knife, and Kate cried in agony. At the same moment another man approached them, and this time Kate did not hesitate but fired. Now Don Ramón got the hold of a knife and stabbed the first man. Soon they were both dead. They had not been robbers at all, but assassins, and as they later found out, there had been five men more at the hacienda, now all dead. Don Ramón was badly wounded but he would survive; Kate had saved his life.

After the incident, Kate stayed at home, numbed, until Cipriano came to see her and take her to see Don Ramón. As they sat in the car, a strange spell was cast over her. She felt Cipriano's physical presence so overpowering, he was Pan with two faces: those of good and evil. He had the power of demons – her demon lover. Outside she could see the skies go dark and mysterious and then there was twilight. She felt she became part of the primeval world where he roamed and had no choice but to submit.

She could conceive now her marriage with Cipriano; the supreme passivity, like the earth below the twilight, consummate in living lifelessness, the sheer solid mystery of passivity. Ah, what an abandon...of so many things she wanted to abandon. (*PS*: 278.)

There was a wedding, with Kate dressed in a green dress, and Don Ramón as the priest. She became the bride of Huitzilopochtli, but it was only marriage by Quetzalcoatl, no other.

Then there came the day when the house of God became the temple of Quetzalcoatl; Don Ramón and his men had won the religious battle. He stood in the church, powerful, and announced to the people: "I am the living Quetzalcoatl" (*PS*: 304). His congregation saluted, but then there was suddenly a woman's cry amongst the crowd: "Lord!... God of love, forgive! He knows not what he does" (*PS*: 307). It was Carlota, strangling with ecstasy, and throes and convulsions tortured her body as she tried to stop the ceremony. Then she fell moaning on the altar steps. Cipriano hurried to cover her body and carried it out of the church, but Don Ramón just stared at his dying wife, and continued the ceremony. He had no heart left to grieve over Carlota; it had died a long ago.

The same way Don Ramón had become the living Quetzalcoatl, Cipriano became the living Huitzilopochtli and Kate, as his bride, Malintzi. However, the decision to become

Cipriano's wife was not an easy one, even if the marriage was only in the name of Quetzalcoatl. She was in love with Cipriano, she felt safe in his arms and knew that he needed her. Still, she also knew that Cipriano only needed her as a "thing of sheer reciprocity" (*PS*: 348) and that he would never see her as an individual with a soul of her own, significant as such:

The tiny star of her very self he would never see. To him she was but the answer to his call, the sheath for his blade, the cloud to his lightning, the earth to his rain, the fuel to his fire. Alone, she was nothing. Only as the pure female corresponding to his pure male, did she signify. As an isolated individual, she had little or no significance. As a woman on her own, she was repulsive, and even evil, to him. She was not real till she was reciprocal. (*PS*: 348.)

The thought was too much to bear: that kind of submission meant the death of her individual self, the abandonment of her very foundations. Nevertheless, she was now Malintzi, and that was her fate.

Fate or no fate, Kate was still fighting with herself. On one hand, she had a pulsing urge to leave Mexico and Cipriano and go back to her family, at least for some time, on the other, the connection between herself and Cipriano and Don Ramón was too strong, they would not let her go. All the ceremonies of Quetzalcoatl and the momentary life with Cipriano, the people of Mexico and the primitivity lurking behind every corner; they had caused a change in her, a change that could kill her if it went forward too quickly. She was not sure that she wanted to give up her independence and give herself completely to the two men, but the alternative was not too tempting, either. If she went to England she might never have the strength to return to Mexico and to her husband; instead, she might end up being alone for the rest of her life with only her pride and other whining lonely ladies to keep company. No, her ego and individuality were not worth that horrible price.

After all, when Cipriano touched her caressively, all her body flowered. That was the greater sex, that could fill all the world with lustre, and which she dared not think about, its power was so much greater than her own will. (*PS*: 395.)

However, Cipriano would stop her from going; she would not have to make the decision herself. She would submit and join him in the Morning Star, be Malintzi to Huitzilopochtli. Nevertheless, the submission would not be complete: she would still try and keep alive the little individuality there was left in her.

## Conclusions

Kate goes to Mexico to get away from the burdens of the mechanized, civilized world and to start a new life. She has no desire for love and romance, and wishes peace, instead. However, with her husband dead and children all grown up, she has nothing to do and wants desperately something to make her feel needed again. This wish is granted when she meets Cipriano and Don Ramón and gradually becomes interested in their plan to revive the age-old Aztec religion. Unwillingly she also becomes their instrument, a means to their end, by letting herself be turned into goddess Malintzi and the bride of war god Huitzilopochtli, the alter ego of Cipriano.

Kate does not want to stay in Mexico forever and makes plans to return to England to her family, but she is scared of loneliness and idleness she might encounter there. She is strongly attracted to both Cipriano and Don Ramón, who are quite different from the men she had met or known before. They are handsome, dark-skinned, sensual and primitively passionate which makes them very exciting in her eyes, but it is quite possible that also the complete dedication to their common task attracts her – they have the meaning in their lives that she so badly needs. In that sense they also remind one of Kate's former husband, who died fighting for what he believed in. However, she does not believe in the Quetzalcoatl religion and finds the two men's desire to appoint themselves living gods both dangerous and repulsive – there is no reason for man to be more than man.

Originally, Kate is drawn to Don Ramón whose sensuality, power and leadership she admires. However, since her feelings are not returned, she turns to Cipriano. He wants her, both physically and mentally, because he feels that she complements him, helps him become more than a man: a god. However, living with Cipriano calls for total submission, abandonment of one's own will and self, and Kate, a modern and independent woman, resents this. There is a battle of wills, which Cipriano wins, or so it seems. He makes her his wife first ceremonially and later legally, and uses her as he pleases. Kate seems like a puppet on a string, having to content herself with a marriage based on some heated moments of passion – and even then she is denied the ultimate satisfaction -, and to act a goddess in Cipriano and Don Ramón's religious play just to help them. However, she not only wants to have sensual pleasure with Cipriano and

blood-connection with him and Don Ramón but also to retain a small Morning Star within herself, to feel significant in her own right. She is not ready to give up totally either her old or new world, and by making some compromises, she manages to have the best of both worlds.

In short, Kate wanted away from the life in the mechanized new world and this she managed in primitive Mexico. She wanted some meaning in her life, so she became a wife and a goddess. She wanted peace and this she found by accepting her modern and primitive sides, by combining her old and new way of life. As for love that she never wanted, it is quite possible that there was never any love in Kate and Cipriano's marriage; that it was only a mutual agreement based on physical needs and Aztec religion. Therefore, Kate got all that she wanted and more, as being in Mexico also taught her new things about herself, such as the ability to enjoy solitude.

## 5 FELINE SYMBOLS AND DUALISM IN THE NOVELS

As stated before, the novels *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* and *The Plumed Serpent* all share one theme: duality of human nature. As Lawrence noted in his doctrine of dualism, in order to make a man-woman relationship last, the both parties must first balance the male and female characteristics within themselves, and then meet each other as opposites that finally form a whole. This double reconciliation of opposites proves difficult for some of the main characters of the novels, and cause problems in their romantic relationships.

In the novels, the duality in the nature of the characters is often expressed through feline symbols. The characters may look like felines, move like them or behave like them. They may recognize themselves or others in felines and even make a drastic turn from one feline into another – a kitten may transform into a lioness. The felines may be shown in a positive light – a kitten's playfulness - or a negative light – the raging of a tiger. In the next pages, I shall bring out examples of these different kinds of feline symbolism

## 5.1 The Rainbow

### 5.1.1 Anna and Will

Although there are feline characteristics in all three generations of the Brangwen family, at least to some extent, they are most visible in the second and third generation. In the second generation, especially Will Brangwen, the step-cousin and future husband of Anna Brangwen, is constantly described in feline terms, but also Anna eventually displays some feline qualities, as she becomes his mate. There is a scene in Chapter VI, where she and Will are having a meal during their honeymoon, and what Will says clearly portends that which is to happen later: “You look like a lion, with your mane sticking out, and your nose pushed over your food” (*TR*: 147).

Already in Chapter IV when Anna meets Will for the first time, she is intrigued by him. He has got a “wonderful voice” that has a “strange, twanging, almost cat-like sound” (*TR*: 109), golden-brown eyes and black, fur-like hair, that reminds her of some “mysterious animal that (lives) in the darkness...and never (comes) out”, living “vividly, swift and intense”( *TR*: 107). Also Anna’s father sees a cat in him, a young tomcat with a fierce but abstracted nature and a hollow grin. This cat wants to live its life separate from other people, having nothing to do with their affairs, like a cat could “lie on the hearthrug whilst its master or mistress writhed in agony a yard away” (*TR*: 115). The nephew irritates him, but he can not help liking and even respecting him. He is jealous of Anna whom he adores and maybe even senses the danger when he sees Will following her like a “persistent, unswerwing black shadow”, with a strange “cat-grin” on his face (*ibid*).

With Will Anna discovers her primitive animal self and together they escape into his kingdom, the dark, pulsating nocturnal jungle of sensual desires. Will is happy and proud like a lion of his bride and would like to have a never-ending honeymoon with her within the four walls of their own home, never letting the blinding sunshine or the rest of the world in. However, unlike Will Anna is not such a creature of darkness and soon needs the daylight and people around her. Moreover, when she finds out that she is pregnant she feels so happy and filled with sunshine that she no longer wants the night, and thus she denies Will his only pleasure. Will, who is shocked by her decision will not



simply lick his wounds like a hurt pussycat but is ready to defend his conjugal rights, fighting back like a tiger.

Suddenly the same feline qualities that had attracted Anna in Will at first become repulsive and frightening, the sensual darkness around him disturbs her. She feels that he, with his demands, is like a leopard that “clings to a wild cow and exhausts her and pulls her down...under his physical will” (*TR*: 185). He seems to have “the power of a creature that lies hidden and exerts its will to the destruction of the free-running creature, as the tiger lying in the darkness” (*ibid*); even when he is just there and does not move he is still waiting for her, stalking, ready to devour her when she shows the slightest sign of weakness.

Will is also frightened, he needs Anna to share his dark kingdom, and without her he feels lost. He hates himself for being weak and wants to get rid of his animal side, but he cannot. Only when Anna herself decides to come back to her and they find a new, gentle love on her terms, his dark soul, “the powerful dissatisfaction in him” (*TR*: 191) gives in and is tamed. The two competing principles of power and love have joined forces: “the lion lay down with the lamb in him” (*ibid*). They slowly come to a compromise with no words exchanged between them; Anna gets her freedom and her children in the daytime, and in the night, there is the sensual unison in Will’s world. Only then can also Anna allow herself to transform into a beast, to become a she-cat to her tom.

The two characters of the novel can be seen as felines in several ways. Will, who already by his looks reminds of a cat-like animal, seems to behave like one as well. He wants to live his life separate from other people, that is, until he meets Anna. When he finds the ultimate sensual satisfaction in her, he turns into a true creature of the night. Proud like a lion of the new kingdom that he has discovered for himself, he wants Anna to share it. Anna, however, rejects him, and he declares a war. Like the sinister Lawrentian tiger he is ready to “kill” Anna to get what he wants. Although he wins, the victory is only partial in the end. Anna joins him in his jungle in the night, but along with the passion she brings a new, soft, womanly love. And as the children come into the world, she becomes a lioness, willing in sexual contact but separate with her cubs, putting them always in the first place. Will is left with two separate kingdoms, his and Anna’s, in which he is more a mere spectator.

### 5.1.2 Ursula and Anton

Also in the third generation, there are characters that display cat-like qualities. Inmiss (1971:126) sees that Ursula, the older daughter of Anna and Will and the main character in the story of the third generation, has from the first the appearance of a lion. Her tawny skin, bronze hair and especially her golden-brown cat-like eyes that obviously come from the father and are constantly emphasized in the novel, indicate the lion-tiger qualities that are first latent and later become more visible in her with the help of Anton Skrebensky, her future lover. Their stormy relationship brings out the feline in not only Ursula, but Anton as well.

As a child Ursula reminds of a kitten. Young and innocent, with no experience of the real world's cruelty, she is the apple of her father's eye, his sun. And his love is returned, the golden-brown eyes dilate with pleasure as they meet the similar pair of the father's. She enjoys being in the church where he works, running around "foraging here and there, like a kitten playing by herself in the darkness with eyes dilated" (*TR*: 218). Also her playing with the ropes hanging from the bells in the tower reminds one of a kitten's play.

However, the innocence of a kitten is soon to disappear. As a youth, Ursula is faced with a serious problem, that of finding herself. Torn between the wish to be good and decent, one of God's lambs - the female principle in her - and the yearning for sensual desire - the quality of the male principle - she begins her journey toward the woman in her. Gradually she changes from the meek lamb, caressed like a pet, to a proud, strong and passionate lion. She finds out that lambs cannot love, only be loved, and the passion in her is too powerful for her to be a lamb. Lions, on the other hand, are "not passive subjects...or pets...or sacrifices", but they had "self-possession" and "dignity" she admired (*TR*: 342). She knows that her heart is like a lion's,

(It) was relentless in its desires. It would suffer a thousand deaths, but it would still be a lion's heart when it rose from death, a fiercer lion she would be, a surer, knowing herself different from and separate from the great, conflicting universe that was not herself. (*TR*: 342-343.)

With her lion's heart, Ursula goes through a series of romantic and sensual affairs, but no other relationship is as important as that with baron and army officer Anton Skrebensky. When she meets him at the tender age of 15, the fight between the lamb and

the lion has already begun. In Anton she sees a self-assured gentleman, an aristocratic lion, and a potential guide to the world of dark wilderness. Soon they fall in love and she begins the journey toward her maximum self, the female. She loves him, at least physically, because he makes her feel like “the whole Woman in the human order” (*TR*: 444), and he has such beauty and glamour when he is with her:

A glow came into his face, into his fine, smooth skin, his eyes, gold-grey, glowed intimately to her. He burned up, he caught fire and became splendid, royal, something like a tiger. (*TR*: 444.)

Anton goes to India and they are separated for a while, but when he comes back, their relationship becomes more intimate. Swept away by the waves of passion, “darkness cleaving to darkness” (*TR*: 447), they enjoy the new exciting side of their romance. Ursula goes about for weeks “in the same richness, her eyes dilated and shining like the eyes of a wild animal” (*TR*: 448). She happily ignores all the other people around her feeling herself abundant and fulfilled.

She was free as a leopard that sends out its raucous cry in the night. She had the potent, dark stream of her own blood, she had the glimmering core of fecundity, she had her mate, her complement, her sharer in fruition. So, she had all, everything. (*TR*: 449.)

Anton is also satisfied. He has no need for the rest of the world; he will simply watch it go by “as a lion or a tiger may lie with narrowed eyes watching the people pass its cage...or a leopard lie blinking, watching the incomprehensible feats of the keepers” (*ibid*). The feline couple stay in their jungle for a long while, but all good has to come to an end.

Although Ursula loves Anton physically and sees him as the tom to the feline in her, the relationship is not meant to last. Anton wants her to go to India with him as his wife, but she is not prepared for this role. Anton feels that as an officer he is a part of the nation and must do his duties in the war but this makes him in Ursula’s eyes only a person with no individuality, a nobody. Although Anton is not a soldier but an engineer, whose main job is to build bridges, there is a clear inclination to Lawrence’s soldier-like tiger emblem: Ursula feels that he, as a part of the war machinery, wants to suppress the Indians and force them under his will. Their love becomes a raging war in which she, instead of a lion that she so much admires, becomes the more sinister Lawrentian feline, the tiger. The tiger wins, whereas her potential mate turns out to be merely a lamb. Licking his wounds like a hurt pussycat, he

marries another girl, leaving Ursula to look for a brighter future.

Like her father Will, Ursula has also the looks of a feline. Moreover, also she turns from the domesticated feline into a more beastly one. As a young girl, she discovers the proud lion's heart within herself, and when she meets the aristocratic Anton, she believes that the two of them could share the yet undiscovered world of unconsciousness and darkness. However, once the new world is found, she discovers that he is not the royal and noble king of beasts, but a mere soldier to that king. The killing, sterile spirit of the tiger is not what she desires, but what she really wants is too much for a man like Anton to handle; she wants the sensuality and freedom of the leopard and the kingdom of the lion. Finally she, disappointed and enraged, turns into a tiger and destroys Anton and the love they shared. Anton, a tiger on the surface only, is left with nothing but the bleeding wounds.

## 5.2 Women in Love

### 5.2.1 Ursula, Birkin and Mino

There are no characters in this novel that display feline characteristics or qualities as clearly as the characters in *The Rainbow*. However, in Chapter XIII there is an example of how the characters of the novel identify themselves with felines. Birkin's tomcat Mino, who is the subject of the incident, is a symbol of the male principle and its superiority; he is "erect", "kingly" and "walks stately with manly nonchalance" (*WIL*: 154). In this chapter Ursula and Birkin are sorting out their feelings toward each other and discussing the kind of relationship they are hoping for. Ursula, the romantic soul that she is, feels this is purely a question of love but Birkin is not ready to accept this. He knows he wants her but in his opinion the relationship should not be based on love but something beyond it, something bigger and "inhuman" (*WIL*: 151), primitive. He believes that the only way to find emotional salvation is to have "a passionate marriage in which each partner recognizes the other's separateness" (see introduction in *WIL*).

Their discussion turns into a heated argument but is suddenly interrupted by the sight of two cats, Mino and a female stray. She appears on the fence and Mino goes to her in

order to court her. Then he suddenly slaps her face with the paw, wanting to show her her place. Ursula, still hurt by Birkin's resistance, immediately interprets this as male bullying and will to govern, "Wille zur Macht" (*WIL*: 155-156), thus identifying herself with the female cat. She feels that Mino and males in general do not have the right to try and suppress females just because they feel superior to them. As she sees that Birkin applauds the tomcat she is filled with fury and even fear. Perhaps she fears that the relationship with Birkin may turn out to be like that of the cats', without love and purely animal.

Birkin sees the situation in another way. Daleski (1965:174) says that for him, Mino's behavior is justified because the female is just a stray and, without Mino her destiny, lost in a chaos. All Mino wishes to do is to have a "pure stable equilibrium" (*WIL*: 156) with her, to make her form a lasting relationship with a single male, himself, and thus bring together and combine the contradictory elements within them both. (Daleski 1965:174-175.) This is the kind of union Birkin would like to have with Ursula. He wants to be like Mino, an animal, a primitive "Adam...in the indestructible paradise" where he can keep his Eve "single with himself, like a star in its orbit" (*WIL*: 156). He wants Ursula to understand that just like Mino and the stray, he and Ursula belong together, but on his terms. He feels that he is like a tomcat and Ursula a she-cat, and actually later describes Ursula as "the cat's mother" (*WIL*: 269). Sanders (1973:98) says that Birkin's wish to become a tomcat is granted when he finally manages to bring Ursula under his will. However, I feel that their final coming together is more a question of compromising; instead of trying to change one another, the two learn to accept each other the way they are.

As years have gone by, Ursula has come to realize that she no longer wants the freedom of a leopard as she did in the days of Anton. All she now wants is an equal partnership based on mutual feelings and this she wants to find with Birkin. However, because he cannot admit his love for her, she feels that all he wants is to use her sexually and then leave her dry. That is why it hurts and irritates her so much to see Birkin applaud Mino's behavior as it handles the she-cat; she does not want to be Birkin's bullied love-slave. Birkin, on the other hand, sees it not as a question of slavery but of ultimate commitment with absolute fidelity. Moreover, he realizes that there cannot be a lasting relationship

unless there is freedom as well, and such is also the kingdom of lions; they are faithful to each other but can also enjoy the separateness. Finally, because of their willingness to meet one another in the halfway, Ursula and Birkin find this kingdom and Ursula's lion's heart is joined by Birkin's similar one.

### 5.2.2 Gerald and Minette

Of the characters in the novel, there is only one that clearly reminds of a feline both in her appearance and behaviour, and that is Minette, a friend of Rupert Birkin. In Chapter VI Gerald Crich, Gudrun Brangwen's future lover, joins Birkin and his friends for a drink at a cafe. At this time he is not yet involved with Ursula's sister, Gudrun. At the same table where Birkin is sitting there is a girl called Minette with her "mane of hair" (*WIL*: 74) like that of an "Egyptian princess's" (*WIL*: 63). She is a small delicate figure with "warm colouring and large, dark hostile eyes" (*ibid*), and there is an instant electric attraction between her and Gerald. The hint toward Egypt already shows a connection to cats and lions, the holy animals of the ancient courts of the pharaohs, and so does the description of her looks. Moreover, her pet name, Pussum, is clearly short of pussycat.

However, Pussum is, as Gerald quickly notices, not purely a pussycat, but also bears resemblance to its wilder relatives. Only a little later she acts out the cat trope hinted at by her name and slashes her lover's hand with a knife showing that she is not afraid of blood. The lover, Halliday by the name, is her plaything, her willing prey-lamb, and his meekness irritates her so much that she attacks and shows him his place. This makes her in Gerald's eyes "like a cat...(or) rather...a young, female panther" (*WIL*: 78), or perhaps the Lawrentian tiger. It also reminds of Birkin's tomcat Mino and his behavior towards the she-cat. Nevertheless, as the situation changes, she no longer remains the violent, power-hungry tiger. Instead, discovering her pregnancy, she turns into the most royal and noble of felines. Fighting like a lioness to protect her unborn baby and grant her a good life, she is willing to sacrifice her own happiness by marrying her lover, a man she barely can stand and an obvious prey to the tiger in her.

Minette's beauty and softness, however, wake up the feline also in Gerald, who feels "an awful, enjoyable power over her, an instinctive cherishing very near to cruelty" (*WIL*:

66). For him she is the victim, prey; he can destroy her whenever he wishes (Inniss 1971:148). This knowledge makes him generous, almost as if he were a cat playing with what is soon to become its meal. Actually, Inniss (1971:148) sees him throughout the chapter as a pure, willful tiger with his “force held steady... at the base of his spine” (*WIL*: 74). He is described in animal terms; he moves in a “slow, observant...attentive motion” (*WIL*: 63), his hands are “rather sinister... animal”(*WIL*: 68) and he laughs “dangerously, from the blood” (*WIL*: 73). On the other hand, Gerald also witnesses the dark, violent side of Minette, a potential challenge to the beast in him. Moreover, when he senses the electricity between the two of them, he is very proud: “every one of his limbs...(was) turgid with electric force, and his back...tense like a tiger’s, with slumbering fire” (*WIL*: 77).

There is, nevertheless, another side of a feline in Gerald as well, the protective lioness-side. When he hears about Minette’s pregnancy he wants to help her and nearly offers her some money. After all, she is small and vulnerable and ready to sacrifice herself by marrying only a “half” man (*WIL*: 83), and maybe that is all she can handle. Thus it is better that Gerald leaves her alone and finds another prey.

Minette is, at the same time, several different felines. Her looks are soft as a pussycat’ but when she is aggravated, the sleeping tiger in her wakes up, ready for battle and merciless in the attack. Yet there is the lioness side as well, who wants to protect her cubs until the emotional death. Gerald, who is by nature a tiger is attracted by both the pussycat and the tiger in Minette, at the same time wanting to make her his prey and to challenge her to see if she could become his mate in the world of sensual darkness. However, he soon discovers that she is no match to him and that a relationship with her would only end in her emotional death. Moreover, as he hears about her upcoming marriage to a “half” man, he knows that Minette must have her prey as well, and it is not going to be Gerald. So he keeps on looking for a tigress, which he later finds in Gudrun Brangwen, and Minette takes the role of the lion mother.

### 5.3 The Plumed Serpent

#### 5.3.1 Kate

Kate Leslie, the Irish widow is seen both as a tiger and a cat in the novel. Inniss (1971:187) sees that before meeting Cipriano, she had been a sexual tigress, a Lawrentian female warrior on the field of love. In Chapter XXVII she suddenly sees herself with the eyes of the men from her past

as...the great cat, with its spasms of voluptuousness and its lifelong lustful enjoyment of its own isolated, isolated individuality. Voluptuously to enjoy a contact. Then with a lustful feline gratification, to break the contact, and roam in a sense of power. Each time, to seize a sort of power, purring upon her own isolated individuality. (*PS*: 394.)

Like many women she knew, she would treat love and men like a cat would treat its prey: playing lustfully with it for as long as possible, then devouring it quickly, with a sense of power. Then she would leave the scene satisfied after the victory, having voluptuously filled “the belly of her own ego” (*PS*: 395). She enjoyed the contact with men, but she could not truly relax with other people. In the end, she always had to “recoil upon her own individuality, as a cat does” (*ibid*).

With other men she had been the conqueress; in Cipriano, however, she meets her match. He refuses to be a prey and fights back, “leaving her blank, the sense of power gone out of her” (*ibid*). Now she has only two options, to escape from him and return to her old ways, or accept him as her equal, or even superior. She knows that no other man but Cipriano can ever satisfy her, but she is not sure whether she wants to give up her ego and individuality. She also knows that returning home would only mean becoming one of the lonely elderly “grimalkin” (*PS*: 395) modern women that repel her the most or, as Clark (1964:73) sees it, “a middle-aged feline haunting London drawing rooms”. Finally she decides that her independence is not worth that “ghastly price” (*PS*: 395), submits and lets Cipriano have his way with her. However, although she seems to have turned from a tigress into Cipriano’s pussycat, there still remains a bit of individuality in her, and guarding it makes her more a lioness.



### 5.3.2 Don Ramón

The fearless leader of the Quetzlcoatl-religion, Don Ramon, is by nature a soldier, a Lawrentian tiger. Inniss (1971:187) sees that this becomes especially clear in his actions as his hacienda is attacked in Chapter XIX, where he is repeatedly described as this sinister feline “terrible in battle, exulting in death”. In this chapter, Don Ramon gets a visit from Kate and they are just discussing the possibility of Kate’s joining the movement, when the action begins. Hearing gun shots outside, he rises “swiftly as a great cat”, strides rapidly, “soft and cat-like” along the terrace and leaps up on to the roof of the house, “the soft, eternal passion of anger in his limbs” (*PS*: 260-261). There he stays unmoved in silence, waiting, and then suddenly stoops and runs “like some terrible cat, the sun gleaming on his naked back as he crouched under the shelter of the thick parapet wall, running along the roof” (*PS*: 262). Then, seeing his attacker, he jumps “like a great cat” (*PS*: 263) on the man, forcing him on the floor and fighting for his life.

Kate, who witnesses Ramon’s actions, sees that he cannot make it on his own. The tigress in her seizes the revolver that Don Ramon has dropped during the fight, but dares not shoot until she sees another man getting ready to join the fight. Then she raises the gun and shoots, and the second attacker is down. Don Ramon gets back to his feet and manages to throw his knife into the abdomen of the first man. When it is quiet again Kate turns to look at Don Ramon and, seeing him standing there with blood all over his body but oblivious of it, she cannot but admire him: “he was like a pristine being, remote in consciousness, and with far, remote in sex” (*PS*: 265). There is clear admiration also on Don Ramon’s part as he looks at her with a “glint of savage recognition” and says: “Good that we killed them between us!” (*PS*: 266)

This fight obviously connects Kate and Don Ramon in a primitive way, he being a tiger and she a tigress, joined together in an animalistic hunting scene. Clark (1964:69) actually sees that had Don Ramon not been involved with another woman, he and not Cipriano, would have been her choice of lover, and I quite agree with him. She seems to respect Don Ramon more than Cipriano: “in her soul, she knew Ramon to be a greater man than Cipriano” (*PS*: 369). I personally feel that it may also be a question of power since Don Ramon is the leader of the movement, he is Quetzalcoatl, while Cipriano is only an instrument to him. Furthermore, if we consider Lawrentian felines, Don Ramon,

as the ruler, is also a lion governing over his jungle. As such, he is a much more positive symbol than Cipriano who, as his soldier, is a mere tiger. It may well be that Kate would, subconsciously, like to be a noble and kingly lioness instead of the tigress that she seems to be.

#### 5.4 Comparison of the Novels: Feline Symbols

The duality in the nature of the characters is portrayed through feline symbolism in several ways. The characters can be recognized as felines by their appearance, movement or behaviour, they can see themselves or other characters in felines, and transform from one feline into another. Moreover, felines can symbolize both positive and negative characteristics or qualities in the characters. This symbolism reflects the qualities associated to both the male and female principles (see p. 10).

The examples of the characters' feline looks found in both *The Rainbow (TR)* and *Women in Love (WIL)* and concentrate mainly on eyes or hair. Will Brangwen in *TR* has golden-brown eyes and black fur-like hair (*TR*: 107) and his daughter Ursula "wisps of bronze hair" (*TR*: 193) and same kind of eyes as his father (*TR*: 193). Minette in *WIL* has a "mane of hair" (*WIL*: 74), and also Anna Brangwen in *TR* is once described as having her "mane sticking out" like a lion (*TR*: 147).

Don Ramón in *The Plumed Serpent (PS)* is the clearest example of a character's feline movement. When his hacienda is attacked in Chapter XXVII he rises "swiftly as a great cat", strides rapidly, "soft and cat-like" along the terrace, runs "like some terrible cat" along the roof and jumps "like a great cat" on the attacker (*PS*: 260-263). A more positive example is found in *TR* where Ursula is running around in the church, "foraging here and there, like a kitten playing by herself" (*TR*: 218).

Feline behaviour in a positive light can be seen through the actions of Anna in *TR* and Minette in *WIL*. After having children, Anna sees them as her main priority and like Minette, who is pregnant and protects her unborn child by marrying out of necessity, she becomes a lioness. However, Minette displays also more negative feline behaviour; she slashes her lover Halliday's hand with a knife (*WIL*: 72), like a cat - or a panther, as

Gerald sees it - would scratch its opponent. There are also several incidents in all the three novels where the lovers are fighting each other as tigers.

Ursula and Rupert Birkin recognize themselves and each other in feline in Chapter XIII of *WIL*. While arguing about the nature of their relationship, they happen to witness a scene where Birkin's tomcat Mino shows a stray she-cat her place by hitting her with his paw. The cats' behaviour seems to symbolize the way Ursula and Birkin see their future. Birkin wants to be like Mino and force Ursula, the stray, under his will, while Ursula, also seeing Birkin as Mino and herself as the she-cat, is shocked by the thought of having a relationship like that of cats': loveless and purely animal. Also Kate Leslie, thinking about love and men in her life, sees herself as a feline in *PS*. She is a great cat who would "voluptuously enjoy the contact" but then "with lustful feline gratification...break the contact and roam in a sense of power...purring" (*PS*: 394).

Most of the characters also go through transformations from one feline to another. In *TR*, Will turns from an attractive young tomcat that he was when he first met Anna into a proud lion, when he marries her, and into a tiger or a leopard, when the honeymoon is over. Ursula is, as a child, an innocent kitten, which in time changes from a proud lion to a passionate leopard and a raging tiger. However, as she finds love with Birkin, she becomes a lion once more. In *WIL*, Minette or Pussum is a small, delicate-figured cat, which transforms into a blood-hungry panther and, finally, a lioness protecting its cubs.

If the characters' feline behaviour is thought of in association with Lawrence's doctrine of dualism, examples of displays of both male and female qualities – the "white" and "dark self"- can be found in all three novels. However, it seems that there are fewer scenes in which male qualities occur. In *TR* Will and Anna, tired of constant fighting, find a new, gentle love on Anna's terms. When Will gives in to her he can feel "the lion lay down with the lamb in him" (*TR*: 191). Also Anna and Minette's lioness-motherhood can be seen as an example of pure love. All these represent the male principle, "Love", which is based on affection. On the other hand, there are plenty of scenes, which portray female qualities. Most of the couples in the novels ruin their chance at happiness by fighting like tigers for the control in the relationship, which shows the female will to govern. The only thing that seem to keeps lovers together is the animal passion they have for each other which turns them into leopards, as Ursula and Will in *TR*, or tigers and

and tigresses as Will in TR, Gerald in WIL and Kate in PS. This is the female “dark self” in them. The violent scenes with Minette stabbing her lover in WIL and Don Ramón attacking the fiend in PS, are also examples of the will to govern, “Law”, of the female principle.

In short, in their movements and behaviour, the characters in the novels display mainly qualities associated with the female principle, such as violence and passion, whereas the gentleness and love of the male principle are qualities that occur less often. It seems that all the romances begin purring as pussycats, but most of them end in the rage of the tiger.

### Conclusions

In *The Rainbow*, Will is the night-loving leopard, the merciless tiger that shuns the daylight and the company of others. He pulls Anna into his world of everlasting passion and aims to keep her there for eternity. However, Anna the lion-mother is ultimately stronger of the two; she gets to decide when to join her tom in the pulsating jungle of desires and when to draw back into her other world and her cubs, separate from Will.

Ursula and Anton’s relationship is not meant to last. At first, Anton seems like a majestic lion with his aristocratic background and the ideal mate to the lion-hearted Ursula. However, his duties as a soulless army officer turn him into the Lawrentian sterile spirit, the tiger. Nevertheless, Ursula the lioness wants a tom-lion at her side: a proud soul with a brave heart. She drives him out of her kingdom and waits for her true mate, Birkin to arrive.

When Ursula meets Birkin in *Women in Love*, he is exhausted after his strenuous relationship with Hermione Roddice, a friend of Gerald Crich and his family. He tells Ursula that what he wants now is the freedom of the tomcat and a relationship with a like-minded she-cat. She is bitterly disappointed at this; she has had her fill of leopard-freedom with Anton and no longer wants it. However, as they fall deeply in love with each other, he discovers the true nature of the feline in him. They become the lion couple, faithful to each other together and apart.

Gerald, on the other hand, as the destructive tiger has no true feelings for anyone, not even Gudrun or any of his friends. He gets no pleasure from being kindness; his mission is to kill or be killed. Minette the lion-mother is the only one who, for a moment, brings out the protective lioness side of him. Nevertheless, she is too easy a victim for him and not worth annihilating, but Gudrun, in whom Gerald recognizes a kindred spirit, is the ultimate challenge for him. However, Gudrun is not a pure tiger and ready to be killed. She declines the invitation to the deathly dance, and lets Gerald self-destruct.

Kate, who in *The Plumed Serpent* feels like a sexual tigress, a she-cat with several love-mice, ultimately chooses the company of a tiger-soldier and the comfort of the hearth over the independence of the tigress. Since she cannot move into the den of Don Ramón the lion-king and govern at his side she gives in to Cipriano the tiger, the next best choice. However, the surrender is not complete; the proud Kate guards the seed of individuality fiercely as a lioness.

Don Ramón is not a pure lion, as a tiger-like soldier he is also a merciless killer. In fact, he is the true representative of the angry spirit of Mexico which Kate sees as “the low, angry, snarling purring of some jaguar spotted with the night” (*PS*: 40). He is the jaguar, the symbol of the military order (<http://www.kokone> 1998) and Mexico.

All in all, it seems by the light of this analysis that although various cat-like features can be found attractive, the pride and courage of the kingly lion and the protectiveness of the queenly lioness are the qualities that are most admired in humans. The rage and senseless violence of the tiger or the leopard, on the other hand, only lead to unhappiness and destruction.

### 5.5 Comparison of the Novels: Dualism

In *The Rainbow*, all couples – Tom and Lydia, Anna and Will and Ursula and Anton – experience difficulties caused by the characters’ duality. Tom wants to be in the company of the finer, foreign people that he so admires, but when he finally gets his chance with Lydia, her foreignness is the very thing that comes between them. He feels that he is not good enough for her with, and his dark self conquers. He contents himself

with the world of passion Lydia has opened for him and has blood-intimacy with her, but does not want to know her in any other way. Lydia accepts this decision, but when Tom dies she is bitter: she could have given him more.

In Will, despite his knowledge and interest in religion, qualities associated with the male principle – sensuality, instinctive behaviour and blood-consciousness – are more visible than qualities connected to the female principle. In fact, they control his nature even more when he meets Anna; he loses interest in the outer world and wants to remain in dark with her, experiencing sensual pleasures with her. She, on the other hand, portrays a great deal of male characteristics being intelligent and spiritual, and it is only through Will that she gets in contact with her latent, female qualities. However, although she enjoys the dark world of passion she also needs the light. Will does not want to stay in the darkness alone and there is a fight, but eventually they reach a compromise: the mental-conscious side governs the days and the blood-conscious side the nights.

Ursula is also intelligent and spiritual, like her parents, but like her father, her dark self is at least almost as apparent as her white self. She wants to find her mission in life, her true self, and since God cannot show her the way, she turns to man. With Anton she satisfies her sensual needs and finds herself happy in this world of carnal pleasures. However, when she realizes that it is all he has to offer, that there is no Love in him, only Law (cf. Lawrence's dualism) and the sterile spirit of a soldier, she recoils. She has not found herself yet, and she is not willing to stop searching for it, just to please Anton, who does not even seem to want to find his white self. Breaking up is all for the best as she needs to learn how to balance her two opposing sides; to find the only way to her true self.

In *Women in Love*, duality of man delays the establishment of the relationship between Ursula and Birkin, but also Gerald has to suffer because of it. Ursula's journey towards the true self continues, but when she meets Birkin, the path becomes more visible. Like Ursula, he has already found both sides in himself; he has had passion with other women when his dark self has controlled him, and now he finds it is time for the white self to blossom. Ursula, too, has turned away from her dark side, but when she falls in love with Birkin, she realizes that she needs both of them: love cannot be at its purest until there is both gentleness and passion. She wants all of him: body and soul. Birkin feels

that the gentle love and individual freedom is the only way a relationship can work; passion is limiting and would make him her possession. There is a bitter fight, but in the end they both accept their own and each other's duality and come together forming a whole.

The character, who is completely destroyed in the novel because of his dual nature, is Gerald. As seen above, he mainly shows his darker side to Gudrun, meeting her only in the world of lust and violence, but there is one woman, who awakes also other kind of emotions in him. Minette, or Pussum, is part child, part woman, and a willing toy for Gerald to play sensual games with. However, that is not the only way in which they are connected; there is also the darker, violent side in Minette which is shown as she protects her unborn child with a knife (see p. 62). The capability at violence binds them together much the same way as Gerald and Gudrun. However, as a single mother-to-be, Minette also appeals to the kinder side of him; he wants to help her and almost offers her some money. Still, since it is Gudrun he decides to pursue and not Minette, his dark self conquers. Nevertheless, when Gudrun realizes she need more than his passion, she cuts the connection between them. After his final act of violence, the attempt to kill Gudrun, he seems to subconsciously decide that he cannot live with himself such as he is, evil, and the incapability at goodness pushes him over the edge.

In *The Plumed Serpent*, Kate is aware of the duality in her regarding what she wants to do with her life. On one hand she enjoys the dark animal passion she has with Cipriano, on the other, her feelings frighten her. She wants to stay with him, but also keep her independence and individuality. Cipriano wants her but only if she submits totally to his male power and the cult of Quetzalcoatl, and abandons her old life, her past and her free will. The modern liberated woman in her, the white side that earns for civilization, almost makes her go, but the fear of loneliness and the passion for Cipriano keep her in Mexico. In the end, she decides to stay as Cipriano's wife and goddess Malintzi, but her submission is only partial: Kate's thoughts are her own and they keep alive a small piece of individuality, the Morning Star. She accepts her duality and by combining the two sides she becomes the new Kate.

Kate is connected to Cipriano by mutual physical needs, but with Don Ramón the connection is much stronger: a true blood-connection. In Mexico, Kate is drawn into a

world of terror and violence through her friendship with Don Ramón when two men attack his house and try to kill him. Fighting against a mutual enemy, they are bound together in much the same way as Gudrun and Gerald in *Women in Love*. Although Kate detests violence as her behaviour at the bullfight (see p. 47) proves, seeing Don Ramón in danger, she not only has to fire the gun but she wants to, and by doing that she manages to save Don Ramón's life. However, when he later says that he is glad that the men are dead, and thus invites her further into the world of violence, she shudders and, unlike Gudrun and Gerald, decides to stay in the light. Don Ramón, on the other hand, is true creature of night, like Cipriano; blood-conscious and passionate, and he cannot completely come out of his darkness.

In Short, Lydia and Anna in *The Rainbow*, Ursula in *Women in Love* and Kate in *The Plumed Serpent* manage to save their relationships by making compromises, whereas Gudrun in *Women in Love* leaves Gerald to save herself and he experiences an untimely death. Anna and Ursula accept the duality in themselves and their husbands, but only Ursula finds true happiness with Birkin, by letting their dual natures become united into a whole. Between Anna and Will, no such union is possible as they both lapse into secondary roles: she of the mother, and he the breadwinner, and feel that life could have given them more. On the other hand, in Kate and Cipriano's marriage, Kate is the only one making compromise but then, their marriage is more like a mutual agreement, in which both parties use each other. Cipriano uses Kate for sensual pleasures and his religion, she him for moments of pleasure and protection from the horrors of Mexico and loneliness.

## 6 CONCLUSION

David Herbert Lawrence, son of intellectual and spiritual Lydia and easygoing but passionate Arthur Lawrence, grew in a tight-knit community of collier men in Nottinghamshire, England. The mother despised the father and he, in turn, turned away from his wife and children. Lawrence lost his male role model and developed mixed feelings for both parents; his sexual identity was blurred, and this prevented him from having any satisfactory relationships with women for a long time. He dropped out of school despite the scholarship he had won, and started his work-life, first as a clerk and



later as a teacher. During this time, he also wrote his first novels *The White Peacock* (1911) and *The Trespasser* (1912), of which the latter had a better success, and married Frieda Weekley. Lawrence and Frieda's life together was stormy but their love for each other, the love of art and travels around the world kept them together until the day he died of pleurisy.

As a writer, Lawrence was very versatile. His works included novels, plays, poems, short stories and other miscellaneous prose. The characters and milieus of his novels came from his boyhood and youth, and he got constantly new ideas for his works from the travels and the new acquaintances he made with other aristocrats, philosophers and other artists. However, unlike other writers of his time, he not only concentrated on the social life of man but also dealt with cosmological questions. His works combine common-sense knowledge with mythology and Freud, and in them man lives in harmony with other creation. Nevertheless, man does not live in Paradise in his novels, but suffers from the same kind of problem as Lawrence himself: the duality of human nature.

Lawrence's doctrine of dualism is a part of his pantheistic and naturalistic world picture and its origins stem from his childhood, especially the relationship between his parents. According to his dualism, there exist two basic opposite principles, male and female in the world, and this dualism also extends to human nature. The male principle, which his intellectual mother represented, is the "white self", the rational and mental-conscious side in man. The female principle, on the other hand, is the "dark self", the instinctive and blood-conscious side, and Lawrence's passionate father represented it. The two contradictory sides of man have to be accepted and combined into a whole, otherwise life can not be in a balance. Moreover, in an ideal relationship there have to be double reconciliation of opposites, so that two persons who have found and combined the two sides within themselves, can then transcend their duality in the balance that is found between them.

Lawrence's dualism bears resemblance to other views on dualism, but it also differs from them greatly. For instance, both Lawrence's and gender dualism have a male-female division, but unlike Lawrence gender dualism sees the female as lower or inferior to the male. Furthermore, Lawrence and Descartes both agree on the separation of identities, such as mind and body, but unlike Descartes, Lawrence sees them both as

parts of the same whole. Finally, like the theory of *yin* and *yáng*, Lawrence considers the equilibrium between the opposing principles or forces quite essential.

The male and female principles are also seen symbolically, for instance as light and darkness, the lamb and the tiger, or the unicorn and the lion, respectively. Inniss (1971) states that the lion, as the king of other animals and the most royal emblem of our divinity in the flesh, is often valued positively, while the tiger, as a sterile spirit and the purely murderous aspect of the lion, is disapproved. However, since Lawrence claims that the male and female principles exist in everything in the world, I see that felines, too, are dual in nature. This duality can also be seen from the various contradictory ways in which felines, especially cats have been regarded in the course of history; they have been transformed from praised rat-killers into man-eaters, from worshipped divinities into pagan messengers of death.

Lawrence's duality of man is clearly visible in the novels *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* and *The Plumed Serpent*. It is also the major cause of the problems that the characters in the novels have. The balancing of the two opposing principles proves difficult for all the main characters, for some of them even impossible, which often prevents them from maintaining their relationships on a satisfactory level. The characters deal with these problems in different ways. In *The Rainbow*, Tom Brangwen, who admires aristocracy and foreigners, ends up partly ignoring his Polish wife Lydia because of his jealousy over her foreign past. They stay together, but he never learns to understand her. His stepdaughter Anna and her husband Will Brangwen attract each other as opposites, but then she realizes that they will always remain as opposites and never complement each other. After long periods of bitter battles, she unwillingly accepts their irreconcilable differences and, disappointed lapses into the secondary role of a mother. In the end they decide that the only common ground will be their bed. Anna and Will's oldest daughter Ursula sees Anton Skrebensky as the answer to her prayers, he is all that she would like to be, but, as it turns out, she has made a misjudgement of character. After alternating periods of lovemaking and fighting, they part their ways, and Ursula is left waiting for her true complement. In *Women in Love*, after making some compromises, she finds him in the form of Birkin, whereas her sister Gudrun who is strongly attached to Gerald Crich by ties of violence and carnal passion, decides that he has no love in him and ends their relationship. Gerald can not accept that his female side is too strong, and he self-

deconstructs. In *The Plumed Serpent* Kate Leslie is drawn to both Don Cipriano and Don Ramón by their dark sensual passion and primitive Indian ways. However, she is also a modern woman who wants to retain her individuality, and finds it difficult to abandon her old life and dedicate herself completely to the religious-political cause of the two men. In the end, she makes a compromise: she stays in Mexico with Cipriano, but also manages to keep a part of her individuality intact.

Characters in the novel show that although passion can be important in a relationship, it is not enough to make the relationship last. Moreover, although making compromises is a way to find satisfaction and even happiness, one's life can not be in a balance unless the duality in oneself and in others is accepted and reconciled. Only then can one truly love oneself and others.

In the novels, there are several feline symbols whose main function is to portray human duality through feline looks, movements and behaviour. This duality can be seen in a character for example through transformations from one feline into another: a noble lion may turn into a raging tiger, or a pussycat may suddenly show her claws. Some of the qualities that felines symbolize are associated to the male principle – the motherly love and self-sacrifice of the lioness – and others to the female principle – the tiger's need to fight over power. Some qualities are deemed positive – the kitten's playfulness – and others negative – the mercilessness of the attacking leopard. Sometimes characters recognize feline qualities in themselves, sometimes in other characters.

Most of the qualities felines symbolize in the novels are associated to the female principle: sensual passion, the need to control, senseless violence. They are also qualities that are often deemed less desirable, even negative in man and that, in the novel, often lead to unhappiness and destruction. Pride, courage and protectiveness, on the other hand, are deemed positive and admired, and help characters to remain true to themselves and others.

At the beginning of my study, my intention was to show that duality in human nature was the main reason for the problems the characters in the novels had, and it proved successful. Because of their incapability to accept themselves and others as having both “white” male and “dark” female elements, they found it difficult and, in some cases,

impossible to maintain a satisfactory relationship. I also wanted to study how this human duality was portrayed through the use of feline symbols, and I found out that there are several ways to do that. The male or female qualities could be seen in the feline looks, movement or behaviour of the characters. The characters could change their behaviour from sweet and innocent to dark and dangerous by transforming from a pussycat into a tiger, and they could display both positive and negative qualities. However, the fact that the qualities that were associated with the female principle and often deemed negative were far more common in the novels than those associated with the male principle, was surprising. One reason for this can be that, as Daleski (1965:35) points out, Lawrence supported the female principle but despised ideas and qualities that were associated to the male principle. Moreover, also Lawrence suffered from the unbalance of his opposing sides, probably partly due to the blurring of his sexual identity as a child, which caused problems in his marriage to Frieda.

The main problems in writing the thesis had to do with the material available. Nearly all the material on Lawrence and his works or ideology that I used in my study was written in the 1960's or the 1970's, and there was no recent criticism available. Moreover, there were hardly any books on Lawrence's use of animal symbolism. Another problem was the choice and definition of the subject of the study. From the original five novels only three were chosen on the basis of their themes and the occurrence of feline symbols in the text. Other difficulties experienced include the right amount of the citations, the depth of character analyses and the order in which the information should be presented.

I have found writing this thesis very interesting and even useful in my own relationships to other people; it has helped me understand better the complex nature of man. Duality of human nature is a subject, which could be studied from many different angles. One could for instance concentrate on how it affects friendships such as those between Birkin and Gerald and Ursula and Gudrun in *Women in Love* or Ursula and her lesbian class-mistress Winifred Inger in *The Rainbow*.

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